

Press Release

Results of pain research projects raise aspiration for advanced pain treatment

- ***Novel ideas for potential improvement of pain management***
- ***High need for translation of findings into practice for improved patients' quality of life***

Vienna, September 3rd 2015. On occasion of the 9th Congress of the European Pain Federation EFIC[®], young scientists from across Europe presented the latest results of their pain research projects, focussing on novel ideas with potential for achieving major advances in pain management. All presenters were former EFIC-GRÜNENTHAL Grant (E-G-G) winners, a grant which aims to support up-and-coming pain scientists. The cooperation of the European Pain Federation EFIC[®] and the pharmaceutical company Grünenthal on this grant has started in 2004 and supports sustainable pain research ever since.

Every fifth adult citizen in Europe suffers from persistent or chronic pain, which is still seen as a mere symptom of an underlying disease. However, the diversity of chronic pain is numerous: Pain is a highly subjective experience, it exists in many different types and has different causes. The right treatment therefore requires early and reliable diagnosis and experienced and focussed pain management. The findings of the E-G-G winners may help to develop and improve the required understanding of dependencies between pain mechanisms and treatment options.

“This year’s motto of the EFIC[®] congress is ‘Translating Evidence into Practice’ – and this is indeed what I feel we have to do”, comments Dott Alberto Grua, Member of the Grünenthal Corporate Executive Board. “Every second year during the EFIC[®] symposium I am amazed by the fantastic findings of our E-G-G winners. Over the years we keep contact with them to learn about their projects’ progress. Whatever we can eventually do to support putting their findings into practice to improve the patients’ life, we are fully committed to do. It is the patient welfare that has been the focus of our thinking and actions – and it will remain so in the future”.

Every two years the EFIC[®] gives former E-G-G winners a platform to share the progress of their pain research projects at the EFIC[®] Symposium “New Findings in Clinical Pain Research”, taking place during the biennial EFIC[®] Congress. Here young researchers may present and discuss their research development with international pain researchers and acknowledged pain experts. Without the financial support and the access to the international pain research network, it would be harder for young scientists to establish their research results and consequently advanced pain treatment options.

“I am delighted about the presented progress of the E-G-G pain projects during the EFIC[®] Symposium”, Dr Chris Wells, President of the European Pain Federation EFIC[®], declares. “On the one hand it shows that we have made great decisions on the selection of the winning projects and on the other hand it provides aspiration for improved future pain treatment. The gained acceptance and recognition of the E-G-G reached during the past years is convincing and supports our approach of investing in research for achieving better treatment for pain patients in the future”.

“The importance of grants such as the EFIC-GRÜNENTHAL Grant cannot be overstated. After completing my PhD I experienced how hard it is in today’s competitive academic environment to set up your own independent research. The EGG grant gave me the opportunity to continue working in the field I want to dedicate my research career to”, highlighted Dr Ligthart, winner of an E-G-G 2012. This underlines the importance to support young researchers to carry out their project ideas.

These are the research projects, which were presented at the EFIC[®] Symposium 2015:

- “Upper limb pain after stroke: should we act on pain or neglect?”, by Professor Samar M Hatem MD, PhD, Belgium, winner of an E-G-G 2012
- “The development of pain, anxiety and depressive symptoms over time”, clarified by Dr Lannie Ligthart PhD, The Netherlands, winner of an E-G-G 2012
- “Fear generalization processes in chronic pain: an associative learning approach”, presented by Dr Ann Meulders PhD, Belgium, winner of an E-G-G 2012
- “Ciguatera fish poisoning: novel insight into an old disease”, by Prof Katharina Zimmermann, MD, Germany, winner of an E-G-G 2012
- Prof Esther Pogatzki-Zahn, MD, from Munster, Germany and one of the winners of the very first E-G-G award in 2004, gave insights into her research project by holding the guest speech “Postoperative pain: From bench to bedside”.

About the European Pain Federation EFIC[®]

With headquarters in Diegem/Brussels, the European Pain Federation EFIC[®] is a multidisciplinary professional organisation in the field of pain research and medicine, consisting of the 37 chapters of the International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP[®]), which are the IASP approved official National Pain Societies in each country. Established in 1993, EFIC’s constituent chapters represent Pain Societies from 37 European countries and more than 20,000 physicians, basic researchers, nurses, physiotherapists, psychologists and other healthcare professionals across Europe, who are involved in pain management and pain research. For more information, please visit www.efic.org.

About Grünenthal

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Altogether, the Grünenthal Group is present in 32 countries with affiliates in Europe, Australia, Latin America and the US. Grünenthal products are sold in more than 155 countries and approx. 5,200 employees are working for the Grünenthal Group worldwide. In 2014, Grünenthal achieved revenues of € 1.154 bn. More information: www.grunenthal.com.

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