

Grünenthal fosters the enhancement of treatment standards for pain in Europe

Aachen, October 28, 2013 – 96 million Europeans suffer from chronic pain.^{1,2} 21% of these people have been affected for more than 20 years. Across Europe chronic pain accounts for nearly 500 million lost working days per year – costing the European economy around € 34 billion.¹ However, the average period between initial symptoms of chronic pain disease and the beginning of adequate therapeutic intervention is four years, as shown by a recent study in Germany.³ This is why the pharmaceutical company Grünenthal, an international expert in the management of pain, invests in research significantly above industry average, calls for better education of healthcare professionals in pain management and has committed itself to face the burden of pain from various perspectives but always with a patient-centric focus.

Supporting young scientists is one elementary step in the battle against pain

Bearing in mind that besides the development of drugs to offer patients a more effective pain management, additional information on underlying mechanisms of pain, different pharmacological principles and how pain should be better managed are crucial, Grünenthal donates a total of € 200,000 for the biennial EFIC-Grünenthal Grant (E-G-G). In doing so, the decision of the awards is made independently by the Committee on Scientific Research of the European Pain Federation EFIC® (European Federation of Chapters of the International Association for the Study of Pain). The grant supports promising young scientists in pain research at a critical phase of their early career. The actual E-G-G winners were ceremonially awarded last week at the EFIC® Congress 2013 in Florence, Italy, were also former winners were given a platform to present the progress of their research projects and exchange information on an international level. "Research requires more than just good ideas. It requires money to implement your projects", Dr Stefano Tamburin, one of the recipients of the grant in 2010 explained when asked about the importance of the grant. "The E-G-G was ideal for the implementation of my projects that was accepted without any limitations, and I could fully devote myself to my research."

Regarding the complexity of pain innovation but also information is needed

However, the best treatment option is redundant if it is not available or practitioners are not well informed. In some European countries, governments and authorities have taken a first

¹ Breivik H, Collett B, Ventafridda V, et al.: Survey of chronic pain in Europe: prevalence, impact on daily life, and treatment. Eur J Pain. 2006; 10:287-333

² 96 M equals 19% of EU population of 506 M. Accessible at <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>.

³ <http://www.bv-schmerz.de/medien/pdf/weissbuch%20-%20druckversion%20final%20120612.pdf>

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step to improve the treatment of pain. In Germany for example, pain therapy is a mandatory course on the curriculum of every medical student. But currently, only few European universities have courses on therapy, diagnostics and prevention of pain in their curricula.⁴ Therefore, healthcare professionals are very often not prepared for the challenges of treating chronic pain patients. "In many cases, pain patients do not simply suffer from severe physical pain. The psycho-social problems like depression, retirement, social exclusion that arise due to pain are often as burdensome and can additionally aggravate the diagnoses and treatment," said Dr Alberto Grua, Chief Commercial Officer EU, Australia and North-America, Grünenthal Group. To enhance the understanding of chronic pain patients' needs, the communication between patient and physician and develop solutions to improve pain management Grünenthal in 2009 started the CHANGE PAIN® initiative that is endorsed by the European Pain Federation EFIC® and a group of international experts with a high reputation in the field of pain management. It compiles and offers supportive tools for daily practice and self-management to both healthcare professionals and patients to support them in their fight against chronic pain.

"As one of the last five remaining international research-orientated pharmaceutical companies headquartered in Germany with research and development investments significantly above the industry average we try to give our best to search for new answers to unmet medical needs in pain and beyond for the benefit of patients and healthcare systems alike. We use our expertise in pain to continuously improve treatment standards in Europe and around the world, because we remain of the conviction – and the facts may prove us right – it's needed" Grua said emphasising Grünenthal's commitment to face the burden of pain.

About Grünenthal

The Grünenthal Group is an independent, family-owned, international research-based pharmaceutical company with headquarters in Aachen, Germany. Building on its unique position in pain treatment, its objective is to become the most patient-centric company and thus to be a leader in therapy innovation. Grünenthal is one of the last five remaining research-oriented pharmaceutical companies in Germany which sustainably invests in research and development. Research and development costs amounted to about 26 percent of revenues in 2012. Grünenthal's research and development strategy concentrates on selected fields of therapy and state-of-the-art technologies. We are intensely focused on discovering new ways to treat pain better and more effectively, with fewer side-effects than current therapies. Altogether, the Grünenthal Group has affiliates in 26 countries worldwide. Grünenthal products are sold in more than 155 countries. Today, approx. 4,400 employees are working for the Grünenthal Group worldwide. In 2012, Grünenthal achieved revenues of € 973 million. For more information: www.grunenthal.com.

⁴ http://www.sip-platform.eu/tl_files/redakteur-bereich/Home/Final_SIP%20Road%20Map%20Monitor%20Booklet%202011_06.02.2012.pdf

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