

**-NEWS RELEASE-**

## **ECTRIMS 2016 to present MS research across long-term effects and prognosis, imaging techniques, B-cell depletion therapies, personalized care, immune response and progressive MS**

**The late-breaking sessions at the congress will discuss the newest data and abstracts**

### **ECTRIMS 2016 congress themes overview:**

- Understanding the mechanisms of disease progression
- New research findings including immune and mitochondrial abnormalities
- Approaches to early treatment
- Evolving approaches thanks to better understanding and personalized treatment
- Long term treatment effects and prognosis
- New insights from registry and cohort studies
- New directions in progressive MS research
- High priority in international research
- B-cell depletion therapies
- First possibly effective treatment in primary progressive MS
- Imaging neuroprotection and repair
- Advances in MRI, OCT, and PET techniques

**15 August 2016, London:** The European Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis (ECTRIMS) previews the key sessions ahead of its annual congress – a dedicated platform to promote and enhance research in Multiple Sclerosis. The 32<sup>nd</sup> edition of the world's largest congress of multiple sclerosis will take place in London from 14 – 17 September 2016.

In total the congress will gather over 8000 of the world's most prominent clinical and research professionals, with 61 sessions and over two thousand abstracts presented – the most researched topics are 'imaging' (213 abstracts), 'immunomodulation/immunosuppression' (195), 'Clinical assessment tools' (102), 'Long-term treatment monitoring' (91) and 'Risk management for disease modifying treatments' (87).

Keynote presentations in 2016 include parallel sessions on 'Insights to long-term treatment effects from MS registries and databases' and 'Long-term outcome after presentation with a clinically isolated syndrome'. Collectively, these two sessions will present data from 12 different studies examining long term prognostic markers, treatment effects and clinical outcomes across timescales of up to 15-years.

Another area of recent scientific research has focused on altering the initial treatment of early active relapsing remitting MS, using a potent therapy instead of a standard immunomodulation prior to escalation. Clinicians and researchers will explore data on the relative merits of this new approach during a hot-topic session.

Research about new drug targets will also be presented, with a hot topic session reviewing B-Cell mediated pathogenic mechanisms and effects of B-Cell depletion therapies currently in clinical trials. The session will explore the role this type of therapy could play in the future for patients with primary progressive MS and relapsing-remitting MS.

In fact, there remains no effective treatment yet for progressive MS – the most disabling form of the disease – so it remains an international priority. Researchers in the ‘New directions in progressive MS research’ session discuss how we can improve diagnosis, monitor the drivers of disease progression and remove any potential bottlenecks in clinical trials.

Furthermore, an essential component in fighting the disease is a more precise understanding of how the pathomechanism evolves, how we can alter it, and what changes occur with different treatments. In this context, two new and very exciting concepts are emerging: immune system-mediated tissue damage and mitochondrial dysfunction. The congress explores new therapies that modulate immune response and lymphocyte migration.

Finally, advances in imaging techniques in MRI, OCT and PET have a great impact on how we monitor treatments that prevent disability and disease progression. Two sessions in particular will look at ‘recent advances in MS imaging’ and ‘New techniques to image neuroprotection and repair’.

Prof. David Miller, Vice President & Chair of Scientific Committee of ECTRIMS: *“We have seen huge advances in MS research in recent years and the implications from new potential therapy options, alongside new imaging techniques and mechanism of action could have profound effects on improving treatment and care for patients. I would encourage anyone in MS research or clinical practice to attend the congress as it is vital we mobilise the community and share our understanding to drive forward research across Europe and the globe.”*

The Congress is jointly organised with Rehabilitation in MS (RIMS), and a special session will outline the continued developments in rehabilitation and symptomatic treatments that are improving symptom management and disability.

For the full scientific programme at ECTRIMS 2016 or details on how to attend, please visit:

<http://www.ectrims-congress.eu/>