



## Letter from the President



Dear Colleagues,

A very warm welcome to the Winter 2018 edition of the ECTRIMS newsletter.

First of, on behalf of the ECTRIMS Council and Executive Committee, a word of gratitude is due to all those many of you who came to Berlin for our 34<sup>th</sup> annual conference. We surpassed the astounding figure of 10'000 participants, a number that was so far only reached by last year's ECTRIMS-ECTRIMS joint meeting. We have had much positive feedback formal and informal pointing to a high degree of satisfaction. A number of elements factored into the success of the meeting; this time most importantly, those related to big data, registry and cohort studies. The venue and the weather also helped. So, thank you all one more time. On to the next venue. We hope to see you all again in Stockholm from 11-13 September 2019.

ECTRIMS has awarded the honorary membership to Franz Fazekas whose work for Multiple Sclerosis has contributed to advancement within the ECTRIMS goals and values. We also welcome Rogier Hintzen, Bruno Stankoff and Krzysztof Selmaj as new ECTRIMS Executive Committee members who will ensure that ECTRIMS stays fresh and in touch with all its country members.

Please be sure to have a good look at the learning opportunities ECTRIMS offers through upcoming events. In this regard, for instance we have just received 170 applications for the

upcoming ECTRIMS Summer School on “Methodology of study design and statistical analysis” in Dublin.

The fellowships and grants programmes are in full swing. These are programmes that we are particularly proud of aim to support the exchange of clinicians, scientist and nurses. Please make sure that those around you know about these programmes and to encourage them to apply.

Last but not least, also please read about the increased support of joint work and activities of ECTRIMS with other Societies.

I wish you all Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Bernhard Hemmer

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## The new ECTRIMS Executive Committee



We are pleased to introduce the new ECTRIMS Executive Committee.

Bernhard Hemmer, DE, took over the presidency from David Miller, UK. Maria Pia Amato, IT, was appointed as new vice president and Mar Tintoré, ES, as Secretary. Tobias Derfuss, CH, remains in his role as Treasurer.

The new ECTRIMS Executive Committee Members, elected by the ECTRIMS Council are Rogier Hintzen, NL; Krzysztof Selmaj, PL; Bruno Stankoff, FR.

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## ECTRIMS 2019 – 11 – 13 September 2019 in Stockholm, Sweden

Dear Colleagues,

It seems that we only left wonderful Berlin a few weeks ago with happy memories of the 2018 ECTRIMS Congress, but time flies and it is already less than nine months until we hope to see all of you in Stockholm, September 11-13, 2019.

It will not be an easy task to match the Berlin ECTRIMS, but the local organizing committee has done its best to come up with an interesting programme. Here, we have tried to select topics of high relevance for the MS field but with a Scandinavian flavor in choosing aspects representing interests of MS researchers from Northernmost Europe. Thus, there will be scientific sessions covering wide topics such as genetics and epigenetics, environmental factors, stem cells, viral pathogenesis, antigen specific and anti B-cell treatments, biomarkers, outcomes research and real world evidence. We hope to provide participants with an array of up to date concepts likely to be central to the understanding of multiple sclerosis in the years to come. Truly, the MS field has come a long way in the past 25 years but we are still far from reaching the goal of preventing the devastating consequences of MS still affecting many of our patients. So let's get together in September to share knowledge, skills and insights with the aim of advancing the field of MS research and treatment.

Wishing you all wonderful season holidays and a happy new 2019!

Jan Hillert  
Chair ECTRIMS 2019

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## Report of the ECTRIMS Regional Teaching Course 2018 in Curitiba, Brazil



The concept of ECTRIMS Regional Teaching courses turned out to be exceptionally successful during the last years. The idea to promote education on treatment of MS in different areas of the world together with experts from the local neurological societies or ECTRIMS partner organisations is well appreciated by our neurological colleagues. Along this line we have organized together with BCTRIMS a Regional Teaching Course in Curitiba, Brazil, which took place on 2 -3 November 2018. The teaching course program was focused on practical aspects of treatment but also provided the theoretical background about the immunopathophysiology of MS, genes and environmental factors implicated in the pathogenesis and biomarkers in blood and CSF. In different interactive workshops the topics “When and how to start therapy?”, “Escalation, switching or induction therapy: what should we do?” and “Monitoring safety and adherence to therapy” were discussed. With over 159 participants, the workshop was again a great success. The concept of a pharma independent teaching activity that involves the leading experts in the field was appreciated by all participants and is certainly one of the main goals of ECTRIMS.

The organization of the next teaching course event in Tyumen, Russia, is already ongoing. The course is planned for 31 May - 1 June 2019. The programme of this teaching course will soon be online. As with all teaching courses registration is free of charge. Please visit the [ECTRIMS website](#) for further information regarding registration that will start end of January 2019.

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**Report of the 10<sup>th</sup> Regional Teaching Course in Sub-Saharan Africa in cooperation with AFAN**



ECTRIMS supported the EAN/AFAN Regional Teaching Course, which was being held in Sub-Saharan Africa, Antananarivo, Madagascar on 24 - 27 October 2018. Residents from different Sub-Saharan countries were trained by a faculty from Africa, Europe and America including a representative from ECTRIMS. For the first time the educational activities involved lectures and case discussion rounds on multiple sclerosis and related diseases.

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### Update on ECTRIMS Focused Workshop 2019 in Athens, Greece

The next ECTRIMS Focused Workshop on “MOG – antibody associated disease” will be held in Athens / Greece on 7 – 8 March 2019 and will cover the fascinating topic of MOG antibody associated disease. Over the last years, new clinical phenotypes associated with the identification of biomarkers are arising and the concept of a specific “MOGpathy” is emerging.

In this workshop we will review the immunology and pathology of MOG-Ab associated disease and we will discuss the clinical spectrum and prognosis of this new entity. Also, the use and guidance of MRI, OCT and biological biomarkers will be examined. Finally, a debate will focus on when and how we should treat MOG-Ab associated disease.

We are aware that there is more to learn and that there are knowledge gaps in the MOG-Ab phenotype, which however also feeds our motivation to address these important issues.

A publication is planned that will summarize the results of this meeting.

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### Update on ECTRIMS Summer School 2019 in Dublin, Ireland

The next ECTRIMS Summer School on “Methodology of study design and statistical analysis” will be held in Dublin, Ireland on 18 – 20 June 2019. The school will provide an updated review of research methodology, design and plan in the field of etiology, prognosis and treatment of MS. Experimental designs in different phases of clinical trials and innovative trial designs as well as methodological aspects pertaining to post-marketing, observational studies will be discussed together with the methodology to develop and implement clinical guidelines. In parallel, the fundamentals of statistical methodology and innovative statistical techniques for data processing and analysis will be addressed in the course.

For further information on the upcoming summer school and detailed programme please visit the [ECTRIMS Website](#).

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## ECTRIMS Online Library – Highlight Webcast from the ECTRIMS 2018



We recommend to watch the following webcast from one of the luminaries of MS research, Professor Alastair Compston, who gave this year's ECTRIMS lecture "Multiple sclerosis in the digital age: seeing through a glass darkly" at the ECTRIMS 2018 in Berlin.

Please click [here](#) to explore the webcast. You need to log in to the ECTRIMS Online Library to view the webcast.

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## Report of ECTRIMS Fellows

### ECTRIMS MS CLINICAL TRAINING FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

**Fellow**

Giordani Rodrigues dos Passos

**Fellowship Institution**

University of Oxford (United Kingdom)

**Mentor**

Dr Jacqueline Palace

**Fellowship Duration**

1 year

**Summary asECTRIMS Clinical Training Fellowship Programme Fellow 2018**

With MS being five times more prevalent in the UK than in my home region, in South Brazil, this fellowship in Oxford was an exceptional opportunity to see hundreds of MS cases, including several with atypical presentations or uncommon complications of therapy.

I regularly attended two MS clinics: one focused on the management of disease-modifying and symptomatic drugs and one for patients with acute relapses, as well as the neuromyelitis optica & MOG-antibody disease clinic.

Occasionally, I also attended the neuro-rehabilitation clinic (where several patients with more advanced MS receive their multidisciplinary care) and the clinics of myasthenia gravis, autoimmune encephalitis and immune neuropathies.

The weekly MS Journal Club (where I presented a few papers) and the multidisciplinary team meetings were also part of my routine. In addition, I took part in public engagement activities: the MS Information Day (where I delivered a talk) and the NMO Patient Day.

With regard to research, I gained experience with clinical databases and statistical analyses and was able to plan and carry out studies in different areas, including seasonality of attacks, abnormalities on visual evoked potentials and influence of immunotherapy on the severity of attacks; I contributed to ongoing projects about the genetics of MS and NMOSD and the interface between MS and cerebral small vessel disease; and I gained insights into the functioning of the MS Trials Unit.

This fellowship fostered my clinical and research skills on MS and related conditions much more than I could have anticipated. I feel confident to manage these conditions, promote public awareness and work towards the integration of clinical services and research.

Next year, I shall resume my clinical work in Brazil and will continue to be involved with the Oxford research projects mentioned above, as an honorary researcher.

I acknowledgeECTRIMS and the University of Oxford for this career-changing fellowship and express

my gratitude for their continuous support throughout all stages.

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## Meeting Dates

### **ECTRIMS Focused Workshop 2019**

Athens / Greece: 7 – 8 March 2019

### **ECTRIMS Regional Teaching Course**

Tyumen / Russia: 31 May – 1 June 2019

### **ECTRIMS Summer School 2019**

Dublin / Ireland: 18 – 20 June 2019

### **ECTRIMS 2019**

Stockholm / Sweden: 11 – 13 September 2019

We wish you a happy and peaceful Christmas and all the best for 2019!



#### **ECTRIMS Executive Committee**

Bernhard Hemmer, DE, President

Maria Pia Amato, IT, Vice President

Mar Tintoré, ES, Secretary

T. Derfuss, Basel/CH, Treasurer & Newsletter Editor

Rogier Hintzen, NL

Krzysztof Selmaj, PL

Bruno Stankoff, FR



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#### **Our mailing address is:**

ECTRIMS c/o Congrex Switzerland Ltd. Peter Merian-Strasse 80 Basel 4002 Switzerland