



Letter from the President



Already several months have passed since the 2017 Annual Congress was held in Paris. The Congress was held jointly with ACTRIMS and was attended by more than 10,000 people, making it the largest Congress to date. Warm thanks go to Catherine Lubetzki and the Local Organising Committee for helping ensure that it was another very successful meeting.

Plans are now well advanced for the 2018 Congress, which will be held in Berlin on October 10-12th. Under the able leadership of Reinhard Hohlfeld (Local Organising Committee Chair) and Bernard Hemmer (Scientific Programme Committee Chair), the scientific programme and faculty has been developed. As usual there will be a wide range of topics covered that will ensure another Congress with cutting edge developments in MS research and care. A comprehensive programme of teaching courses is also being prepared under the leadership of Tobias Derfuss and Sandra Vukusic. This year's Congress will take place over 3 full days - Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. I hope you will mark the Congress date in your diary.

ECTRIMS also keeps busy with other regular activities. These include the 2018 fellowship round. There are several different fellowship schemes and this year we received a good number of applications, especially for the Postdoctoral Research Exchange and Clinical Training Fellowship schemes. The 2018 focused workshop on "Aggressive MS" took place in Brussels on March 1st and 2nd, and thanks to Mar Tintore, Lou Brundin and Bernhard

Hemmer for leading its organisation. The 2018 summer school on “Optical Coherence Tomography in MS” will take place in Budapest on June 25-27th. In addition, two Regional Teaching Courses have been scheduled for 2018: the first was successfully held in Argentina on March 15th and the second will take place in association with BCTRIMS in Brazil in November.

There have been several recent publications with ECTRIMS involvement. The first comes from the International Advisory Committee on Clinical Trials in MS (which is jointly sponsored by the US National MS Society and ECTRIMS) and is the 2017 revisions of the McDonald criteria for the diagnosis of MS, published in Lancet Neurology. The second is the ECTRIMS/European Academy of Neurology Guideline on the pharmacological treatment of people with MS, which has been published in the Multiple Sclerosis Journal and European Journal of Neurology. Thirdly, a special issue of the Multiple Sclerosis Journal has been published that is devoted to the topic of the 2017 ECTRIMS Focused Workshop (Advancing Trial Design in Progressive MS) - thanks to Jeremy Chataway and Robert Fox who were guest editors for this special issue.

I hope that you find the contents of the newsletter enjoyable and interesting.

David Miller

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ECTRIMS 2018 – 10 – 12 October 2018 in Berlin, Germany

Dear colleagues,

I am happy to report that the preparations for ECTRIMS 2018 are right on track. Of the over 140 invited international chairs and speakers the overwhelming majority accepted instantaneously, testifying to the great reputation of ECTRIMS as the “World’s largest congress of multiple sclerosis”! The Local Organising Committee, the Scientific Programme Committee and the Teaching Course Committee have been working hard to prepare an attractive program. As usual, strong emphasis will be placed on the latest developments in MS therapeutics, including particularly challenging areas like safety, emerging biosimilars and worldwide access to modern treatments. The program of the educational sessions is currently being finalised. It offers an

attractive range of clinical and scientific topics presented by an outstanding international faculty.

As you may already know, this year's ECTRIMS will shine a special spotlight on the chances and challenges of digital medicine, "big data", artificial intelligence, machine learning and robotics. We are happy and honored that Prof. Alastair Compston, Cambridge, has agreed to give the ECTRIMS Lecture entitled "*Multiple sclerosis in the digital age: Lessons from genomics and beyond*". As a pioneer of MS genetics Alastair is destined for this task. He will give us a grand perspective on this topic based on his lifetime contributions and experience. This year's Confavreux Lecture, entitled "*Neurobiology of MS from the lab to the clinic*", will be given by Prof. Cathérine Lubetzki who hosted the last meeting in Paris and who is one of the leading experts on the neurobiology of MS. Last but not least, let me remind you of the abstract deadline on 16 May 2018. ECTRIMS 2018 offers you a unique opportunity to present your most exciting recent work to a large audience of friends, colleagues and peers!

Best wishes and stay tuned!

Reinhard Hohlfeld
ECTRIMS 2018 Chair

Report of the ECTRIMS Focused Workshop 2018 in Brussels, Belgium

The 2018 focused workshop on "Aggressive MS" proved to be a productive meeting of about 50 participants. Over 2 days, there were many excellent presentations and lively, interactive discussion sessions. Day 1 covered the definition, prediction and management of aggressive MS. Day 2 considered how to move forward and also covered the management and prevention of complications of high efficacy treatments. Arising from the workshop proceedings, it is planned that a publication will be prepared on the topic of Aggressive MS.

Update on ECTRIMS Regional Teaching Courses 2018

ECTRIMS further continued its activity to promote education on treatment of MS in different areas of the world. The teaching courses are always organized in collaboration with the local neurological societies or ECTRIMS partner organisations. After successful teaching courses in St. Petersburg, Dubai, and Vilnius the spring teaching course 2018 was just recently held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on the 15th of March. The [teaching course program](#) was focused on practical aspects of treatment but also provided the theoretical background about the pathophysiology of MS. In different interactive workshops the topics « Initiation of treatment: when, who, how », « Escalating, switching and induction therapy », and « Safety and monitoring of DMT » were discussed. With over 150 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. Along this line the preparations for the next teaching activity in Curitiba, Brazil have already started. The program of this teaching course that was developed together with BCTRIMS is [online](#). As with all teaching courses registration is free of charge. Please visit the ECTRIMS website for further information regarding registration that will start mid-May 2018.

Update on ECTRIMS Summer School 2018 in Budapest, Hungary

The ECTRIMS Summer School 2018 on “Optical Coherence Tomography in MS (OCT)” will be held in Budapest in June. A faculty of international experts will cover the OCT field from theoretical basics to practical exercises. The response to the announcement of the workshop was enthusiastic. More than 120 people from 37 countries applied to the workshop.

ECTRIMS-EAN Guideline on the pharmacological treatment of people with Multiple Sclerosis

The ECTRIMS/EAN joint guideline for treatment of people with Multiple Sclerosis was published in the ECTRIMS and EAN official journals, the Multiple Sclerosis Journal and the European Journal of Neurology in mid-February, following presentations during the ECTRIMS annual meetings of 2016 and 2017. The guideline includes twenty-one recommendations based on an extensive revision of the available evidence and a formal consensus process, following the GRADE methodology.

The panel for this guideline was led by Prof. Xavier Montalban, Barcelona (Spain), Prof. Ralf Gold, Bochum (Germany), and Prof. Alan Thompson, London (United Kingdom). Dr Susana Otero, Barcelona (Spain) coordinated the whole effort. The remainder of colleagues authoring the Guidelines was:

Maria Pia Amato (ITA), Dhia Chandraratna (UK), Michel Clanet (FRA), Giancarlo Comi (ITA), Tobias Derfuss (GER), Franz Fazekas (AT), Hans Peter Hartung (GER), Eva Havrdová (CZR), Bernhard Hemmer (GER), Ludwig Kappos (CH), Roland Liblau (FRA), Catherine Lubetzki (FRA), Elena Marcus (UK), David H Miller (UK), Tomas Olsson (SWE), Steve Pilling (UK), Krzysztof Selmaj (POL), Axel Siva (TUR), Per Soelberg Sørensen (DMK), Maria Pia Sormani (ITA), Christoph Thalheim (BEL), Heinz Wiendl (GER) and Frauke Zipp (GER).

The purpose of the committee of experts who has participated in the development of this Guide has been to homogenise the decision-making in determining the treatment of choice, giving people with MS and health professionals a document with solid support regarding the pharmacological treatments currently available. All medications modifying the course of the disease approved by the European Medicines Agency at the time of publication were taken into account for the preparation of the Guide. The guidelines cover treatment in adult patients with confirmed MS and in patients with a clinically isolated syndrome (CIS), as well as monitoring of treatment response, interruption and change of therapeutic strategy and also treatment in special situations, such as pregnancy.

A five-year lapse has been agreed by the expert panel to produce an update of the guidelines.

5th anniversary of the ECTRIMS online library

Another way to promote education in the field of MS is to make the content of the annual ECTRIMS meetings available to the public. ECTRIMS therefore started 5 years ago to publish posters and talks of the ECTRIMS congress in an online library. The access to this library is free of charge and available to all health care professionals including those that did not participate in the meeting. Several thousand HCPs have already registered and used this online tool for their education. If you weren't aware of this feel free to [check it out](#).

ECTRIMS Fellowships 2018

ECTRIMS offers a comprehensive range of fellowship programmes for different target groups.

In 2018 9 new fellowships were awarded:

ECTRIMS Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Exchange Programme

- Nishihara, Hideaki
- Kleerekopper, Iris
- Guzman de la Fuente, Alerie
- Morandi, Elena

ECTRIMS Multiple Sclerosis Clinical Training Fellowship Programme

- Boaventura de Oliveira, Mateus
- Reyes, Saul
- Ghanim, Zaid
- Karhikeayan, Venkatraman

ECTRIMS Comprehensive Multiple Sclerosis Nurse Training Programme

- Pastore, Francesco

MSIF-ECTRIMS McDonald Fellowship

We are happy to announce that the application is now open for the

MSIF-ECTRIMS McDonald Fellowship

The McDonald Fellowship enables young researchers from **emerging countries** to work with the world's leading researchers in MS, with a view to returning to their own countries to establish a programme of MS research that involves the application of newly learned techniques. This is a **two-year fellowship**, with an award of **£30,000 per annum** to the candidate and an additional sum of £2000 awarded to the host institute.

Further information may be found at: <https://www.msif.org/mcdonald>

Deadline for nominations is **30 June 2018**.

Reports of ECTRIMS Fellows

ECTRIMS MS CLINICAL TRAINING FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

**Fellow**

Zhifeng Mao, PhD – 2016 Awardee

Research Topic

Personalised dosing of cladribine for people with multiple sclerosis

Fellowship Institution

The Blizard Institute, Barts and The London School of Medicine & Dentistry, Queen Mary University of London, London, United Kingdom

Mentor

Dr. Klaus Schmierer

Fellowship Duration

1 year

Summary as ECTRIMS Clinical Training Fellowship Programme Fellow 2016 - 2017

During my fellowship, I had an opportunity to gain knowledge of implementation of new treatments and technologies (treatment: Cladribine; biomarker: neurofilament light chain) for both relapsing-remitting and progressive MS in routine clinical practice. I joined Dr Schmierer's weekly neuroinflammation clinic and other consultants. Through this clinical experience I gained insights into different disease presentations (mainly MS, but also other neurological disorders), different clinical courses and special situations, like pregnancy, the influence of comorbidities, and management of side effects. I also had the opportunity to see some uncommon cases (such as MS in twins, and combined with autism et al). I also refreshed my skills in the neurological examination which was conducted somewhat different from my original training. I joined the weekly clinical discussion neuroscience meeting at the Royal London Hospital and occasionally at the Queen Square National Hospital. My clinical research project was devoted to developing a treatment with injectable cladribine at BartsMS. I had the opportunity to learn how to counsel patients in decision making, how to manage treatment in clinical practice, and how to switch disease-modifying therapies, which together enhanced my understanding of such a long-term disease. We will soon submit our research project which suggests that injectable cladribine may offer benefits for people with relapsing-remitting as well as more advanced stages of MS. Our personalised treatment protocol appears safe but warrants controlled studies to more definitively assess efficacy and safety, particularly in patients with progressive MS who are not eligible for licensed DMTs including oral cladribine (Mavenclad®). I'm grateful for the opportunity to work on this project. I had the opportunity to present our results in ABN 2017, MSParis2017, and AAN 2018. We also wrote a review, in which we proposed an off-label treatment with an injectable

cladribine induction treatment for MS in countries with a health care system that does not reimburse currently registered treatments. I also participated in Barts-Blog, which is one of the most popular Blogs in the field of MS. I also learned how to make an academic poster (Poster Presentation Workshop by Joanna Cordy) and how to assess the MS Functional Composite (a composite of 3 tests: the PASAT, 9-hole peg test and the timed 25-ft walk). My year in the UK will without doubt benefit my future career in China and I'd like to thank the great team at Barts andECTRIMS.

ECTRIMS-MAGNIMS FELLOWSHIP IN MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING IN MS



Fellow

Alessandro d'Ambrosio, MD

Research Topic

Relating functional connectivity to cognition in multiple sclerosis: from stationary to time-varying analysis of strategic large-scale networks

Fellowship Institution

Neuroimaging Research Unit, San Raffaele Hospital, Milan, Italy

Mentor

Professor Massimo Filippi

Fellowship Duration

1 year

Summary as ECTRIMS MAGNIMS Fellowship in Magnetic Resonance Imaging in MS Fellow 2016 - 2017

I have been actively involved in the MAGNIMS study focused on the assessment of dynamic functional connectivity, entitled: "Relating functional connectivity to cognition in multiple sclerosis: from stationary to time-varying analysis of strategic large-scale networks".

Our aim was to analyze resting state (RS) functional connectivity (FC) using static and dynamic methods to define the correlates of cognitive dysfunction in patients with multiple sclerosis (MS) in a multi-center setting.

For this purpose, a sample of 62 MS patients and 65 reference healthy controls were enrolled at seven European sites participating to the "Magnims-Cognition" project (VU University Medical Centre, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; CEM-Cat, Hospital Vall d'Hebron, Barcelona, Spain; Medical University Graz, Graz, Austria; Ospedale San Raffaele, Milan, Italy; University College London, London, UK; University Campania "L. Vanvitelli", Naples, Italy; University of Siena, Siena, Italy).

The results showed that dynamic FC analysis was able to detect the presence, in HC and MS patients, of 3 recurrent FC states: two states (State1 and State2) were characterized by strong inter-network connectivity, while one state (State3) was characterized by a weak inter-network connectivity. MS patients with cognitive impairment (CI) had a significantly lower dwell time in the high-connectivity State2 compared to HC and cognitively preserved (CP) MS patients. Interestingly, CI MS patients exhibited significantly lower dynamic fluidity, defined as less frequent switch between states, than CP MS patients and operated over a restricted dynamic range (less distance travelled through connectivity states).

ECTRIMS Job Platform

The ECTRIMS Job Platform on the ECTRIMS Website offers a great possibility to search for training, research and job opportunities in Multiple Sclerosis within Europe. The quickest way to find the right candidate in MS is to post a job advert on the ECTRIMS Job Platform.

Meeting Dates

RIMS Annual Conference

Amsterdam / Netherlands: 31 May – 2 June 2018

ECTRIMS Summer School 2018

Budapest / Hungary: 25 – 27 June 2018

ECTRIMS 2018

Berlin / Germany: 10 – 12 October 2018

ECTRIMS Regional Teaching Course 2018

Curitiba / Brazil: 2 – 3 November 2018

ECTRIMS 2019

Stockholm / Sweden: 11 – 13 September 2019

We are looking forward to seeing you in Berlin!



34TH CONGRESS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE FOR TREATMENT AND RESEARCH IN MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

ECTRIMS

10 – 12 OCTOBER
2018
BERLIN, GERMANY

The poster features a red background with white text and a white line-art illustration of the Berlin skyline at the bottom, including the Brandenburg Gate and the Reichstag dome.

Please be aware of fraudulent organisations!

WARNING

There are an increasing number of fraudulent websites that impersonate ECTRIMS2018. We would like to alert all participants to be aware of possible scams and to strongly advise you to only use the official ECTRIMS2018 registration and ECTRIMS accommodation agency Congrex Travel.

ECTRIMS Executive Committee

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