

## The President's Corner

Dear Friends of EFIC®!



I am writing this after returning from three exciting meetings. I was in New York at the 8<sup>th</sup> Congress of WIP, where 6 Presidents of national and international Pain Societies have just reaffirmed and signed the Declaration of Miami.

I then travelled to our excellent Societal Impact of Pain (SIP) meeting at the EU Parliament in Brussels, where over 200 participants (including over 20 MEPs) discussed four important issues (see report). The meeting was a great success; the scientific content of the meeting comes under the mantle of EFIC, organized, driven and delivered in a wonderful cooperation by Bart Morlion and Norbert van Rooij, together with Joop van Griensven (PAE) and Mariano Votta (ACN). Subsequently I attended the European Academy of Neurology meeting in Copenhagen at the Bella Sky Congress Center ([where we will hold our own meeting, "Bringing Pain Relief to all Patients", in September 2017](#)). This was a wonderful meeting, of 6000+ Neurologists, at a great congress venue, and the best news is that they are very eager to work with us to develop recognition of, and best practice for, management of neuropathic pain. Their President, Gunther Deuschl, and I signed a memorandum of understanding between the two societies to cooperate and work together.

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Contributors: Chris Wells, Luis Garcia-Larrea, Bettina Haake-Weber, Arun Bhaskar



made a Citizen of Honour last month by my home city of Liverpool, for my work in Pain Medicine, a very special tribute. I hope you all have a wonderful summer, and look forward to seeing some of you at the superb meeting we are holding in [Dubrovnik, September 21st-23rd, for the European Year against Pain in the Joints](#).

**With best wishes,**  
**Chris Wells**  
**President of the European Pain Federation EFIC**

Since the last newsletter, we have held two Executive Board meetings and are launching three new task forces. One is on CRPS, chaired by Andreas Goebel, one is on management of low back pain and sciatica chaired by Stephen Ward and the third is on cancer pain, chaired by Elon Eisenberg. All three will be evidence-based and will provide advice on best practice in assessment and treatment. If you have published on any of these topics, and are interested in becoming a task-force member, please do contact me with an expression of interest and a short CV or bio.

On a personal level, I was delighted to have been

## A Word from the Editor



**Dear readership,**

This edition of the Newsletter summarizes a very busy period for the European Federation EFIC; numerous national conferences, participating at the Societal Impact of Pain meeting and agreeing a memorandum of understanding between with the European Academy of Neurology.

Please continue to submit activities undertaken by your national Chapter!

**Bróna Fullen**  
**Editor European Pain Federation EFIC Newsletter**

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**European  
Journal of Pain**

**1st EFIC Topical  
Symposium**

**Pain in Europe X  
2017**

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## EFIC on Social Media

Are you following of the European Pain Federation EFIC on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube yet?

Join our community online and stay up-to-date on recent developments, grants and all other news related to the European Pain Federation EFIC as well as the pain research and pain medicine sector:

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## Register now for the 1<sup>st</sup> EFIC Topical Symposium 2016



The European Pain Federation, EFIC®, is proud to announce its **First Topical Seminar**, on the theme of Acute and Chronic Joint Pain. 2016 is the European and Global Year against Joint Pain, and we meet in Dubrovnik to consider the many recent developments in the understanding and treatment of joint diseases causing Pain and the overall management of such pain.

The **scientific program** is designed to meet the aims of EFIC®, which are “to advance the understanding of mechanisms, assessment, prevention and the treatment of pain»; it will consist of plenary sessions, workshops, seminars, free paper sessions and poster presentations. We will be holding the meeting in conjunction with other global and European groups to broaden the appeal of the meeting and to extend our message.

The Symposium will be an important milestone for clinical scientists and practicing health care workers from all disciplines. Together, we will further the management and treatment of patients with joint pain. The European Pain Federation, EFIC®, really looks forward to welcoming you to beautiful Dubrovnik and to a very successful meeting. **[REGISTER HERE!](#)**

### Future Arthritis Burden

With the ageing of the European Population, the prevalence of arthritis is expected to increase yearly. By the year 2030, an estimated one hundred and twenty million (25% of the projected total adult population) adults aged 18 years and older will have doctor-diagnosed arthritis. Two-thirds of those with arthritis will be women. Also by 2030, an estimated 60 million adults (37% of adults with arthritis) will report arthritis-attributable activity limitations. These estimates may be conservative, as they do not account for the current trends in obesity, which may contribute to future cases of osteoarthritis.

Topics covered in the Symposium will include animal models of joint pain, inflammatory hyperalgesia, epidemiology and assessment of joint pain, back pain and the new NICE guidelines, acute joint pain and its management including pre and postoperative pain treatment, and all aspects of treatment of chronic joint pain now and in the future.

## European Journal of Pain – News & Editor's Choice Articles

By Luis Garcia-Larrea and Bettina Haake-Weber



*A letter from EJP Editor-in-Chief Luis Garcia-Larrea*

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

After the outstanding work of my predecessor Prof Hermann Handwerker, taking over the direction of such as prestigious Journal as *The European Journal of Pain* –our *EJP*– is a pleasure and a challenge. A pleasure above all, since being able to transmit the best of clinical and basic research in our discipline through a European channel is a source of intense satisfaction. A challenge too, though, as we are all aware of the difficulties that 'classical' scientific journals are enduring nowadays, not only due to the multiplicity of parallel and uncontrolled channels of information, but also –and I should say especially– because of the increasing pressure from 'predator' pay-for-publish journals more interested in the authors' money than in the authors' scientific ideas.

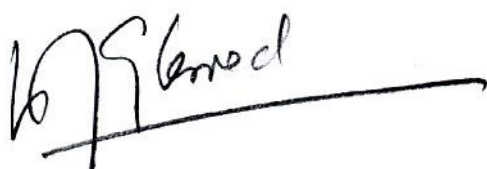
And this is the difference. When you read a paper from EJP you can be certain that it has been thoroughly scrutinised by one Section Editor and at least two external reviewers, to ensure that contents are reliable and useful. To be convinced that EJP papers' contents do cover all essential fields in our discipline, just browse contents via [PubMed](#) or via the [Journal's webpage](#) from our publisher Wiley. All is there.

As you probably know, as members of a National Pain Society affiliated to EFIC (and otherwise you would not be reading this newsletter) you are *granted free access* to the full text of any EJP paper. Admittedly, the process from the PubMed abstract to the full pdf is not yet that straightforward, but EFIC and Wiley's technicals are working hard to improve this. And in each EFIC Newsletter you will find a step-by-step outline of the procedure, prepared by our Managing Editor Dr. Bettina Haake-Weber.

As active members of the Pain community, you can contribute to EJP in many ways. Of course by disseminating the knowledge acquired through our Journal. And for those of you who are active researchers in the pain field, by selecting EJP as an outlet for the best of your basic or clinical work: you can be certain that your manuscript will be processed fairly and promptly (23 days in average to first editorial decision) and that you will receive useful feedback –including in case of rejection. And do not forget to *cite* EJP papers in your work, wherever you publish it: this significantly enhances the visibility of our Journal to other researchers who have not the privilege of being members of EFIC!

I will be of course happy to know your personal thoughts on any matter related to EJP.

With all best wishes



Luis Garcia-Larrea, MD, PhD  
Editor-in-Chief, European Journal of Pain (EJP)






*Get your free access to the EJP!*

- You come across an EJP-article in e.g. MedLine and want the full article?
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You have a free subscription to EJP as:

- a member of your local national Pain Society (EFIC chapter)
- as participant of the EFIC Congress in Vienna 2015 (free until 01/01/2018)

**Starting from MedLine take the following steps:**

1. Go to **"Full text Links"**   in the upper right corner of the MedLine-page.
2. You will be guided directly to the article on the journal's homepage.
3.  or  : the article is available for free
4.  You will now need to register at EFIC for your free access to the EJP content before you can download the full article.
5. There is no direct link to the EFIC website from where you are.
6. Open the Journal Information on the **EFIC website** in a new window:  
<http://www.efic.org/index.asp?sub=A46FDAE5I3G22G>
7. OR open the EFIC website in a new window: [www.efic.org](http://www.efic.org)
8. OR open the link given on the left side of the page "Society Information" and choose "visit EFIC website" in a new window.

On the EFIC website, go to "Publications" in the upper right corner and choose "European Journal of Pain".

1. Scroll down the page to "Subscription to the EJP" and choose your registration form.
2. Follow the instructions and fill out the register form and go to "register".
3. Please note that you will need to activate your account after receiving an e-mail with the login details.
4. Go back to your article, go to "login" in the upper right corner and log onto the journal.
5. Choose the PDF or the Enhanced HTML Article.

**In addition, the journal provides free content for everybody:**

- three Editors' Choice articles per issue
- virtual issues on different topics
- the 10 Top Downloaded Papers 2015

*European Journal of Pain App*

We are excited to announce that the new journal app for EJP has been finished and is now live in the Apple and Android App store. The app is also be free to download, making it easier for EJP readers to access the Journal wherever they are. The app can be found here:

Apple store (iOS):

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/european-journal-of-pain/id1068447414?ls=1&mt=8>

Google Play store (Android):

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.wiley.jas.ejp>

The new EJP app will give users an entirely new browsing and reading experience, providing immediate and convenient access to articles anytime, anywhere. The app is free to download and the publisher, Wiley-Blackwell, welcomes feedback! If you have ideas for new features, or want to give us feedback on the app, please visit the Ideas Portal: <https://wileyapps.ideas.aha.io/ideas/new>



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*EJP Editor's Choice articles July 2016*

Are you a subscriber of the European Journal of Pain?

If not, you can still download the Editor's Choice articles for free on the **EJP website** at [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/\(ISSN\)1532-2149/homepage/custom\\_copy.htm](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/(ISSN)1532-2149/homepage/custom_copy.htm).

Please read on to find out which articles are featured in this section in July 2016:

### **"Review: Neuropathic low back pain in clinical practice"**

*by Baron, R., Binder, A., Attal, N., Casale, R., Dickenson, A.H. and Treede, R.-D., (pages 863-871), DOI: 10.1002/ejp.838*

What does this review add?

- Increased recognition and improved understanding of the neuropathic component of low back pain raises the potential for the development of mechanism-based therapies.
- Open and retrospective studies suggest that agents like tapentadol and topical analgesics - such as the capsaicin 8% patch and the lidocaine 5% medicated plaster- may be effective options for the treatment of neuropathic low back pain in defined patient groups.

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### **"Transdermal Cannabidiol Reduces Inflammation and Pain-related Behaviors in a Rat Model of Arthritis"**

*by Hammell, D.C., Zhang, L.P., Ma, F., Abshire, S.M., McIlwrath, S.L., Stinchcomb, A.L. and Westlund, K.N., (pages 936-948), DOI: 10.1002/ejp.818*

What does this study add?

- Transdermal cannabidiol (CBD) gel application has therapeutic potential for relief of arthritic pain-related behaviours and exerts an anti-inflammation property without evident high brain centre psychoactive effects.

### **"Robot-guided neuronavigated rTMS as an alternative therapy for central (neuropathic) pain: Clinical experience and long-term follow-up"**

*by Pommier, B., Créac'h, C., Beauvieux, V., Nuti, C., Vassal, F. and Peyron, R., (pages 907-916), DOI: 10.1002/ejp.815*

What does this study add?

Based on the clinical experience of long-term treatment, rTMS over primary motor cortex could be a possible therapy for pain relief in patients with neuropathic pain, after a failure of medications

You can access all Editors' Choice articles from past issues for free via the journal's [website](#).

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## Memorandum of Understanding between European Pain Federation EFIC and European Academy of Neurology



### Memorandum of Understanding between

### **European Pain Federation (EFIC)**

Grensstraat 7, mailbox 3, 1831 Diegem, Belgium (hereinafter referred to as "EFIC")

and

### **European Academy of Neurology (EAN), EAN Head Office,**

Breite Gasse 4/7, 1070 Vienna, Austria (hereinafter referred to as "EAN")

EFIC and EAN are also referred to as the parties.

Both parties agree on the following principles as the foundation of their cooperation:

1. The principle goal is to strengthen the collaboration between EFIC and EAN.
2. The parties will continue to operate as independent organizations and being governed by independent committees.
3. Promoting EFIC and EAN as leading societies for neurologists and pain management in Europe and to promote optimal pain management for neurological patients in Europe.

4. Improving availability and quality of educational and scientific endeavors, attracting and growing talent/intellec[t]s to enrich the knowledge of European neurologists and pain specialists.
5. Lobbying in Brussels for inclusion of pain management in the neurological curriculum as well as lobbying for research.
6. The key areas of collaboration to deliver these goals are:
  - a. Annual Scientific Congresses:
    - i. Possibility to provide a joint session at each other's congresses.
    - ii. Booth: Both parties will receive exhibition space (2x3m) free-of-charge at the respective congresses.
    - iii. Advert in final Congress programmes: Each party will receive one full-page advert in the final programme of each other's yearly congress free-of-charge.
    - iv. Banner on Congress / Society website: Each party will receive a slide banner on a prime location of the respective websites free-of-charge.
  - b. Best practice guidelines: Joint cooperation with the EAN Scientific Panel "pain" and the writing of joint guidelines
  - c. Enhancing Education: Both parties will support education by offering / hosting schools, teaching courses and visiting doctor exchanges within the rules of each society.
  - d. Liaison: Encouraging and facilitating links with other relevant societies.
7. EAN will include EFIC in any collaboration with other partners concerning pain management and both parties will keep each other informed on related multinational initiatives.
8. This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective upon having been signed by both parties and will remain in force until cancelled in writing by either of the parties. Amendments and modifications to this Memorandum of Understanding are only valid if made in writing and signed by both parties.

## EFIC-IBSA Foundation-EJP Publication Award 2015



*Sponsored by IBSA Foundation for Scientific Research, Switzerland*

Two prizes of € 2,500 will be awarded to first authors of an excellent original article in the areas of Pain Research or Pain Medicine published in the European Journal of Pain in 2015.

### Eligibility

- To be awarded the prize, the first author of the publication should work in a non-commercial institution (university, public research institute, hospital, etc.) in the area of pain research or pain medicine.
- The paper must be published (in press or online) in the European Journal of Pain in 2015.
- Professional affiliation must be a European country.
- Section Editors of the European Journal of Pain can nominate a maximum of two papers each.

### Evaluation



The jury is the EFIC® Committee on Scientific Research as of 2015. Each member will evaluate all the proposed manuscripts, excepting the papers with conflict of interest. The final decision will be taken by the Committee on Scientific Research, on the basis of the highest mean total score summed up of 4 subscores (0-1-2) as follows: novelty, quality of plan, structure of the paper, quality/impact of the findings. The successful candidate will be notified by the end of July 2016.

### Application details

- Nominations proposed by the Editorial Board of the European Journal of Pain should be submitted by the Chief-Editor by 30th April 2016 via email to Christel Geevels ([secretary@efic.org](mailto:secretary@efic.org)).
- The award winners are expected to follow the invitation for the cocktail reception and to attend the Awarding Ceremony during the Opening of the 2016 EFIC® Symposium in Dubrovnik.
- The award can be split between equally contributing first authors, but only one of the authors is invited to the Awarding Ceremony in Dubrovnik 2016.
- Travel costs of up to € 750, - and one-night accommodation will be covered for the award winners by EFIC.

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## News from our Chapters



### News from the Kosovo Pain Society

On 29 April 2016, PHA has organized a "Workshop for pain in joints" in Prishtina, which was held under the EFIC and IASP campaign "2016 Global Year Against Pain in the Joints". The workshop was organized by PHA in cooperation with the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kosovo, the Patients' Rights Association in Kosovo - PRAK, as well as Liv Hospital Clinic from Istanbul.

The meeting was attended by experts from Kosovo, Turkey and Albania. Over 30 participants were present. During the workshop, 8 lectures from different medical experts for pain management took place, where the main focus was the orientation towards the creation of the guidelines and protocols of pain, which is absent to us in Kosovo. The lectures were followed by a discussion and the decision to establish a 'National Task Force for the Pain Management', which will take care of:

- The establishment of guidelines and protocols for pain management,
- the creation of curricula for the subject "The pain and its management" at the Faculty of Medicine and in medical schools,
- the creation of curricula for sub-specializations in pain management,
- the fact that acute and chronic pain should be evaluated by health care professionals and documented in official lists at clinics, hospitals and family health centers,
- the opening of ambulances for the treatment of chronic pain through health centers, and
- the publication of a scientific journal for pain.

At the end of the workshop it was decided that the task force created is going to meet every 2 months to assess the activities towards achievements the objectives of the issue in this workshop. The workshop was accredited by the Board for Professional Continuing Education of the Ministry of Health in Kosovo with 10 credits for lecturers and 8 credits for participants.

## Societal Impact of Pain Symposium 2016: Actions started!

Under the motto 'Time for Action', over 220 representatives of health care- and stakeholder- organisations from more than 28 countries met in the European Parliament and Concert Noble in Brussels to discuss the "Societal Impact of Pain" (SIP 2016). Over 300 international and national pain advocacy groups, scientific organisations and authorities have endorsed the scientific aims of previous SIP symposia and meetings. The objectives of this year's SIP Symposium have been endorsed by over 160 pain advocacy and scientific organisations.

Taking place under the high patronage of the Italian Ministry of Health, SIP 2016 focused on areas of EU policy that affect pain care and aimed to have a lasting political impact, with conclusions to be enshrined in the EU policy-making process through their inclusion in a European Parliament Resolution. To underline this ambition SIP 2016 was supported by an impressive group of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs): Heinz K. Becker, Clara Eugenia Aguilera García, Soledad Cabezón Ruiz, Nicola Caputo, Therese Comodini Cachia, Miriam Dalli, Theresa Griffin, Françoise Grossetête, José Inácio Faria, Takis Hadjigeorgiou, Marian Harkin, Agnes Jongerius, Merja Kyllönen, Giovanni La Via, Jeroen Lenaers, Roberta Metsola, Piernicola Pedicini, Sirpa Pietikäinen, Sabine Verheyen and Alfred Sant.



Vocalizing the broad range of support Austrian MEP Heinz K. Becker stated: "I fully support the Societal Impact of Pain platform. Our strategy on active ageing in Europe has to take into account the impact that untreated pain can have on the quality of life of elders as well as their age of retirement and inactivity. Together with SIP I want to raise awareness of the impact of pain and identify policies at European level to improve pain care."



Chris Wells, President of The European Pain Federation (EFIC) declared: "SIP 2016 is a great leap forward for our work in finding policy solutions for better pain care in Europe. Working with European patients' groups, MEPs and Commission officials brings us in to the heart of the EU political process".

The SIP 2016 symposium brought together representatives of the European institutes, policy makers, pain specialists, scientific researchers, patient representatives and other stakeholders to discuss four key issues related to the societal impact of pain in four workshops that delved into four critical issues related to pain:

**Pain as a quality indicator for health care:** The lack of clear indicators to measure pain effectively across Europe, which are crucial to granting access to cross-border health care and evaluating organisational improvement in pain management.

**Chronic Pain: a disease or symptom?:** The failure of many doctors and policy-makers in recognising that in some cases, chronic pain can be seen as a disease in its own right, rather than as a symptom of another illness. This is very important in establishing effective pain management plans.

**The relevance of pain in cancer care and rehabilitation:** Pain occurs in more than 70% of patients with cancer and effective pain management should be an integral part of cancer treatment and palliative care.

**Pain, rehabilitation and reintegration of workers in the workforce:** Pain prevalence is associated with reduced workforce participation and increased direct and indirect costs on society, yet effective treatment can help people reintegrate into the workforce if they so choose.

The lack of clear indicators to measure pain effectively across Europe is of particular interest in the context of the Cross-border Healthcare Directive ratified in 2011. This piece of EU legislation has defined, inter alia, under which conditions European citizens can claim the right to seek treatment in another EU Member State and be refunded by his or her own country's national health service or other relevant bodies. Severe pain is among the criteria that can trigger authorization of cross-border healthcare. However, a SIP survey conducted by EFIC, PAE, ACN and Grünenthal, has shown that most EU Member States are not implementing this provision on their national regulations.



"Unfortunately, we do not see much progress on this particular aspect of the Directive", says Prof Morlion. "This is all the more regrettable as we do have very reliable pain assessment tools available which would permit exactly this kind of judgement." In the transposition process of Directive 2011/24 at national level, only France, Ireland, Italy and Slovenia have formally recognized the importance of the assessment of the degree of patient's pain as stated in Article 8(5), setting the benchmark on the implementation of the cross-border healthcare directive. Based on these data Bart Morlion added: "It has been five years and still we see no progress on one of the most crucial parts of this Directive. If no measurement of pain takes place, then how can we really understand whether a patient deserves access to treatment in another member state? Pain specialists have a number of tools to measure the extent to which patients are experiencing pain and really this should become routine."

In reaction Marian Harkin MEP (Ireland) stated: "It is time for the Commission to act. Member States have been very slow to properly implement the Cross Border Healthcare Directive. The National Contact Points must provide information to enable patients to make informed choices and doctors must be given the tools to assess the degree of pain being experienced by patients. Furthermore, medical professionals need to be more proactive in ensuring their patients can exercise their rights to cross border healthcare, where appropriate."

### **"Pain should be prioritized in the EU Health Programme" – Strengthen prevention and optimise pain training**



"The prevalence of chronic pain, its societal and economic impact, and the clear deficiencies in pain care should be a wake-up call to policy makers" says Prof Morlion. In autumn 2016, the European Commission is due to conduct the mid-term review of the current Health Programme 2014-2020, and to launch consultation on this topic. "This would be a good opportunity to indicate to the Commission that chronic pain needs to be prioritized in the future", says the EFIC President Elect Bart Morlion. "We also need a much stronger focus on primary and secondary prevention. Right now, we are spending 97 percent of the considerable healthcare budgets in Europe on curative medicine, and only a meagre three percent for prevention. This is all the more worrying since it is most obvious how much chronic pain could be avoided by primary prevention efforts, in particular with respect to musculoskeletal pain, and by structured secondary prevention for persons at risk for pain chronification."

EFIC President Chris Wells concurred that "one of EFIC's main goals is to improve pain management in Europe at all levels. This includes, to a large extent, harmonising and optimising training and education in pain medicine around the continent. We have therefore developed a European Curriculum and Multidisciplinary Diploma which will be recognised across Europe. The first exams will take place in 2017."

Under the scientific auspice of the European Pain Federation EFIC (EFIC®) and guided by SIP 2016 cooperation partners Pain Alliance Europe (PAE) and Active Citizenship Network (ACN), the faculty of each of the working groups produced specific policy recommendations addressing the societal impact of pain. Based on these recommendations, the organizing partners of the SIP platform formulated the following overall key recommendations addressing the Societal impact of Pain directed at the institutions of the European Union and national governments:

- 1. Implement Article 8.5 on the degree of patients' pain in the Cross-border Healthcare Directive**
- 2. Establish an EU platform on the societal impact of pain**
- 3. Integrate chronic pain within EU policies on chronic diseases**
- 4. Ensure that pain care is a part of policies and strategies on cancer**
- 5. Initiate policies addressing the impact of pain on employment**
- 6. Implement workplace adjustments for people with chronic pain**
- 7. Increase investment in pain research**
- 8. Prioritise pain within education for health care professionals, patients and the general public**

Giovanni La Via MEP, Chair of the European Parliament's Environment Public Health, and Food Safety Committee announced that he is working with a number of influential MEPs to launch a Written Declaration on chronic pain. The Written Declaration will call for, among other things, a reference network for centres of excellence in pain treatment. When discussing pain care on day one of the SIP symposium, Tapani Piha, Head of Unit for cross-border healthcare in DG SANTE, had said that European Reference Networks, due to be established by the European Commission this year, could one day focus on conditions for which expertise are rare. Giovanni La Via MEP was joined by 20 MEPs who strongly supported this year's symposium.

Following the success of this year's symposium, Alfred Sant MEP, former Prime Minister of Malta, confirmed that his government will invite SIP to host their 2017 symposium in Malta during the Maltese presidency of the Council of the European Union. Mr Sant stated: "Pain is a common element of numerous chronic diseases. The European Union and member states must act now on the urgent burden that it causes individually to patients and seek to make chronic pain relief an integral part of public health policies."



To get an impression about the great success of this event please watch the video trailer and read more about the event on the [SIP website](#).

## Next steps for EFIC

Together with the SIP partners PAE, ACN and Grünenthal, the EFIC board will develop a roll out plan for the scientific coordination by the EFIC councilors and IASP chapters of the discussion on the implementation of the policy recommendations on national level. The results of these discussions will form the base for SIP 2017. For this purpose the EFIC councilors will be contacted shortly. Words of thanks go to Norbert van Rooij to drive and deliver, and especially for his persisting contagious enthusiasm, Joop van Griensven (PAE) and Mariano Votta (ACN), together with all their colleagues, for the wise initiatives and support. Excellent personal relationships and trust between all partners were certainly one of the key elements to success. And last but not least, we would like to thank the pharmaceutical company Grünenthal as our partner within the SIP platform to enable EFIC and its partners to arrange and fund this important initiative.



## Meetings: Past and Future

By Arun Bhaskar



### Past Meetings

Time flies and suddenly we are nearing the halfway mark in 2016 and I hope this finds you all well. The weather in the UK, and indeed most of Europe, has been quite mild after a brief snow shower in March and it has been enjoyable so far. There had been several meetings in the spring and I have met some of you at various meetings and as always it was great to catch up on things. The schools have closed for the mid-term holidays and it is only a matter of few weeks after a brief term, the summer break would be upon us soon.

Let me start with something close to home and closer to the heart to me; it was also the first meeting I attended chronologically. The 2016 Annual Scientific Meeting of the British Pain Society was held at the Harrogate International Centre in the famous town of Harrogate in Yorkshire on 10-12 May 2016. The town was in full bloom and provided a wonderful ambience to the meeting. More than five hundred delegates involving the multidisciplinary composition of the British Pain Society attended the meeting. The meeting started with a wonderful plenary dedicated to Prof Pat Wall and was delivered by Prof Stephen Hunt from University College London. Prof Hunt challenged



and debated on the concept of the Gate Control Theory in view of the discovery of newer molecules and application of existing treatments for new indications. Prof Hunt cited the examples of anti-nerve growth factor antibodies in osteoarthritis and the use of Botulinum toxin A for treating migraine and neuropathic pain. Prof Hunt also discussed the issue of the use of opioids in chronic non-malignant pain and the emergence of opioid analgesic dependency in chronic pain patients, which is a serious problem in the USA. I found it interesting when it was presented that the scientific data do somehow support the view that opioids in chronic pain patients do not contribute to addiction, but there are numerous clinical and epidemiological data that supports the converse of this statement. There were also plenaries on CRPS (Prof Frank Birklein), Pain and dementia (Prof Peter Passmore), update on Neuromodulation (Prof Eric Buchser), the role of CNS in chronic musculoskeletal pain (Prof Eva Kosek), Post-op pain (Prof Winfried Meissner) and managing patients with painful joints (Dr Gooberman-Hill). Dr Katja Wiech gave a wonderful plenary on the evidence supported by neuroimaging on brain mechanisms underlying expectancy-related modulations of pain including placebo response and how this can be harnessed for therapeutic benefit. In my opinion, Dr Brock Bastian delivered one of the best plenaries on the positive consequences on experiencing pain including the perception of pain as a form of justice and also the capacity of pain to enhance senses and subsequent pleasure. He also presented studies that demonstrated how sharing painful experiences could bring a sense of bonding and cooperation amongst people.





There were several parallel sessions covering the length and breadth of the specialty of pain medicine under the umbrella of the various special interest groups. One of sessions discussed a multidisciplinary approach to managing pain in patients with sickle cell disease. There were also interesting sessions on opioid-induced immunomodulation, chronic arthritis pain, pain after joint arthroplasties. The debate on the draft guidelines on the management of back pain and radicular pain was delivered by Dr Chris Wells and Prof David Walsh, both of whom were on the guidance development group; this generated a great amount of discussion within the hall and afterwards. Another session where there was considerable interest was in the topical discussion on cervical spinal injections. There were an excellent variety of posters and seventeen of them were invited to deliver them as oral presentations. The next British Pain Society ASM is the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary edition, the first to celebrate the Golden jubilee year in the world. The meeting is to be held at The ICC in Birmingham, England on 03-05 May 2017; details of that meeting will be published in the coming issues.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Belgrade International Symposium on Pain (BISOP) was held at the Crowne Plaza in Belgrade, Serbia on 13-14 May 2016 attracting more than four hundred delegates. Dr. Nebojsa Ladjecic and the Scientific Programme Committee had been consistently successful in putting together topics on comprising a rich mixture of evidence-based medicine and sharing of clinical experiences to support the development of pain management, both acute and chronic in Serbia and other Balkan states. It was great to see pain specialists from various neighboring countries come together to share ideas and participate in interesting debates in various workshops. Dr Andrzej Krol did hands on workshops on the use of ultrasonography in pain interventional procedures and also neuromodulation workshops by Drs Pataky and Stojkovic. There were several plenaries including one on the effect on chronic pain on cognition by Dr Carsten Bantel, opioid analgesic dependency by your truly and an interesting perspective on the rising trend in using medical marijuana in the USA and its aftermath by Dr Nebojsa Knezevic from the University of Illinois, USA. Dr Ladjecic always put together a wonderful social networking sessions where there was enthusiastic interaction between the delegates in very friendly surroundings overlooking the majestic Danube.

The 8<sup>th</sup> World Congress of the World Institute of Pain (WIP) was held on 20-23 May 2016, at the midtown Hilton NYC, on the Avenue of the Americas, New York, USA. The meeting was attended by nearly 1800 delegates and the Scientific Programme Committee under Prof James Rathmell and Prof Clifford Woolf had put together a great programme for this meeting. The meeting started with the reiteration of the Miami declaration and Dr Chris Wells represented the European Pain Federation and Prof Giustino Varassi was also present. The opening ceremony on the evening of the 20<sup>th</sup> of May was quite emotional with Prof Gabor Racz reminiscing about his recently deceased colleagues Prof Raj as well as Prof Heavner who sadly lost his fight to cancer a couple of days prior to the meeting. During the day there were several lectures updating on various topics related to pain medicine. There were several interesting plenary sessions with lectures from Prof Clifford Woolf, Prof Irene Tracey and Prof Rolf-Detlef Treede under the theme of "Advancing the Science of Pain Medicine" and on Clinical Trial Designs by Prof Robert Dworkin, Prof Nathaniel Katz and Prof Richard Rauck. Other plenaries included talks by Dr Adnan Al-Kaisy, Dr Leo Kapural and Dr Frank Huygen on neuromodulation and on chronic post-operative pain prediction by Prof Elon Eisenberg.

Multiple sessions focused on the Basic research in molecular and cellular biology, pharmacology and animal models in pain; there were also clinical sessions covering all aspects of pain medicine including neuropathic pain, musculoskeletal pain, visceral pain and cancer pain. Dr Michael Gofeld and WAPMU organized hands-on ultrasound workshops and there were sessions looking at the latest advances in technology in the management of chronic pain. There were specialised hands-on cadaver workshops and there were 20 candidates to take the FIPP examination and another 10 candidates to take the CIPS examination. One of the highlights of the meeting was to have a "New York experience" at the networking session, which was held at the restaurant near Times Square owned by Guy Fieri, who presents the ever popular programme Diners, Drive-ins and Dives.

## Future Meetings

After the summer holidays there are several meetings coming up in September and October and I am attaching the details of some of these meetings below.

I had mentioned in the previous issues that the 16<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Pain to be held at the Pacifico Convention Center in Yokohama, Japan on 26-30 September 2016 under the auspices of the IASP and is the biggest event in the pain calendar for 2016. Prof. Claudia Somner and the Scientific Programme Committee have put together fifteen plenary sessions and seventy topical workshops – there is no better way to update yourselves with the cutting edge research that is happening in the field of pain medicine all around the globe. Japan with its rich cultural heritage and mysticism is always a wonderful experience and I am looking forward to the trip there. I am hoping to see many of you there; as you may be aware the flight process are going up and I would advice you to book your tickets soon. The details of the meeting can be obtained from the link below.

<http://www.iasp-pain.org/Yokohama16/>

The First EFIC Topical Seminar is to be held in Dubrovnik, Croatia, one of the beautiful parts of the world, from September 21-23, 2016. The theme for European Year Against Pain for 2016 is joint pain and the programme reflects the recent developments in managing back pain and radicular pain as well as musculoskeletal medicine. Dr. Chris Wells and Prof. Serge Perrot, the co-chairs for this meeting, have put together a scientific programme that covers all aspects of joint pain and its management. There would be considerable debate on how the paradigm is changing in the management of musculoskeletal pain and back pain and it would be a shame to miss out on this. The details of the meeting can be obtained from the link given below.

<http://www.efic-topicalsymposium2016.org>

The Royal College of Anaesthetists Faculty of Pain Medicine Study day on "*Musculoskeletal System Examination for Diagnosing Pain Problems*" is being held at the Royal College of Anaesthetists in Churchill House, London on 15 June 2016. The organisers, Drs S Gupta, M Tewani and S Balasubramanian have put together a programme that emphasizes the practical aspects of the spine and peripheral joints. This would be a good event for anyone who is embarking on a career in pain medicine or rheumatology. The details of the meeting can be obtained from the link given below.

<https://rcoa.ac.uk/education-and-events/fpm-musculoskeletal-system-examination-diagnosing-pain-problems>

Improving Outcomes in Opioid Dependence (IOTOD 2016) is being held in Bristol, UK on 21-23 June 2016. This unique meeting brings together around 400 experts in the field of addiction medicine and psychiatry looking at optimising care for ageing patients, preventing drug overdose and managing different addictions, dependence and substance abuse. Prof. Sharon Walsh and Prof. John Marsden, co-chairs of the meeting and the scientific committee have put together a varied programme and there are dedicated sessions looking at opioid usage and management of opioid abuse and opioid analgesic dependence. The details of the meeting can be obtained from the link below.

<http://www.iotodmeeting.com/iotod-2016/welcome>

The Spinal Intervention Society 2016 European Congress will be held on 21-23 October at the Sheraton Lisbon Hotel & Spa in Lisbon, Portugal. Dr Tim Maus and colleagues are putting together a great programme and I would be posting more details of this meeting in the next issue. The details of the meeting can be obtained from the link below.

<http://www.spinalinjection.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=683283&group=>

The Neuromodulation Society of UK and Ireland (NSUKI) ASM is to be held on 03-04 November 2017 at the Manchester's historic Town hall, Manchester. This is one of the largest neuromodulation scientific meetings after the INS meeting and NANS and is rapidly growing in popularity after last years combined meeting with the German and Swiss neuromodulation societies. This year NSUKI is joining up with the neuropathic pain

SIG of the British Pain Society and an exciting programme is being planned; I shall give you the details in the next issue. I would like to extend a personal invitation on behalf of NSUKI and its President, Mr Roger Strachan. The details of the meeting can be obtained from the link below.

<http://www.nsukiasm2016.com>

Finally, I have to mention about the annual winter symposium; the London Pain Forum is organizing the 5<sup>th</sup> Winter Symposium on "Advances in Pain Medicine" 15-20 January 2017 in Tignes, France. If you are up for some stimulating talks and interesting debates in the morning and evenings interspersed with some fun, be it traversing the pistes or enjoying the fresh powder whilst taking in the Alpine surroundings in winter, give a thought. This meeting also attracts 16 European CME points. I shall post more details in the next edition. The details of the meeting can be obtained from the link below.

<http://www.winterpainsymposium.com>

There are several meetings happening in September and October as mentioned above and I hope that you would be attending most of these meeting; I look forward to see you there. But before that, let me wish all of you a summer filled with sunshine and happiness and enjoyment during the well-earned summer break to spend time with your family and friends.



The European Pain Federation is also pleased to endorse this meeting of our partner, [SIS](#):

**Current Trends in Spine Interventions**  
**21-23 October 2016**  
**Sheraton Lisboa Hotel & Spa**  
**Lisbon, Portugal**

The 2016 European Congress features:

- 12.25 CME credits offered during the General Session
- 1 1/2 day agenda (full day Saturday and half day Sunday)
- Friday Welcome Reception with exhibitors
- Research Presentations

Find out [more on the scientific program](#) and [how to register](#) for the congress on their website.

How did you enjoy the EFIC Newsletter 02/2016? Let us know at [newsletter@efic.org](mailto:newsletter@efic.org). We look forward to receiving your feedback on this issue.

The next EFIC Newsletter will be published in September 2016. The deadline for contributions is September 2, 2016. All contributions must be emailed to Brona Fullen at [brona.fullen@ucd.ie](mailto:brona.fullen@ucd.ie).

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# 1<sup>st</sup> EFIC Topical Symposium

Acute and Chronic Joint Pain

**SAVE THE DATE**

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**First Announcement**



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