

Kaj Blennow's pioneering research into Alzheimer's disease recognised by the 2010 ECNP Neuropsychopharmacology Award

The **European College of Neuropsychopharmacology** (ECNP) is pleased to announce Kaj Blennow as the recipient of the 2010 **ECNP Neuropsychopharmacology Award** in recognition of his original and influential contributions to Alzheimer's disease research. The ECNP Neuropsychopharmacology Award is presented annually and recognises distinguished research in neuropsychopharmacology and closely related disciplines. The award is accompanied by a prize of € 20,000.

Kaj Blennow, Professor in Clinical Neurochemistry at the University of Gothenburg and Senior Consultant at the Neurochemical Laboratory of Sahlgrenska University Hospital, Gothenburg, Sweden, is one of the world's leading researchers in **Alzheimer's disease**. His work has focused on the development of laboratory measures for clinical diagnosis and therapy monitoring in Alzheimer's disease, with significant implications for both drug development and patient care.

"In the field of brain disorders, the development of good biomarkers can enhance the possibilities for early diagnostics and the measurement of treatment effects" Blennow said at the **23rd ECNP Congress** in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. "In the future this could enable clinicians to diagnose and treat Alzheimer's disease before the person experiences any symptoms."

The scope of Blennow's research is extensive. In Alzheimer's disease, as well as biomarkers, it has embraced genetic mechanisms, neurochemical pathogenesis and neurotransmitter disturbances. He has also extended his neurochemical innovations into other fields of neuropsychopharmacology, such as schizophrenia and depression. "*We clearly need new drug targets and innovative leads for novel therapies,*" Blennow commented on the recent closure of neuroscience labs of major pharmaceutical companies in Europe. "*The basis for modern drug development, which has a strong tradition in Europe for more than 50 years improving the quality of life of people struck by brain disorders, has to be kept alive.*"

By 2040 the incidence of Alzheimer's disease is expected to double in Western Europe and triple in Eastern Europe, as Europe's population ages. Speaking on behalf of the ECNP 2010 Award Jury, Guy Goodwin of the University of Oxford, United Kingdom, said, "*Kaj Blennow's contributions to addressing this growing public health challenge have been outstanding. We are delighted to be able to present him with this award.*"

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ECNP is an independent scientific association established in 1987 to promote the translation of ground-breaking science discoveries into improved pharmacological treatments for mental disorders and enhanced public health. The 23rd ECNP Congress 2010 in Amsterdam, in which more than 7,000 registered participants from across the world met to discuss the latest advances in brain research, marks ECNP's ongoing commitment to alleviating the burden and suffering associated with mental disorders.

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