European College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ECNP): To advance the science of the brain, promote better treatment and enhance brain health

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The human brain is the most complex organ of the human body, responsible for human behaviour, cognition and emotion. Neuropsychopharmacology, a trans-disciplinary field of science, is of core relevance for understanding how the human brain works and how disorders of the brain develop and how they can be prevented and treated. Neuropsychopharmacology provides a range of crucial theories, methods, and approaches to answer the critically important questions regarding the causes, the treatment, and the prevention of brain disorders such as schizophrenia, dementia, bipolar disorder, depression, anxiety disorders and Parkinson’s disease.

Disorders of the brain are the core challenge of the 21st century. Over the life course almost 50% of the EU population will be affected by one or more disorders of the brain, that rank overall as the most significant contributor to the overall disease burden in Europe. As a trans-disciplinary, comprehensive, scientific field, neuropsychopharmacology brings together basic and clinical science in a unique and stimulating cross-talk of neuroscience disciplines, such as pharmacology, psychiatry, neurology and psychology. By elucidating the biochemical basis and processes of human behaviour, cognition and emotion in general and of brain disorders in particular new insights and perspectives are opening up that can be translated into clinical progress and improved treatment and prevention.

The European College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ECNP) is an independent scientific association founded in 1987 by European scientists and clinicians working in neuropsychopharmacology and related disciplines to encourage innovative research across the neurosciences and to translate new knowledge on fundamental disease mechanisms into clinical applications. It is today Europe’s leading forum for the exchange and dissemination of interdisciplinary research on the brain and brain (dys-)function.

Focusing especially on co-ordinating scientific activities and standards between European countries, ECNP brings together neuroscience researchers and clinicians from all over the world. It is founder member of the European Brain Council (EBC) and the Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS), and a member of the International Union of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology (IUPHAR). As well as facilitating dialogue with scientific and decision-making bodies, such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the European Union (EU), ECNP also provides guidance and information to the general public on matters relevant to mental disorders and brain research.

To achieve its objectives, ECNP has established a number of activities and programmes designed to promote the communication and cross-fertilisation of research results and ideas in the field of neuroscience as well as to ensure highest standards in clinical practice:

ECNP Congress
The ECNP Congress is the largest annual meeting on neuropsychopharmacology and mental disorders in Europe, attended by more than 7,000 psychiatrists, neurologists, psychologists and neuroscience researchers from all over the world. The congress’s programme is of the highest scientific standard and brings together distinguished scientists, young researchers and clinicians to discuss the latest achievements and future perspectives in neuropsychopharmacology and related disciplines.

ECNP Regional Meetings, Seminars and Consultation Meetings
The ECNP biennial Regional Meetings (with 200–500 participants each), designed to stimulate the exchange of clinical and basic scientific information within different regions of Europe, and annual Seminars, designed to provide an interactive training course for future leading scientists in neuropsychopharmacology, are organised in regions where researchers and practitioners have less opportunity to attend international meetings. ECNP Consultation Meetings are designed to initiate fruitful cross-talk between scientists, regulators and industry on designated topics.
ECNP activities for young scientists

As an essential part of stimulating high-quality research, ECNP puts especial emphasis on the promotion of young scientists interested in pursuing careers in mental disorders and their treatments. ECNP therefore offers free or reduced registration fees as well as awards such as the ECNP Travel Award and Fellowship Award to enable young scientists to participate in ECNP Congresses. In addition, ECNP organises the annual Workshop on Neuropsychopharmacology for Young Scientists in Europe and Targeted Expert Meetings in order to promote the interaction of young European scientists with distinguished experts.

ECNP School of Neuropsychopharmacology

The ECNP School of Neuropsychopharmacology, established in 2009, aims to ensure highest standards in clinical neuropsychopharmacology by giving qualified junior psychiatrists high-level training and involving them in the development of local good practice in teaching and training. A maximum of 50 young clinicians recommended by the ECNP Advisory Board of National Societies are accepted annually. The ECNP School of Neuropsychopharmacology takes place once a year in Oxford, United Kingdom.

Publications

The scientific journal of ECNP, European Neuropsychopharmacology (ENP), publishes cutting-edge findings from basic and clinical research. In addition to ENP, ECNP publishes on a regular basis Consensus papers, Targeted Expert Meeting (TEM) review papers, and newsletters in print (ECNP Matters) and online, which disseminate the contents of the ECNP’s congresses, meetings and other activities.

Webcasts

Recently ECNP has taken the initiative to record and publish lectures held at its congresses and meetings to enlarge the visibility and accessibility of neuropsychopharmacology to an interested audience.

Special Events

In view of the continuing globalisation of the pharmaceutical sector, ECNP is strengthening its efforts to promote common standards and secure a sustainable future for European neuroscience. Therefore, ECNP, in conjunction with the EMA and EU, has organised the 1st ECNP Summit on the future of CNS drug research in Europe in March 2011 in France with the objective to discuss with related scientific organisations, patients groups and the pharmaceutical industry current and future challenges and to develop possible solutions.

http://www.ecnp.eu

Notes for editors

Please note that participation in the 24th ECNP congress in Paris, 3–7 September 2011, is free of charge for journalists, but requires registration. You can register for the 24th ECNP Congress by submitting your registration form via http://www.ecnp.eu/emc.asp?pageId=1975

For further information about ECNP and its activities please visit the ECNP website: www.ecnp.eu