

## IN THE NEWS

## NEUROGASTRO 2015

At the NeuroGASTRO 2015 meeting in Istanbul, Turkey, neuroimmune crosstalk was a big topic under discussion. Hanne Vanheel presented work on the role of the enteric nervous system (ENS) in functional dyspepsia. Duodenal biopsies of patients with functional dyspepsia had dysfunctional neurons in the submucosal plexus. In addition, an increased number of eosinophils and mast cells infiltrated the submucosal layer and correlated with the amplitude of calcium transients (a measure of neuronal activity). Sabine Bühner presented on the crosstalk between mast cells and ENS nerves. She showed sequential calcium signalling in the mast and nerve cell, and implicated calcitonin gene-related peptide as the neurotransmitter involved.

The interdisciplinary nature of neurogastroenterology and motility research was also prominent at the conference. Interindividual variation in pain perception of gastrointestinal disease is known to involve differences in psychophysiological factors (personality, physical effects of the insult, for example acid reflux). Research is now underway into how to identify these differences and using a more holistic approach by combining drug, psychological (for example, cognitive behavioural therapy) and physical (for example, deep breathing exercises) treatment strategies.

*Nature Review Gastroenterology & Hepatology* also had the honour of supporting the nEUROgastro TANDEM Young Investigator Initiative. The idea behind the scheme is to strengthen ties and develop research collaborations between the basic and clinical neurogastroenterology and motility communities across Europe. “11 teams were generated with colleagues from 13 different countries currently working in different labs of 9 countries all over Europe, thereby truly reflecting the European future of neurogastroenterology and motility research,” remarks Miriam Goebel-Stengel, one of the organising committee.

The winning team project was ‘*The implication of nesfatin-1 in gastroparesis*’ from Chloé Melchior and Philip Prinz. The joint second place projects were ‘*Neoneurogenesis in colorectal cancer*’ from Emilie Duchalais and François Cossais, and ‘*Histamine receptors in IBS*’ from Daniela Ostertag and Annemie Deiteren. The nEUROgastro TANDEM organisers were Mira Wouters, Ihsan Ekin Demir, Andreas Stengel, Guillaume Gourcerol, Gemma Mazzuoli-Weber and Miriam Goebel-Stengel.

**Gillian Patman**