Mission Statement of the ICGP

The mission of the International College of Geriatric Psychoneuropharmacology is to further clinical care, research, and education in geriatric psychoneuropharmacology by fostering cross-fertilization of scientific knowledge among clinical and preclinical scientists from different related disciplines

Defining and articulating clinical methodologies necessary for the proper study and subsequent large-scale application of interventions to prevent and treat neuropsychiatric disorders

Periodically developing consensus-based interpretations of available scientific data in order to recommend scientific and regulatory policies regarding the application of interventions to improve the health and well-being of the aging individuals with neuropsychiatric disorders who are residing in many culturally distinct societies worldwide.

A Message from the Chairman

Dear colleague,

I would like to take the opportunity in the first Newsletter of the ICGP to welcome you to the College. As a member or associate of the ICGP, you belong to an elite group of clinicians and researchers dedicated to the advancement of neuropsychiatric care of older populations around the world. A key objective of the ICGP is to enhance communication among clinicians and researchers international-ly. While the ICGP has been in existence for over 12 years, the lack of a Newsletter has been a factor limiting this objective from being met fully. Now, thanks to the efforts of some junior members, led by Dr Ahmad Khundakar, this gap is being filled. My sincere thanks to Dr Khundakar for stepping forward to fill the key role of editor.

Of course, the newsletter can only be effective with contributions from all of you. Please endeavour to make it a living document that instructs, entertains and above all brings people together. It would be a fulfilment of everyone’s wish to see contributions from around the globe in the subsequent issues of the Newsletter. I suggest you bombard the editor with contributions from every corner. We are looking for ideas to increase the relevance of ICGP and improve its standing among the associations relating to neuropsychiatric disorders of the elderly.

I also look forward to seeing you in Pittsburgh for the XIII annual meeting of the ICGP. A wonderful program has been put together by the organising committee, ably by Dr Meryl Butters and her colleagues, and the hospitality of our Pittsburgh colleagues, under the leadership of Prof Chip Reynolds, is legendary.

Warm regards,

Perminder Sachdev
President, ICGP

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The History of the ICGP

The International College of Geriatric Psychoneuropharmacology (ICGP) was founded by Dilip Jeste (San Diego, CA, USA) and a core international, interdisciplinary group of geriatric psychiatrists, neurologists, psychologists and basic scientists who have remained dedicated to the organization. Several issues motivated the formation of the organization. First, the recognition that in both developing and developed countries, the population of elderly, as well as elderly suffering from neuropsychiatric disorders, is growing rapidly. Second, the programmatic gap between organizations focused on geriatric patients and organizations focused on geriatrics translational research was needed. These public health and programmatic issues highlight a compelling need for a forum to enhance communication among clinicians and scientists internationally to bring discoveries from “bench to bedside” (forward translation) as well as from “bedside to bench” (reverse translation).

In addition to the scientific aspects of the organization, the ICGP has benefited from the great spirit of mentorship in the geriatrics field to develop a Junior Investigator Awardees Program. Each year the ICGP support a group of early stage investigators internationally to attend the meeting and participate in a training workshop the day before the scientific meeting begins. Over the past decade, many of our travel awardees have become successful, independent investigators and have remained involved in the organization, serving as session and committee members and chairs for the annual meeting programs.

The ICGP’s priorities of scholarship and mentorship are exemplified by the past presidents, who are outstanding scientists and mentors. Following Dilip Jeste’s term as the first president, Charles Reynolds (Pittsburgh, PA, USA) was the second president. Shigeto Yamawaki (Hiroshima, JP) was the third president, who was followed by John O’Brien (Cambridge, UK). Gwenn Smith (Baltimore, MD, USA was the fifth president and Perminder Sachdev (Sydney, Australia) is the sixth and current president. Our past meetings have alternated between North American (Kona, San Juan, Pittsburgh, San Diego, Baltimore, Irvine) and locations outside of North America: Europe/Asia (Barcelona, Basel, Hiroshima, Sydney, Athens, Sevilla). Both junior and senior colleagues have commented consistently that the annual meeting provides a unique, collegial and intellectually stimulating environment that fostered the exchange of ideas and collaborations internationally.

On the tenth anniversary of the ICGP, we announced the organization’s affiliation with the International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry. The editors of the journal are Alistair Burns (Editor-in-Chief) and George Alexopoulos (North American Editor). The synergistic relationship between the ICGP and the IJGP has been an important opportunity to achieve the complementary objectives of the organization and the journal. The mission of the ICGP “to further clinical care, research, and education in geriatric psychoneuropharmacology” and the priority to enhance international, interdisciplinary communication overlaps with the objectives of the ICGP. We have translated the scientific sessions and productive discussions from our annual meetings into journal submissions. In particular, we encourage our junior colleagues to contribute to the journal and the organization. We encourage those interested in geriatric mental health to become involved in the ICGP and to continue to contribute to the ICGP.

Gwenn Smith, USA
The Institute for Ageing and Health (IAH), Newcastle University, was initially established in 1994 with the goal of promoting interdisciplinary research on the major causes of health and disability in later life, and has gained a world-class reputation for aging research. The IAH’s work in bringing together researchers from disparate backgrounds, from basic scientists through to a diverse range of clinical practitioners, has led to innovative research in the field of aging. This work has included pioneering major studies into health and aging in the oldest old population (the 85+ Study, directed by Professor Tom Kirkwood CBE), the etiology of mitochondrial diseases and systems biology of aging. Newcastle University selected aging as its first ‘Societal Challenge Theme’ and has instigated widespread political support for its ‘Changing Age’ campaign, which seeks to find new ways to solve some of the societal problems associated with increasing human longevity.

Brain research remains central to the success of the IAH, building on Newcastle’s world-class reputation in the field (see Table). The IAH has always maintained a close relationship with the ICGP, with several IAH research leaders (in particular Past-President and former IAH Professor, John O’Brien) vital in the development of the organization.

Alan Thomas, UK

The Newcastle Brain Tissue Resource (NBTR; formerly Newcastle Brain Bank) was established nearly 50 years ago and has led to significant advancements in the understanding of brain diseases, including Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease and depression. Comprising over 1,500 brains kindly donated by individuals with a variety of neurological and psychiatric disorders, and supported by a high degree of clinical information and highly-skilled technical staff, the NBTR remains one of the largest and well-respected brain depositories in Europe. Tissue acquired from the NBTR has led to pioneering discoveries in the fields of neurochemistry, such as the discovery of cholinergic deficit in Alzheimer’s disease by Professors Elaine and Robert Perry, and pathology, such as the inception of the internationally recognized criteria for the diagnosis of dementia with Lewy bodies led by Professor Ian McKeith. Building on such discoveries, the NBTR continues to provide a vital resource for research into the genetics, pathophysiology and nomenclature of brain disorders in late-life.

For further information about the Newcastle Brain Tissue Resource contact Debbie Lett (NBTR Manager) on +44 191 248 1231 or debbie.lett@ncl.ac.uk

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The Newcastle Brain Tissue Resource
Last year’s ICGP meeting took place in conjunction with the SEPG in Seville, Spain. Organizing and coordinating the event required considerable planning and dedication from the executive councils of both societies and the invaluable help from the respective presidents, Gwenn Smith and Raimundo Mateos. Considerable contributions were also made from other associated organizations, such as the Associação Portuguesa de Gerontopsiquiatria (APG), the Hellenic Psychogeriatric Association (HPA) and the International Psychogeriatrics Association (IPA); we extend our thanks for their assistance and participation. A total of 265 delegates registered for the meeting, with around 50% of participants travelling from abroad and thus mostly affiliated to the ICGP, with the rest comprised of Spanish participants, mainly belonging to the SEPG. We hope that we achieved our goals of providing a lively, interesting and informative event.

The central theme of the meeting was “The future of geriatric psychoneuropharmacology”, highlighting novel therapeutic interventions, molecular targets and cutting-edge methodologies. Amongst the highlights of the meeting was an outstanding President’s Plenary Session that offered the bidirectional exchange of basic and clinical science findings, which we hope may translate into improved clinical management of neuropsychiatric disorders. An international, interdisciplinary group of speakers, including Martha Bruce, Antonio Lobo, John O’Brien and Gwenn Smith, discussed on the future of geriatric psychoneuropharmacology based on their innovative work and leadership in the field.

The ICGP/SEPG Joint Session on “Neurocognitive and neuropsychiatric symptoms in the elderly: Advances in phenomenology and therapeutics”, co-chaired by G. Smith (USA) and L. Agüera (Spain) was extremely well received. We also had three important sessions emphasizing the interaction of other associated international organizations in our field. A joint session with the IPA and SEPG Presidents (JM Mintzer and R Mateos) and several representatives of other International societies associated to the IPA encouraged great participation and was of crucial importance in assessing the organization of geriatric psychiatry services worldwide. Another joint session with the Hellenic Psychogeriatric Association was devoted to the behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia. And a last, but not least important, joint session was held with the Portuguese Gerontopsychiatric Association on “Psychogeriatrics and Dementia in Spain and Portugal”.

Two important lectures were also given on “Neural mechanisms underlying motor and cognitive learning”, presented by JM Delgado, and on “The neuroscience of positive psychiatry”, by our founding President, Dilip Jeste, via video link.

A total of 10 ICGP parallel panel sessions were conducted, covering essential topics from a wide range of subjects from the treatment of neuropsychiatric disorders to disease pathology to the influence of nutrition on cognition and mood in late-life.

The Senior Award was presented to Dr Andrés Lozano (Toronto University, Canada), for his major contributions to the new Functional Neurosurgery, and especially to Deep Cerebral Stimulation. Junior Award recipients were also recognized for their outstanding work at an early stage of their career.

And finally we organized an evening cultural and gastronomic visit to the Alcázar of Sevilla, the old Islamic and Christian royal palace, a magnificent building from the XI Century, developed and transformed during the Renaissance.

We were really delighted by having been the guests of such an outstanding meeting. I believe this represents a significant milestone in the progress of the ICGP.

Ángel Morínigo, Spain
XIII ICGP Annual Meeting 2013 — Pittsburgh, USA

October 30th — November 2nd

This year’s ICGP Annual Meeting will take place at the University Club, University in Pittsburgh from October 30th to November 2nd 2013.

The meeting will commence with the Junior Investigator Training Day on Wednesday October 30th. An interesting and diverse program has been devised for recipients of the Junior Investigator Award by coordinators, Sebastian Köhler and Brent Forester, including talks by leaders in the field about career development and other useful tips and strategies. It will also allow the opportunity for the junior researchers to get to know the other award recipients and senior researchers.

The following day’s program will commence with the President’s Plenary Session entitled “The Exceptionally Old: Lessons for Healthy Ageing”, chaired by the new ICGP president, Perminder Sachdev. Professor Sachdev will summarize findings from international studies examining centenarians and emphasize the importance of studying this exceptional cohort of patients. Ingrid Skoog of Gothenburg University will continue the theme by examining cognitive decline and dementia in the 10th and 11th decades of life. Finally, Paolo Sebastiani of Boston University will outline the genetics of exceptional longevity.

There will be numerous symposia and parallel symposia throughout the meeting covering topics ranging from psychotic Alzheimer’s disease, to mapping brain networks relating to mood in late-life depression and anxiety, to possible novel treatment options for late-life psychiatric syndromes. There will also be a poster session, which will follow the formal presentation of the Senior and Junior Investigator awards.

The University Club was first established in downtown Pittsburgh 1890 as a meeting place for college graduates who enjoyed literature and the arts. In 1923 The University Club moved to a purpose-built classical-style limestone building designed by the architect Henry Hornbostel, which remained its home until November 2004, when the premises were purchased by the University of Pittsburgh. The renovation converted the University Club for use as a faculty club, banquet and conference facility, and for housing for families of hospital patients.

The University Club is situated in the heart of Oakland, a neighborhood with easy access to the major landmarks of Pittsburgh. Conference services include state-of-the-art AV capabilities, high-speed internet, business center service, and flexible meeting spaces for small or large sessions.

Pittsburgh: “The Steel City”

We are delighted to hold this year’s meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Situated on the Allegheny Plateau, where the confluence of the Allegheny River from the northeast and Monongahela River from the southeast form the Ohio River, Pittsburgh unique geography and wealth of natural resources has long been coveted by native settlers, explorers and industrialists alike.

Known as both “the Steel City” for its industrial heritage and “the City of Bridges” for its world-beating 446 bridges, Pittsburgh has also led innovations and industries in aluminum, glass, shipbuilding, petroleum and electronics. However, the deadly air pollution that hung over Pittsburgh’s steel mills for nearly 150 years has long gone, and the region has undergone a dramatic environmental transformation. Indeed, in recent times, Pittsburgh has been consistently named most liveable city in the US. Pittsburgh’s most recognizable landmark, the Fountain at the Point, is a focal point to a network riverfront parks. Pittsburgh is also rich in art and culture, boasting the Heinz Hall home of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and the Benedum Center, home of the Pittsburgh Opera. It also holds major art museums including the Andy Warhol Museum, Carnegie Museum of Art, and the Mattress Factory. Pittsburgh was also named the “Best Sports City” in 2009 and is home to the legendary Pirates, Penguins and Steelers.

We look forward to seeing you all in Pittsburgh!
Junior Investigator Award

The chairs of the Junior Award Committee, Sebastian Köhler and Brent Forester, are pleased to announce ICGP International Junior Investigator Awardees. We believe that we have chosen a remarkable group of talented individuals, representing a diverse array of research areas. We are very much looking forward to meeting them in Pittsburgh.

Philip Gerretsen is a Geriatric Psychiatrist at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, a multidisciplinary balance clinic at Toronto Geriatric Hospital. He has recently published works on neuroimaging and insight in schizophrenia.

Karen Mather is the Leader of the Genomics and Genetics Group at the Centre for Healthy Brain Ageing. Her research involves examining genetic and epigenetic variation associated with early markers of late-onset Alzheimer’s disease (AD).

Atilla Gönenç is an Instructor at Harvard Medical School and MR Physicist at McLean Hospital Imaging Center. His research has focussed on the impact of white matter diffusion and hyperintensity volume on cognition in later-life.

Amanda McGovern is a post-doctoral fellow in clinical psychology at the Weill Cornell Medical College currently examining the relationship of apathy on affective and cognitive components.

Sara Weisenbach is an Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago and a Clinical Psychologist at the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center. Her primary research interest is in the neurobiology of depression during late life.

Inez Ramakers is a post-doctoral researcher at the Maastricht University. The major theme of her research is the occurrence of cognitive decline, Alzheimer’s disease pathology in patients with mild cognitive impairment.

Paulo Shiroma is an Assistant Professor based at Mayo Clinic-Rochester and is interested in the circuitry underlying the regulation of emotions in response to pharmacological challenges in late-life depression.

ICGP 2014 Meeting: Tsukuba, Japan

We are delighted to announce that the XIV ICGP Annual Meeting/19th Japan Congress of Neuropsychiatry will be held in Tsukuba, Ibaraki Prefecture, Japan on 1-4 October 2014. The meeting will be held in conjunction with the Japanese Psychogeriatric Society and will take place at the Tsukuba International Congress Center.
The International College of Geriatric Psychoneuropharmacology (ICGP) is a multidisciplinary organization, primarily comprised of clinical or basic science researchers with national reputations and interest in issues around neuropsychiatric disorders in relationship to aging and the treatment of these conditions. Currently, no other international organization focuses entirely on the many disciplines involved in geriatric psychoneuropharmacology. The ICGP is open to scientists from all countries, from different related disciplines, and from different work settings (universities, government institutions, private practice, pharmaceutical industry, etc.).

We hope that you will consider applying for membership in this unique organization. The ICGP Credentials Committee will review all the membership applications.

The aim of the International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry is to communicate the results of original research in the causes, treatment and care of all forms of mental disorder which affect the elderly. The journal is of interest to psychiatrists, psychologists, neurobiology investigators, social scientists, nurses and others engaged in the care of older adults. The journal has an international perspective and accepts contributions from countries throughout the world. Its articles are based on studies of epidemiology, etiology, pathogenesis, clinical presentation, psychometric assessment, and treatment of geropsychiatric disorders as well as health services research.

George S. Alexopoulos, MD. Editor, International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry (Western Hemisphere and Japan).

Become a Member of the ICGP

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