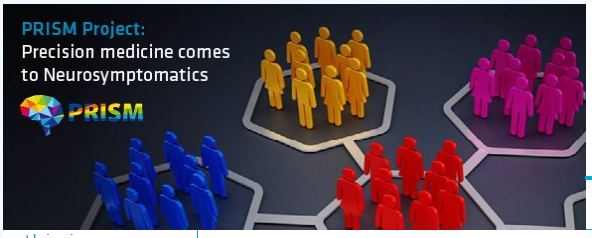

November
2018

this issue:

Powerful PRISM presence at the 31st ECNP Congress

At the 31st ECNP Congress, 6-9 October 2018 in Barcelona, a series of activities were launched to communicate the PRISM project to the congress's 5,000 neuroscientists, psychiatrists, neurologists, psychologists and neurobiologists from around the world.

On Monday, 8 October, a special PRISM reception was held. Kicking off with a short welcome and introduction by Martien Kas and Hugh Marston, coordinators of the project, the reception provided an outstanding opportunity for interested delegates to ask questions, meet team members and share ideas. The reception was visited by people from 20 different countries.

Monday also saw PRISM featured in one of the congress's all-new 'Campfire Sessions', in which Martien Kas and Hugh Marston talked about how the project is bringing precision medicine to neurosymptomatics. The intimate set-up of the session provided particularly useful opportunities to join in discussion, ask questions and brainstorm.

Directly at the entrance of the congress venue, PRISM also took pride of place in the ECNP 'project wall', showcasing the six European projects that ECNP is currently supporting with dissemination services. The display was accompanied by a digital information terminal, where people could read more about the projects, or post questions. At set times members of the PRISM team were also on hand to answer questions and give information.

The result was a high level of quality visibility amongst possibly the largest and most targeted population of relevant scientific stakeholders anywhere in the world. And there was a lot of interest!


Campfire session


PRISM reception


Information terminal


Display and terminal

Poster on GWAS presented at the WCPG congress

At the World Congress of Psychiatric Genetics (WCPG) in Glasgow, 11-15 October 2018, PRISM partner DrugTarget ID presented a poster about the genome-wide association study (GWAS) of social withdrawal that they recently conducted in the general population.

The social withdrawal measure was composed of four questions from the UK Biobank questionnaires and followed a distribution that was within the limits of normalcy. The GWAS included 342,498 adult participants from the UK Biobank and resulted in 584 genome-wide significant SNPs located in 20 genetic loci. Gene-based analysis showed that ELAVL2, ARNTL and DRD2 are the top genes associated with social withdrawal.

The poster received significant attention, with particular interest being shown in the distribution of psychiatric cases within the GWAS sample. However, due to the novelty of the results, this was unknown at the time. "We have now found that the social withdrawal score of people with depression and schizophrenia is well above the mean, and the score of Alzheimer's disease (AD) patients is slightly lower. However, the latter can be due to the very low number of AD patients in the total sample and should therefore be interpreted with caution. By excluding all participants with a psychiatric disease from the analysis, we have also shown that they do not drive the signal. Therefore, we can conclude that the social withdrawal measure encompasses a continuous trait within the general population, with enrichment for psychiatric cases at the extreme end," says Geert Poelmans.

The PRISM project goes multi-media

The first batch of PRISM videos is set for release. The series, prepared by ECNP, gives an overview of the project and its scope, with appearances by the Groningen research team.
In the first video Martien Kas guides us through the aims of PRISM and introduces some of the innovative tools used in the project to investigate schizophrenia and Alzheimer's disease. These include Behapp, the smartphone application applied to translational neuroscience, and the study of social withdrawal through the back-translation of human findings in animal models using EEG and other state-of-the-art techniques.

Next, Hugh Marston will discuss PRISM, providing insights of the project from the industry perspective.

Keep an eye on our social media channels and join the PRISM LinkedIn group to get informed about all videos and much more!

Save the dates!

The next PRISM General Assembly (GA) and Steering Committee (SC) meetings are taking place on 7-8 February 2019 in Basel, Switzerland.
After the successful poster session at the last GA in Mainz in March 2018, the formula will be repeated in Basel, having the PRISM early career researchers presenting the progress of their work and/or preliminary findings.

This will be last meeting with all partners before the end of the PRISM project – phase 1.

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