

P R E S S R E L E A S E

**New solutions to optimise pain management presented by
CHANGE PAIN Initiative**

Over 200 pain specialists attended International Expert Summit

Aachen/Rome, 21 June 2010. Pain specialists from across Europe recently met in Rome at the CHANGE PAIN Expert Summit to discuss current needs and latest insights in chronic pain management. At the scientific event organised by Grünenthal, experts from the international CHANGE PAIN Advisory Board presented the most important results of their first three meetings for the first time. Highlights were presentations of the PAIN EDUCATION programme and the CHANGE PAIN Scale – two new tools supported by the expert group to improve chronic pain management in daily practice. The first PAIN EDUCATION eCME module is now available and can be accessed via www.change-pain.com.

CHANGE PAIN is an initiative by German pain specialist Grünenthal which is endorsed by the European Federation of the IASP® Chapters (EFIC). It aims to enhance the understanding of the needs of patients with severe chronic pain and to develop solutions to improve pain management. At the International Expert Summit on 20-21 June 2010 more than 200 pain specialists came together to learn more about the CHANGE PAIN group's findings and activities. These include a tool for a better physician-patient communication and a new pain education programme for healthcare professionals.

PAIN EDUCATION – modular learning with comprehensive eCME modules

“Current pain management is often driven by tradition and personal experience, focusing mainly on symptom control,” explained Professor Giustino Varrassi, President of EFIC and Chairman of the CHANGE PAIN Initiative. “In order to improve the treatment of chronic pain patients a better education of healthcare professionals on underlying pain mechanisms and appropriate use of pharmacological substances is important. The new training programme PAIN EDUCATION will help to meet this need.”

The programme is currently under development on the basis of the insights from the discussions of the CHANGE PAIN group. It follows a new pain education approach aiming to move treatment from symptom control to multi-modal mechanism-

orientated pain management.¹ Implementation is supported by an educational grant by Grünenthal.

The programme consists of three comprehensive interactive e-learning modules which will meet the criteria for accreditation by the Union Européenne Des Médecins Spécialistes (UEMS). Thus, PAIN EDUCATION will offer a basis for a structured and lasting educational approach covering the following topics: assessing pain and patient/physician communication, multi-modal management of chronic pain, and mechanism-orientated pharmacological pain therapy. The first module can now be accessed via the CHANGE PAIN website www.change-pain.com. Further online-modules will follow.

CHANGE PAIN Scale – a new tool to improve physician-patient communication

Another important objective discussed at the Expert Summit was the improvement of physician-patient communication. Many instruments are available to support this communication and to assess pain intensity and quality of life impairment. However, these are usually time-consuming and more suited for pain specialists but not often used by general practitioners. Therefore the CHANGE PAIN Advisory Board has adapted a new scale based on the Individual Treatment Target, defined by Müller-Schwefe and Überall¹.

“The new CHANGE PAIN Scale is a quick, and user-friendly instrument to enhance communication between physicians and patients. It allows the physician to assess the pain intensity perceived by a particular patient and also to evaluate other areas of impairment,” said Dr Gerhard H. H. Müller-Schwefe, MD, President of the German Pain Association (DGS) and Chairman of the CHANGE PAIN Initiative. “Healthcare professionals can use it initially to identify the key elements of successful pain management, communicate on treatment expectations, and subsequently to record patient-centred perception of changes in well-being.”

A major design criterion for the CHANGE PAIN scale was ease of use. Two combined 11-point NRS on the front enable the physician to quickly assess the patient's current pain intensity and to set realistic targets together with the patient. Six key parameters that affect patients' quality of life, e.g. sleep quality, general activity and mood, are given on the back of the scale and physicians simply need to agree with patients whether improvement is needed in each of these. Results at subsequent appointments can be compared to establish the efficacy and tolerability of the chosen pain therapy and the progress towards the agreed treatment goals.

About CHANGE PAIN

CHANGE PAIN[®] aims to enhance the understanding of the needs of patients with severe chronic pain and to develop solutions to improve chronic pain management.

Initiated by German pain expert Grünenthal and endorsed by the European Federation of the IASP[®] Chapters (EFIC), the initiative involves pain experts from across Europe. The international Advisory Board is chaired by Professor Giustino Varrassi, MD, President of the EFIC, and Dr Gerhard H. H. Müller-Schwefe, MD, President of the German Pain Association (DGS). Key objectives of CHANGE PAIN[®] are to generate a better understanding of physicians' and patients' perspectives, publish the results of research projects and communicate findings in scientific publications, as well as to increase knowledge of pain physiology to facilitate individual treatment decisions. More information: www.change-pain.com

About EFIC

The European Federation of IASP chapters (EFIC) is a multidisciplinary professional organisation in the field of pain science and medicine, made up of the most important European scientific societies for the study of pain. Established in 1993, by Prof. Ulf Lindblom, EFIC represents 31 countries and close to 20,000 scientists, physicians, nurses, physiotherapists, psychologists and other healthcare professionals across Europe, who study pain and treat patients in pain. More information: www.efic.org

About Grünenthal

Grünenthal is passionate about globally being the preferred partner in pain management for patients, health care professionals and payors. The corporation drives innovation to expand European market leadership in moderate to severe pain. Grünenthal is an independent, family-owned German corporation with companies in 34 countries all over the world. Founded in 1946, the corporation employs 2,000 people in Germany and 5,200 worldwide. In 2008, Grünenthal achieved revenues of about 864 million Euros. More information: www.grunenthal.com

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Current press materials are available in the press section at www.grunenthal.com and www.change-pain.com.

¹ Müller-Schwefe GHH, Überall MA. Individual Treatment Targets in Chronic Pain Management, Proceedings of EFIC, 2006. Istanbul.