

PRESS RELEASE

Societal Impact of Pain: SIP 2013 Focus Groups for concrete policy outcomes

After three SIP Symposia, this year's SIP Focus Groups will concentrate on two topics for generating concrete policy instruments and improving chronic pain management in Europe

Brussels/Belgium, 06 March, 2013. This year the European, multi-stakeholder platform "Societal Impact of Pain" (SIP) will organise their annual meeting in the form of SIP 2013 Focus Groups, which will be hosted in the EU Economic & Social Committee and the EU Parliament in Brussels, Belgium on 14-15 May. The aim of the SIP Platform is to raise awareness of the impact of chronic pain, to exchange information and share best-practices across the European Union and to develop and foster policy strategies and activities to improve pain care in Europe. After three European symposia in 2010-2012, the SIP Programme Committee has decided to concentrate on two topics to generate concrete policy instruments for Europe and its Member States: While SIP Focus Group 1 (14 May) will develop "SIP Recommendations" for a European set of quality indicators for chronic non-malignant pain management, SIP Focus Group 2 (15 May) will stress the correlation of chronic pain and the reduction or loss of work productivity and the workforce, respectively, and will generate a "SIP Proposal for Action" on EU best practices for reintegrating chronic pain patients back into their working environment. Registration link is available at www.sip-platform.eu

The topics of the SIP Focus Groups as selected by the SIP Programme Committee are closely related to one of the seven policy dimensions of the [SIP Road Map for Action](#). The Road Map was a key result from SIP 2011 symposium outlining seven policy dimensions on how the EU institutions and member states can effectively address the societal impact of pain at EU level. The Focus Groups will provide a forum for inspirational key note presentations and in-depth plenary discussion.

Professor Hans Georg Kress, President of the European Federation of IASP® Chapters (EFIC®), explains the background: "It is important to make chronic pain visible as a medical, economical and societal disease. Chronic pain has a big influence on someone's daily life, working life and family life. We want to make sure that politicians and policy-makers in Europe and in the Member States are aware of the societal impact of chronic pain. Therefore, the outcomes of both Focus Groups shall give concrete suggestions on how we can effectively change pain management and thus improve the quality of life for our patients."

Pain as Quality Indicator of Outcomes

Rationale for the SIP Programme Committee for selecting this topic for SIP Focus Group 1 has been the commonly agreed need for developing and implementing instruments for monitoring and measuring the quality of pain management in Europe. Adequate pain management has started to become a priority for health care services and providers across Europe. The epidemiological data,

the high prevalence and significant direct and indirect costs for the health care systems have been noted and shared during previous [SIP symposia](#). However, health care providers and budget holders still struggle to measure the quality of pain management and thus to defend the required allocation of appropriate resources.

The objective of SIP Focus Group 1 is therefore to develop and agree upon a set of indicators for chronic non-malignant pain management, which are most-commonly shared among EU member states and which shall be adopted and sequentially validated and/or implemented by EU Member States following SIP 2013.

Chronic Pain in the Working Population

During SIP 2013 Focus Group 2, the significance of the EU workforce and the impact of chronic pain on the latter will be the central topic: “In times of austerity and economic crisis, employment and productivity of the working population is a central topic discussed on national and European level”, explains Marian Harkin, Irish Member of European Parliament, who will be chairing this SIP Focus Group 2. “We need to discuss the importance of both preventive measures and rehabilitation programmes as part of an effort to ensure that our working population is able to re-enter the workforce even if they have been affected by chronic pain.”

Due to the need for sharing best practices and exchanging models among EU Member States for keeping our workforce healthy, SIP Focus Group 2 aims at developing a “Proposal for Action”, giving national examples of rehabilitation and integrated care programs and proposals for concrete measures on EU and Member State policy level.

International Endorsement for SIP

The scientific aims of the SIP 2013 Focus Groups are being endorsed by a large number of international and national pain advocacy groups, scientific organisations and health authority bodies reflecting the broad relevance for the different stakeholders. Alberto Grua, Executive Vice President of Grünenthal Europe & Australia, explains: “In the fourth year now Grünenthal has been supporting the objectives of this multi-stakeholder platform: In order to improve quality of treatment and to reduce costs in a continuously older-growing population, we believe it is crucial to have experts, patients, health care authorities, politicians and payers sitting at one table in order to produce workable solutions for Europe.”

The scientific framework of SIP 2013 is under the responsibility of the European Federation of IASP® Chapters (EFIC®). The pharmaceutical company Grünenthal GmbH is responsible for funding and non-financial support (e.g. logistical support).

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Notes to Editors:

About the Societal Impact of Pain (SIP)

The "Societal Impact of Pain" (SIP) is an international, multi-stakeholder platform created in 2010 as a joint initiative of EFIC® and the pharmaceutical company Grünenthal GmbH and aims to raise awareness of the relevance of the impact that pain has on our societies, health and economic systems, exchanging information and sharing best-practices across all member states of the European Union, and developing and fostering European-wide policy strategies & activities for improved pain management in Europe. The platform provides opportunities for discussion for health care professionals, pain advocacy groups, politicians, insurances, representatives of health authorities, regulators and budget holders.

The scientific framework of the SIP platform is under the responsibility of the European Federation of IASP® Chapters (EFIC®). The pharmaceutical company Grünenthal GmbH is responsible for funding and non-financial support (e.g. logistical support). For more information, please visit www.sip-platform.eu

About EFIC

The European Federation of IASP® Chapters (EFIC®) is a multidisciplinary professional organisation in the field of pain research and medicine, consisting of the 36 chapters of the International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP®), which are the IASP accredited official National Pain Societies in each country. EFIC's constituent chapters represent pain societies from 36 European countries and close to 20,000 physicians, basic researchers, nurses, physiotherapists, psychologists and other healthcare professionals across Europe, who are involved in pain management and pain research. For more information, please visit www.efic.org.

About Grünenthal

The Grünenthal Group is an independent, family-owned, international research-based pharmaceutical company headquartered in Aachen, Germany. Building on its unique position in pain, its objective is to become the most patient-centric company and thus to be a leader in therapy innovation. Grünenthal is one of the last five research-oriented pharmaceutical corporations with headquarters in Germany which sustainably invests in research and development. These investments amounted to about 25 percent of revenues in 2011. Grünenthal's research and development strategy concentrates on select fields of therapy and state-of-the-art technologies. We focus on the intensive search for new ways to treat pain better, more effectively and with fewer side-effects than before. Altogether, the Grünenthal Group has affiliates in 26 countries worldwide. Grünenthal products are sold in more than 155 countries and today approx. 4,200 employees are working for the Grünenthal Group worldwide. In 2011, Grünenthal achieved revenues of €947 mn. More information: www.grunenthal.com



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