

Science Academies encourage EU Parliament to address the allergy and asthma epidemic in Europe

For the first time policy makers, patients, industry representatives and the scientific allergy and asthma community came together at the European Parliament on 14 October 2015 in Brussels to discuss the need for a better diagnostic and therapeutic approach for patients with allergies and chronic airways disease. Speakers (see box) encouraged a united initiative using Precision Medicine to arrest the epidemic.



“The socio-economic impact of allergies and chronic airways diseases cannot be underestimated, as they represent the most frequently diagnosed chronic non-communicable diseases in the EU,” underlined Member of Parliament (MEP) David Borrelli, host of the meeting, and Chair of the EU Interest Group on Allergy and Asthma Sirpa Pietikäinen.

According to published statistics, 30% of Europe’s population currently suffer from allergies and asthma, and more than half of these patients are deprived from adequate diagnosis and treatment. “To meet these challenges, we need to start focussing more on prevention so more of our citizens remain healthy longer. It is often forgotten that to succeed in creating jobs and growth, we need a healthy population fully fit for work,” said EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety Vytenis Andriukaitis.

Precision Medicine: a novel solution

Precision medicine (PM) is an emerging approach for disease treatment and prevention that takes into account individual characteristics of a patient in genes, environment and lifestyle. If implemented into the clinical practice, it could help to achieve the arrest of the Epidemic of Allergies and Chronic Airways Diseases. It could change Europe’s healthcare dramatically, as disease management would shift from acute and reactive medicine to one that embraces four key features:

- **personalized care** based on molecular, immunologic and functional endotyping of the disease

- **participation of the patient** in the decision making process of therapeutic actions
- **account predictive and preventive aspects** of the treatment

At the same time, Precision Medicine will allow clinicians to more accurately predict which treatment and prevention strategies for a particular disease will work, when and in which groups of people. The benefit is improved patient-centred care, reduced costs of side-effects and better prevention, which increases public health.

Next Steps

Commissioner underscored the need for optimal patient care in Europe, supporting joint action plans for disease prevention, patient empowerment and cost-effective treatment strategies leading to a better health status of European citizens.

To learn more about Precision Medicine in allergy and airways diseases, please stay-tuned on www.eaaci.org for further features.

EU Symposium on the “European Need for PRECISION MEDICINE in allergy and airways disease”

Symposium organisers

European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI)
European Rhinologic Society (ERS)
European Medical Association (EMA)

SPEAKER LIST

Commissioner of Health and Food Safety Vytenis Andriukaitis
MEP David Borrelli, Symposium Host
MEP Sirpa Pietikäinen, Chair of European Parliament Interest Group on Allergy and Asthma

EAACI President Antonella Muraro
EAACI Secretary General Peter Hellings
EAACI VP Congresses Lars K Poulsen
ERS President Wytse J. Fokkens
EMA President Vincenzo Costigliola
Aria-Macvia Founder and Chairman Jean Bousquet
European Respiratory Society President-Elect Guy Joos
Respiratory Effectiveness Group Chair David Price
European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients' Association President Christine Rolland
Global Allergy and Asthma European Network (GA2len) Secretary General Torsten Zuberbier