



International Plasma Protein Congress 2017:

AN ONGOING DEBATE TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO CARE

BY SARA STEFANELLI, PPTA COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT, EUROPE

The 2017 International Plasma Protein Congress (IPPC) took place in Prague on March 14-15, with the participation of industry leaders, researchers, and patient representatives discussing the numerous challenges still hindering global, efficient access to care, but also presenting frontline projects on specific rare diseases and related therapies.

The two-day Congress opened with a focus on the hosting country—the Czech Republic—with an overview of its health care system by the new Deputy Minister of Health, Prof. Roman Prymula. Mr. David Bell (Grifols and Chairman of the PPTA Global Board of Directors) provided the Chairman’s message, noting that PPTA’s most important role is to educate patients, legislators, regulators, and the general public to ensure access to care for all who need it. He called for the industry to battle back against misperceptions and misinformation by speaking up about the industry and the safety of source plasma and the safety and efficacy of plasma protein therapies. Furthermore, the speakers provided some remarks on the challenges in the harmonization of the Czech Republic and the EU vision on health, as well as a summary of plasma production and pharmaceutical use in the Czech Republic. The session featured Prof. Jaroslav Zverina (Charles University in Prague); Dr. Miloš Bohoněk (Central Military Hospital–Military University Hospital Prague); Mr. Bruno Santoni (Plasma Protein Therapeutics Association [PPTA]); and Mr. David Bell. At the end of the session, the 2017 Hilfenhaus Award was presented by Dr. Oliver Schmitt (CSL Behring and Chairman of the PPTA Europe Board of Directors), and conferred to Prof. Henriette Farkas, M.D., Ph.D., DSc (Semmelweis University in Budapest).



From left to right: Mr. David Tsur (Kamada); Mr. Joshua Penrod (PPTA); Mr. Patrick Robert (Marketing Research Bureau); Dr. Pierre-Francois Falcou (PFF Consulting); Dr. Ranjeet S. Ajmani (PlasmaGen Bioscience).

The second session, moderated by Dr. Larisa Cervenakova (PPTA), examined various aspects of primary immunodeficiency (PID) diseases—outlining care and awareness initiatives in Germany, as well as strategies to optimize care organization and providing an overview of PID from Europe to Asia. Prof. Volker Wahn (University Hospital Charite in Berlin) presented on efforts to improve awareness of PID with German physicians through the FIND-ID project and the importance of early diagnosis and treatment. Prof. Esther de Vries (Tilburg University) talked about using the entire health care chain to optimize PID care including the use of data for building awareness and better diagnoses. Prof. Martin van Hagen (Erasmus University Medical Center in Rotterdam) provided a comprehensive overview of PID care in Southeast Asia including advances in genetic testing. He also discussed the increasing role of patient groups in Asia in helping to improve awareness of PID.

The Congress continued with a focus on the hemolytic disease of the newborn (HDN), from the description of the Rh disease and the use of hyperimmune plasma as therapy, to the challenges for universal eradication of HDN. The speakers represented members of industry and non-profit/academia who discussed challenges in Anti-D production, as well as challenges to reaching patients in the developing world. The speakers also addressed ways to ensure access to care for patients around the world. The session featured

Prof. Alvin Zipursky (Sick Kids Toronto); Dr. Kirsten Seidel (CSL Plasma); Prof. Vinod K. Bhutani (Stanford University); Mr. Lawrence P. Guiheen (Kedrion) and Prof. Gérard Visser (University Medical Center Utrecht).

Day one of the IPPC concluded with a patient-focused panel that addressed access to plasma protein therapies by examining specific geographic areas such as Central Europe, France, and Romania. Speakers included: Dr. Adrian Pană (Former Secretary of State in Romania); Ms. Martine Pergent (French PID patient association, IRIS); Mr. Brian O'Mahony (European Haemophilia Consortium); and Mr. Jan M. Bult (PPTA). Each of the speakers addressed the challenges and opportunities with working toward ensuring access to care and appropriate plasma protein therapies.

After a sponsors session about supply chain management for plasma and plasma protein therapies and the related challenges, which featured Mr. Eric Youssef (Merck) and Mr. Bruno Santoni, the sixth session concentrated on international developments with regard to plasma protein consumption across countries, the contrast in access to care worldwide and specifically to progress in Indian plasma products. The panel concluded with a presentation on how, through innovation, a small business that is locally focused can grow to one that has a global impact. The session featured Mr. Patrick Robert (Marketing Research Bureau); Dr. Pierre-François Falcou

(PFF Consulting); Dr. Ranjeet S. Ajmani (PlasmaGen Bioscience); Mr. David Tsur (Kamada); and Mr. Joshua Penrod (PPTA).

Session seven featured Mr. John Delacourt (PPTA); Ms. Cristiana Spontoni (Jones Day); Mag. Felix Patzak (Austrian Federal Office for Safety in Health Care); and Ms. Mary Gustafson (PPTA) and covered some regulatory aspects of the plasma protein therapeutics industry. First was a presentation on new trends in inspections. Of note is an initiative to use risk-based inspection planning that, through the use of control measures in inspection planning, could reduce the inspection burden while maintaining standards. Finally, there were presentations on the possible expansion of the National Donor Deferral Registry (NDDR) and the Cross Donation Check System (CDCS) to Europe. The panel concluded with an in-depth discussion of the EU General Data Protection Regulation and national regulations on personal data and their impact on the expansion of the NDDR and CDCS.

The closing session outlined how access to rare disease therapies can be supported through health-economic value; in particular, the discussion focused on reimbursement and the European Health Technology Assessment (HTA) harmonization project, underlining the pivotal role played by the patient's perspective in assessing such health-economic value. The session featured Prof. Maarten Postma (University of Groningen); Prof. Philippe Van Wilder (University of Brussels); Dr. Karen Facey (University of Edinburgh); and Dr. Irina Odnoletkova (PPTA).

As in each year, the 2017 International Plasma Protein Congress provided a fruitful platform of discussion, bringing together the varied stakeholders of the plasma industry and presenting unique and often challenging views on critical topics. During the closing announcements, Mr. Bruno Santoni thanked the sponsors, speakers, and attendees and encouraged all to attend IPPC 2018 in Budapest, Hungary. It was also announced that—thanks to the votes of all attendees—the 2019 IPPC will be held in Stockholm! ●



Top: Session three speakers listen to a presentation given by Prof. Gerard Visser (University Medical Center Utrecht). **(From left to right):** Prof. Alvin Zipursky (Sick Kids Toronto); Dr. Kirsten Seidel (CSL Plasma); Prof. Vinod K. Bhutani (Stanford University); and Mr. Lawrence P. Guiheen (Kedrion).

Bottom (from left to right): Dr. Karen Facey (University of Edinburgh); Dr. Adrian Pană (Former Secretary of State in Romania); Mag. Felix Patzak (Austrian Federal Office for Safety in Health Care); Ms. Martine Pergent (French PID patient association, IRIS).