

FOREWORD

Dear Colleagues,

In spite of recent advances in both the research and clinical domains of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), the disease remains an incurable, fatal condition. On the other hand it is an inspiring challenge to researchers and clinicians alike. The Ljubljana ALS Team was established in autumn 2002 at the Institute of Clinical Neurophysiology, University Medical Centre Ljubljana. The team, led by Professor Janez Zidar, links together experts from different fields working in unison to provide care and support for patients with ALS. A few research projects have started in parallel making clinicians and researchers even more committed to this disease.

ALS is the topic of this year's Ljubljana autumn clinical neuroscience meeting taking place at the University Medical Centre, Ljubljana on 19–20 September 2008. The Symposium keynote speaker is Professor Nigel Leigh from King's College London presenting the 24th Dr. Janez Faganel Memorial Lecture entitled "ALS: Advances in the Laboratory and in the Clinic". In two days the meeting will cover various aspects of the disease, from neuroimaging and neurophysiology, to respiration, cognition, neurobiology, and – most importantly – treatment and care of the patients.

The meeting is mainly a bilateral event bringing together two groups of both young and also established researchers

and clinicians: the Ljubljana ALS Team and the MND Team from King's College London. A few prominent speakers from other parts of Europe have joined them and it is great to see that the participants are coming not just from Slovenia, but also from neighbouring countries, making the meeting an important regional event.

The meeting is a result of the hard work of a group of dedicated colleagues and good friends from both Slovenia and the UK and I would like to thank them all for their input. The organisation of the meeting would be impossible without generous support from the British Council (The International Networking for Young Scientists Programme), the Slovenian Research Agency and also from numerous pharmaceutical companies. I'm deeply thankful to them all.

My hopes are that this meeting will strengthen the links between the groups and also create new opportunities and ideas for regional collaboration. I also hope that many new friendships will be made. With this in mind, I wish you an interesting and inspiring meeting, and a pleasant stay with us.

We wish you a very warm welcome to Ljubljana,

Blaž Koritnik