



HDNL 2024 - Issue No 98, Q3 24

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FAMILY VOICES WEBINAR

Who are HDYO and what do they do?

7-8 pm, 25 November 2025

The Huntington's Disease Youth Organisation (HDYO) is an international organisation supporting, educating and empowering young people up to 35 years who are impacted by Huntington's disease.



The HD Alliance is delighted to welcome **Jenna Heilman**, Executive Director of HDYO, for this webinar where we will find out what HDYO is and how it helps empower young people as they journey through being impacted by HD. Please join us from **7-8pm on 25 November** to find out more.

To Register: <https://www.huntingtons.ie/Family-Voices-Webinar-Series>

NEWSLETTER OF THE HUNTINGTON'S DISEASE ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

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EHDN & Enroll HD Meeting 2024



The EHDN Plenary meeting & Enroll-HD Congress was held in Strasbourg from 11-15 September. Approximately 1,200 attendees included family members and representatives, clinicians, scientists, researchers and pharma and biotechnology companies joined the meeting.

Professor Anne Rosser, Chair of EHDN, Astri Arnesen, President of the European HD Association, Professor Christine Tranchant, University of Strasbourg and Professor Patrick Weydt Co-Chair EHDN opened the meeting. Anne Rosser welcomed delegate, she thanked families for their contribution to research and thanked the organising committee led by Professor Åsa Petersén and Sandrine Humbert, Research Director Inserm, and CHDI for sponsoring the meeting.

Astri Arnesen reminded delegates of the impatience of HD affected families to see successful therapies available and the benefit of collaboration among all stakeholders. The European Huntington Association also held a membership meeting during the conference and provided an update on their work.

Recordings of the sessions are now available on the EHDN website:
<https://ehdn.org/ehdn2024/>

Highlights included:

HIDDEN NO MORE: Charles Sabine spoke about the power of HD families joining together to raise awareness, promote research and advocate for better care. Every single major advance in HD research has emanated from patient participation.



He discussed the dozens of companies now engaged in HD research, made possible by the thousands of family members around the world who contribute to research by participating in Enroll-HD and other studies.

CECI N'EST PAS L'EUROBUZZ: Professor Ed Wild's hilarious session, promoting accessible science by adding humour, and encouraging younger scientists to face their fears and their forerunners! While HD is passed from one generation to the next, so too is science, so it is important to pass on wisdom and control.



In this Buzz quiz, Ed Wild pitched distinguished scientists Professor Bernhard Landwehrmeyer (HD) and Professor Harry Orr (SCA1) against Dr. Opeyemi Kinyomi, HD Research Centre UCL, UK and Jennifer Oraha, PhD Researcher, Lund Sweden, who are in the earlier stages of their career. Dr Ahmad Aziz, EHDN was scoremaster. Ed Wild and Professor Jeff Carroll co-founded HD Buzz fifteen years ago and the HD research news website now records 500,000 visits per month.

(continued from page 1)

EHDN 20 YEARS: Bernhard Landwehrmeyer, Patrik Brundin and Anne Rosser discussed the establishment of the European HD Network twenty years ago and all that has been achieved to date.

HDYO PRESENTATIONS: Anne Elizabeth Saldarriaga Velez Magnusson, HDYO advocate and Sweden and Colombian representative, shared how her personal experience of having been a young HD caregiver and now living at risk, has informed her current advocacy work.

Jenna Heilman, Executive Director HDYO, spoke about the importance of HDYO's work to support the global HD young person community of those of 35 years and under. HDYO continues the work of founders Mat Ellison and BJ Viaw. HDYO, and other partners including Cat Martin, plan to bring back the EHDN Young Adult working Group to support young people to be ready and prepared to participate in research. Many HDYO ambassadors attended the conference.

CHDI: Cristina Sampaio, Chief Medical Officer, CHDI, informed attendees of the renewal of Enroll-HD and the creation of Enroll-2.0 which brings new services for better research. She revealed the new logo of Enroll-HD to correspond with this renewal. She also announced that Enroll-HD are collaborating with *Regeneron*, a biotech company based in the USA, which leverages genetic information to produce drugs.

They now have 9 drugs in the market and have a lot of experience in genetic analysis of large datasets. This collaboration aims to provide genome sequencing for 20,000 people, from analysis of Enroll-HD data, and will be available to all HD researchers.

Updates on Clinical trials included:

SOM Biotech repurposes existing drugs for new uses. They looked at Tetrabenazine to improve safety and identified a potential drug SOM3355. The Phase 2a Proof of Concept study revealed that it safely reduces chorea in HD patients. 171 patients were recruited for the Phase 2b completed in April 2024. Data is now being analysed and they hope to publish in November.

Prilenia have submitted their drug Pridopidine for Marketing Authorisation review to the European Medicines Agency (EMA). The process can take approximately one year.

uniQure: Professor Ed Wild presented an update on behalf of uniQure's Phase I/II AMT-130. It is the first gene therapy for

HD, a once off surgically administered RNA which is expected to reduce the production of HD protein.

Launched in 2019, there are now 26 patients in the USA and 13 in EU & UK under observation. AMT-130 demonstrated that it is generally well tolerated with a reduction in a key measure of degeneration at 24 months. Further updates due mid 2025.

Roche: New fluid biomarker data from their GENERATION HD1 Phase III study is of benefit for their current GENERATION HD2. The Independent Data Monitoring Committee, who review the balance of risk and benefit in a trial, recommended in August 2024 that Roche continue their Phase II trial.

Wave Life Sciences: In June 2024, Wave announced positive results from their Phase 1b/2a SELECT-HD trial of WVE-003 which only targets mutant huntingtin to lower production of the toxic protein.

The therapy is administered by a spinal tap. WVE-003 targets specific letter changes in the genetic code of the mutant gene, termed SNP3, which are present in about 40% of HD patients.

Wave are actively engaging with the FDA and hope to have a favourable path forward by the end of this year. If so, they then hope to look at SNP1 and SNP2 so that they can develop a therapy for all HD patients.

PTC Therapeutics: Their PIVOT-HD trial aims to lower Huntingtin in the brain and blood with an oral drug PTC-518 (now referred to as voptoplam), which penetrates the blood brain barrier.

In June 2024, PTC announced positive results from their 12-month interim data. The trial demonstrated durable dose-dependent lowering of mutant Huntingtin protein in blood cells, reaching 43% at the 10-milligram dose level along with dose-dependent lowering of mutant Huntingtin protein in the CSF at levels similar to the blood in Phase 2 patients.

The drug was seen to be safe and well tolerated.

FDA Grants Fast Track Designation to PTC518

PTC Therapeutics announced on September 26th that the FDA (USA Food and Drug Administration), has granted Fast Track designation to PTC518. This is awarded to promising therapies for diseases of high unmet need.

"We look forward to working collaboratively with FDA to continue to advance the program as efficiently as possible."

said Matthew B. Klein, M.D., Chief Executive Officer of PTC Therapeutics.



There were 430 HD posters under eleven categories on display. Topics included Clinical Studies, Genetic Modifiers and Experimental therapeutics.

Updates on Planned Clinical trials included:

Alnylam Pharmaceuticals: ALN-HTT02 is a novel C16-siRNA Congugate for HTT-Lowering in the CNS. A Phase I study will commence later this year.

Atalanta Therapeutics are also exploring an siRNA mechanism ALT-101 and plan to initiate clinical trials for HD patients in 2025.

ExoRNA Bioscience are looking at an in-vivo self-assembled siRNA delivery strategy for their potential ER2001 therapy and have conducted a first in human study. They are hoping to collaborate and establish a trial in Europe.

reMYND are investigating a small molecule drug REM 0049949 to target neurotoxicity and plan to start a clinical trial in 2024

Alchemab Therapeutics are analysing antibodies from resilient individuals who are susceptible to neurodegenerative disease but who do not progress or progress very slowly. In addition to social, environmental and genetic factors, is there a response from our immune system?

Analysing data from the PREDICT-HD study an antibody ATLX1095 has been identified which may have potential therapeutic benefit. Alchemab have started to design clinical studies.

Rgenta Therapeutics are looking to develop an RNA-Targeting oral drug for the PMS1 gene which is an identified modifying gene for HD.

Huntington's Disease Now: Mechanisms and Therapeutics Professor, Sarah Tabrizi, gave a summary of learnings in the last five years. More is known about somatic expansion and genetic modifiers in DNA repair genes which can modify somatic expansion.

She believes downregulating genes PSM1 and MSH1 and upregulating the FAN1 gene can reduce somatic expansion. Targeting HTT Exon 1 is also essential as evidence suggests it drives toxicity.

Various exciting approaches are now underway to target HD including Splicing modulators, DNA and RNA modulators, Gene therapy, HTT Oligonucleotides, Repeat Expansion, Regenerative Medicine, Inflammation and many academic labs developing therapies. She advised that all of the parts of the complex pathogenesis of HD are now being targeted.

The HD Young Adult Study (YAS) has produced important learnings and suggests that somatic expansion appears to drive neuronal dysfunction and deregulation in the striatum decades before onset. This implies that treatments should be started early before symptom onset and results can be measured by biomarkers.

Professor Tabrizi presented the YAS data at a HD Regulatory Science meeting with the FDA neurology team in July. Doing clinical trials for people with the HD gene before onset of the disease is the best way to prevent Huntington's disease. FDA acknowledged the huge unmet need for HD and are open to considering trials in pre-symptomatic individuals providing safety and efficacy is established prior to starting trials.



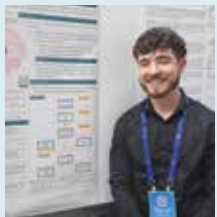
Enroll-HD wants to focus on participants earlier in the course of the disease to gather pertinent data on earlier stage participants to accelerate drug development. Enroll-HD 2.0 is an amendment to the original protocol to allow specific recruitment.

Enroll-HD initially aimed to recruit as many participants as possible and it has been successful in this regard. It has done a lot of work with controls (family members not carrying the HD gene) and with people who have HD. The focus now will be to look at recruiting gene carriers in earlier stages of the disease. The aim is to have 25,000 active participants.

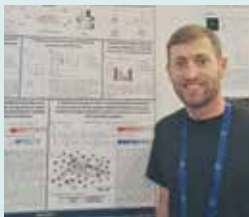
- There will be different cohorts for different stages of the disease
- Targeted recruitment
- Wider variety of potential bio-samples
- Sub-studies, including imaging and semen



Attendees from Ireland at EHDN,



Mathew Stevens, Poster (F 071): Substance Use Behaviour in HD: Investigating the role of Inhibitory Control and Perseveration,



Cian Gavin, Poster (I 029) The type II diabetes medication metformin rescues cognitive symptoms in a mouse model of Huntington's disease



Professor Hoblyn, Poster (K 026): AI Bias: Considerations for Bias in Artificial Intelligence for Research and Clinical Practice in HD,

The EHDN & Enroll-HD meeting provided an opportunity to connect with others working with HD. Clinicians and researchers attending from Ireland included Professor Niall Pender, Orla Russell, Colm Peelo, Beaumont Hospital and Trinity College Dublin, Eva Woods PhD Researcher TCD, Dr. Tom Burke and Matthew Stevens, School of Psychology, University of Galway, Professor Jennifer Hoblyn, Clinical Director St. John of Gods, Cian Gavin, PhD Researcher, UCD and Emer Doheny, Assistant Professor UCD. HDAI representatives included Board members Triona O'Hanlon and Derek Readman along with Patricia Towey, Information and Services Coordinator.

THANK YOU

Joe Doran HD Awareness Walk

The 2024 Joe Doran HD Awareness walk at Lough Key in July was an outstanding success once again. A huge thanks to Pauline and Anne Doran, Peggy Fogarty (aunt) and family, Joseph Doran (uncle) & family, and to Joe and Pauline's extended family, friends and neighbours.



The walk has raised around €14,500 which is truly remarkable. Sincere thanks to all who participated on the day, donated online and raised sponsorship. Thanks to all the HD family members and to members of the Bluebird Care Staff team who joined the walk. People traveled from all over Ireland and the UK to join the walk. Businesses in Longford generously sponsored prizes including: Aine's Boutique, Longford Arms Hotel, Denniston's, Matt O'Brien Fashions, Peggy, Castle Varagh Hotel, CheckOut and Cara Pharmacy. We received very generous contributions from J Coffey Construction Ltd, Joseph Duran and family, the extended O'Toole family, the Newman family and the Mitchell family to name but a few. Thanks to Dermot and the team at Lough Key for their support.

Herbert Park Car Show



Paddy Byrne, Life Pharmacy Ballsbridge, very kindly nominated HDAI as one of the chosen charities to benefit from donations at the

Herbert Park Car Show in May. HDAI received €6,000 as a result. We extend thanks to Paddy Byrne, the Ballsbridge organisers and all who contributed.

Membership

Thanks to all who renewed their 2024 membership. Your engagement supports HDAI's work and helps to keep the HD community connected.

Donations

Thanks to our donors for their support including:

- Direct Debit/regular donations received from David, Fionna, Martina, Paul, Tarik and Zil.
- Anonymous €1,000, David Purdom €450, Grant Family €150, Cussen Family & friends €100, Sheila Walsh €100, Tarik's Cycle €150 plus donations via Go Fund Me, Dawn Little €1,550 in memory of Anthony Holohan and Lynne Robinson, "I hope this helps you in doing the great job you do".

**Membership, sponsorship and donations via online fundraising platforms are subject to bank and platform fees.*

In Memory

Eileen Carty - Condolences to the family and friends of Eileen Carty who passed away on 26th September. Eileen and her late husband Pat were committed and valued members and volunteers of HDAI and both served on the Board in mid-2000's. Rest in peace Eileen.



Carol Roche

Family and friends of the late Carol Roche continue to donate in her memory.

Carol was a much loved wife, mother, daughter, sister, relative, friend and neighbour. HDAI received an incredibly generous donation of €1,000 from Catherine Cahill. Total donations in Carol's memory amounts to €3,024.

Grants - Thank You



HDAI applied for HSE National Lottery Funding to support our

activities and events. We have been successful in receiving national Lottery grants as follows:

- CHO Dublin North City & County - €4,000
- CHO West - €1,000
- CHO Cork & Kerry - €2,480

Follow HDAI



Huntingtons Disease Association of Ireland



@HDAI_ie

Thank you to our volunteers for their social media work.



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www.huntingtons.ie

Joe Doran HD Awareness Advocate

Pauline continues to be a committed advocate and contacts regional newspapers and radio stations to raise awareness. Pauline shared her family story and spoke about her son Joe and their commitment to raising awareness on the Joe Finnegan Show on Shannonside FM in July. Patricia from HDAI joined Pauline to speak about the need for specialist HD services.

Patient Experience Survey

The Neurological Alliance of Ireland (NAI) launched a 2024 Patient Experience Survey Project to coincide with World Brain Day. This survey is a collaboration between the Neurological Alliances of England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland which aims to understand the experiences of people affected by neurological conditions.

Links to an Adults Survey, A Carers Survey and a Young People & Children Survey and a Frequently Asked Questions Guide are available on their website <https://www.nai.ie/content/neurological-patient-experience-survey>

Are you getting the care and support you need for your neurological condition?

NAI are asking you to share your experiences and help improve neurological services for everyone affected by neurological conditions throughout Ireland.

Make a difference and complete the survey before the closing date of November 15th at My Neuro Survey: <https://www.nai.ie/content/neurological-patient-experience-survey>

Rare Diseases Ireland Election Manifesto



Rare Disease Ireland members with Deputy Pádraig O'Sullivan and Minister Anne Rabbitte

Rare Diseases Ireland held their Election Manifesto launch on July 10th at Buswells Hotel, Molesworth St, Dublin 2. The manifesto features a number of actions that will reduce health inequalities and improve health and social care for people living with rare diseases when implemented.

The manifesto is a call to current members of the Houses of the Oireachtas, election candidates and political parties to mobilise and take action to meet the needs of 300,000 people living with rare diseases in Ireland, as well as their families and caregivers.

See RDI-Manifesto-2024-09.pdf at <https://rdi.ie>

Neurological Alliance of Ireland Election Manifesto



The Neurological Alliance of Ireland held a Pre Budget event at Buswells Hotel on September 25th.

The NAI and it's members highlighted to members of the Oireachtas the need for delivery of fully resourced community neurorehabilitation teams and the provision of access to a Consultant Neurologist in five regional hospitals in Bantry, Letterkenny, Wexford, Mayo and Portlaoise.

See <https://www.nai.ie/Recent News>



Dates for future HDAI Support Meetings

Dublin: 9th Nov. (and Annual Lunch)

West: 7th Dec. (and Annual Lunch)

Cork: 30th Nov. (and Annual Lunch)

Limerick: 19th Oct. (Annual Lunch in Jan.)

Please contact us at info@huntingtons.ie if you are interested in joining a support meeting.

Dates subject to change - contact HDAI for confirmation