National Centre for Neuroimmunology and Emerging Diseases

September 2019

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Our Mission

The National Centre for Neuroimmunology and Emerging Diseases (NCNED) is a research team located at Griffith University on the Gold Coast. Led by Professors Sonya Marshall-Gradisnik and Donald Staines, the team has a focus on Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS).

Our mission is to translate research findings into preventative medicine, social and clinical care, and public health outcomes. By collaborating with local, national and international research institutes, we aim to create sustained improvements in health and health care for not only those affected by ME/CFS but also other immune disorders.

Welcome to NCNED

Dr Kiran Thapaliya has recently joined NCNED and will be working as a Research Fellow in the area of Neuroimaging with NCNED researchers. Kiran's expertise is the area of modelling MR signals to study tissue microstructure in the human brain using multi-echo gradient echo at 7 Tesla. His expertise is on myelin imaging, signal modelling, magnetic susceptibility and quantitative susceptibility mapping and will be of significant importance in NCNED Neuroimaging focus of ME/CFS patients.

Michael Matula is a research student who has recently joined NCNED. Michael is a Clinical Physiologist in Respiratory and Sleep Medicine. His research project will involve reviewing the literature on the link between objective measures of sleep quality (such as sleep efficiency and staging demonstrated on the hypnogram of the EEG) and symptoms experienced by patients. A case series of patients with diagnosed CFS/ME assessed through various sleep centres will then be compiled, the data analysed and their PSG findings compared with their documented symptoms from a thorough quality of life questionnaire. It is hoped that by understanding the possible link between objective sleep disruption and symptoms affecting quality of life, this can give insight on ways to improve sleep architecture and the effect this would have on the symptoms experienced by these patients.

Gordon Research Conference on Organellar Channels and Transporters – West Dover, VT, USA, 4-9th August

NCNED research team member, Dr Helene Cabanas, attended and presented data from NCNED at the prestigious international Gordon Research Conference held in Mount Snow, VT, USA from the 4th to the 9th of August, 2019.

The focus of this meeting was on the most recent progress in new technologies in understanding the dynamics and physiology of organellar ion channels and transporters. Understanding the role of organellar ion channels and transporters will help elucidating new prognostic markers and/or therapeutic targets for ME/CFS. NCNED research data was received extremely well.

Griffith UNIVERSITY Queensland, Australia

MENZIES HEALTH INSTITUTE QUEENSLAND

ME/CFS Society of Western Australia

Professors Sonya Marshall Gradisnik and Don Staines visited the ME/CFS and Lyme Association of WA to provide an update on advances in discovering the pathology of ME/CFS. This included a background on the clinical pathology of ME/CFS, transient receptor potential ion channels and calcium signaling, as well as progress in pharmacotherapeutics and treatments. The seminar was extremely well attended. NCNED appreciated the opportunity to provide an update on the latest research data. NCNED is returning to WA in early 2020 to continue their collection of patient samples in the area of understanding the pathology of ME/CFS.

Publications

The NCNED team has just published an important paper titled 'A systematic review of cytokines in Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Systemic Exertion Intolerance Disease (CFS/ME/SEID)'. Matthew Corbitt, Natalie Eaton-Fitch, Donald Staines, Helene Cabanas and Sonya Marshall-Gradisnik.

To view the article, please use the following link:

https://link.springer.com/epdf/10.1186/s12883-019-1433-0?author_access_token=oGS8oSoB3ng5QwDUI7WPpm_BpE1tBhCbnbw3BuzI2RMOtEHGGPfIRKBejc-Tt4mMSRHueZ2ixKhPcRX2xe9aSWwCAuS4omU-152hpfkHB_xL2KNMMlmd2WtbYSUUZl5DNjECpef8z-gRthYbVTQV4g%3D%3D

The results showed that cytokines do not exhibit a conclusive role in CFS/ME/SEID and thus do not serve as reliable biomarkers.

Expansion of research site

The National Centre for ME/CFS Research in Australia (NCNED) has now commenced further ME/CFS research initiatives in Victoria, in collaboration with The Royal Melbourne Hospital, Australian Rickettsial Reference Laboratory, World Health Organisation Reference Laboratory, Geelong to further examine TRP ion channel function in ME/CFS patients.

If anyone is interested in participating in this study, please contact us by email at ncned@griffith.edu.au or call (07) 5678 9283 for further information.

Appreciation and Acknowledgement of Granting Organisations, Agencies, Benefactors and Fundraisers

Thank you to Annie Opasinis, the Stafford Fox Medical Research Foundation, McCusker Charitable Foundation, Mr Douglas Stutt, the Mason Foundation, Mr and Mrs Ian and Talei Stewart, the Alison Hunter Memorial Foundation, the Blake Beckett Foundation, Mr Adrian Flack, the Buxton Foundation, the Henty Community, Change for ME Charity, QLD ME/CFS/FM Support Association QLD Inc., the ACT ME/CFS Society and WA ME/CFS.