



EARA News Digest 2019 - Week 20

Welcome to your Monday morning update, [from EARA](#), on the latest developments in biomedical science, policy and openness in animal research in Europe and around the world.

Research

From dogs to boys, a new gene therapy for a rare disease



A gene therapy trial for a rare disease, which causes extreme muscle weakness and respiratory failure, has shown [striking results](#).

Researchers from USA, Canada, Germany and France performed the trial on nine boys with Myotubular Myopathy (MTM), aged between eight months and six-years-old, and presented the [results](#) at the [annual meeting](#) of the American Society of Gene & Cell Therapy.

All patients presented meaningful improvements in neuromuscular and respiratory function - most can sit up on their own, while four can now breathe without ventilators.

Previous research with dogs, a recognised animal model to study inherited muscle diseases, has verified that animals with MTM also showed improvements in their movement.

The boys “have gone from nothing to something,” told [Perry Shieh](#), neurologist at the University of California, Los Angeles. “Time will tell how much that something will be.”

Research

An unexpected atlas of the brain's immune cells

Scientists at Belgian EARA member the [VIB Center for Inflammation Research](#) at VUB, have [mapped](#) the brain's immune area using cells from mouse and mice.

The atlas revealed the diversity of brain macrophages (a type of immune cell) and found microglia (cells that are in close contact with neurons) where they were not expected.

The results, published in the journal [Nature Neuroscience](#) analysed more than 60,000 cells from the brains of healthy mice, ones with Alzheimer's disease and from mice with a genetic mutation in their immune system.

"It is becoming increasingly clear that inflammation plays a central role in many neurological disorders, especially Alzheimer's disease," said team leader Dr Kiavash Movahedi.

"We think that understanding the ins and outs of brain macrophages may be key for finally finding treatments for these diseases,"



Media



50 years of Ellegaard Göttingen Minipigs recognised

EARA member [Ellegaard Göttingen Minipigs](#) has marked 50 years of the company at its [Scientific Symposium, in London](#), UK, which also looked at future biomedical research uses for its animal model.

After Lars Friis Mikkelsen (pictured), CEO of the Danish company, opened the Symposium, a series of lectures looked at the growth of the company and its long-term collaboration with the University of Göttingen, which originally bred the minipig, and examined the ways that the animal is used in toxicology testing.

Peter Vestbjerg, of Ellegaard, explained that the Göttingen Minipigs is a good non-rodent model due to the adaptability of the minipig and its well managed genetics.

Examples of how minipigs are used to test toxicity on compounds under development for Alzheimer's and for anti-cancer drug development were given by Joanna Harding of AstraZeneca, and Sally-Anne Reynolds of Sequani, respectively.

From the University of Edinburgh, Michael Eddleston, focused on translational medicine between animals and humans, stating: "Pigs do save lives."

Do you have any colleagues who you think should receive this news digest? They can subscribe using [this link](#).

Follow the European Animal Research Association:



Copyright © 2019 European Animal Research Association, All rights reserved.

This is the partners newsletter of the European Animal Research Association. You are receiving this email because you opted in as EARA partner. The newsletters are send out on a quarterly basis to update EARA partners on the latest developments of our association.

Our mailing address is:

European Animal Research Association

Abbey House

74-76 St John Street

London EC1M 4DZ

[Privacy policy](#)

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)

