

Travel report on the 2016 annual meeting of the American College of Rheumatology (ACR)

Washington D.C. November 11-16

Receiving the NIVI travel grant made it possible to attend the 2016 ACR meeting. I presented my work on interactions between the two major autoantibodies in rheumatoid arthritis (rheumatoid factors and ACPAs) during the poster session on November 15th (see footnote for a link to the abstract¹) and during the discussions at the poster I received valuable input from both international researchers and Dutch colleagues.

The topics of the presentations at the conference ranged from basic science to clinical rheumatology practice and provided a good overview of where the rheumatology field is heading. One highlight for me was the series of lectures given by Dr. Troy Torgerson (University of Seattle), which consisted of two talks on the immunological basis of targeted therapy and basic immunological mechanisms in autoimmunity and a third session with interactive cases showing the various ways in which the immune system can go “off-track” and cause autoimmunity. The first two sessions are available online through the ACR website: <http://acr.peachnewmedia.com/store/provider/provider09.php>

Iain B McInnes (University of Glasgow) held an inspiring talk titled “Treatment of Rheumatoid Arthritis When the Patient Is Not Well” in which he advocated more involvement of the patient in setting treatment goals and emphasized that the goal should not be the lowest disease activity possible, but the best quality of life for the patient.

Something completely different, but very interesting, was the duo presentation of Scott Litin and Edward T. Creagan “How to give a fantastic talk”. They gave great tips on how to keep your audience engaged and how to most successfully present your research. I already used their advice on how to create optimal PowerPoint slides and their tips on posture during a presentation I gave when I returned to our institute.

I thank the NIVI for awarding me the travel grant that enabled me to get input from many fellow researchers on my projects and to get updated on rheumatology in general and the immunological mechanisms underlying disease and treatment.

Willem Falkenburg

Department of Rheumatology,
Amsterdam Rheumatology and immunology Center (ARC), location Reade
Department of Immunopathology, Sanquin Research, Amsterdam
w.falkenburg@sanquin.nl

¹ <http://acrabstracts.org/abstract/rheumatoid-factors-may-potentiate-immune-complex-formation-of-anti-citrullinated-protein-antibodies/>