



## MNDcare Latest News - March 2012

Welcome to the first MNDcare newsletter for 2012.

The New Year starts with information on important advances in MND research.

In this issue:

- Overview of latest MND research
- Grants awarded for MND research in Australia
- MND around the world
- Presentations from the Allied Professionals Forum
- Ask the Experts

### Latest Research

The December edition of the research newsletter **Advance** includes a report by Bradley Turner, Florey Neuroscience Institutes, on the scientific highlights of the 22nd International Symposium on ALS/MND in Sydney, December 2011:

*'With the explosion of discoveries in the MND field these past 3 years in terms of fingering culprit genes, molecules and dominant themes such as genetic message and protein quality control in motor neurone biology and vulnerability in MND, I sensed a real air of excitement and optimism heading out of this Symposium and looking forward to strides achieved in the Chicago 2012 meeting.'* - [Read more](#)

Advance also provides a summary of the grants awarded for MND research in Australia in 2012:

### MNDRIA grant allocations for 2012

Funds totalling \$1.357 million have been awarded by the Motor Neurone Disease Research Institute of Australia (MNDRIA) to new grants commencing in 2012. Three scholarships have been awarded to encourage new researchers to the field of MND. Twelve grants-in-aid have been awarded to projects that approach MND from many angles seeking to understand the causes, provide better care, or find a cure for MND. These grants help to retain established researchers as they continue their quest to fight MND. [Read more](#) about the research being funded in Australia

### International Research Update

The final quarterly International Research Update for 2011 prepared by Bill Gole Postdoctoral Research Fellow Dr Justin Yerbury is now available:

*'Over the last three years I have had the pleasure of writing this report with the aim of creating a report that could translate the most recent MND research filled with scientific jargon into something that we can all understand. It has been a very exciting three years and we have covered some great leaps in scientific progress in the understanding of MND. When I first started writing this report it was common to see the phrase "we do not know what causes most familial cases of MND". Since then mutations in the genes TDP-43, ELP3, FUS/TLS, ANG, OPTN, ATXN-2, VCP and UBQLN-2 have all been found to cause MND. Most recently two groups of scientists have reported that a new gene, C9ORF72, causes many cases of MND and FTD. This new gene has become the most common known cause of MND. We have also seen progress in understanding the biology of MND with uncovering of pathways in inflammatory processes, stress pathways, protein disposal and much more. In*



*this, my last report before passing on the job, we will focus on this new genetic mutation and what this means for understanding MND, and as always we will look at some of the other MND research going on all around the world' - [Read more](#)*

Dr Yerbury has done a wonderful job and hands over publication of the International Research Update to Dr Catherine Blizzard from the Menzies Research Institute, University of Tasmania.

To keep in touch with the latest ALS/ MND research from around the world we recommend regular visits to the [MNDcare RSS news and research feed pages](#)

## MND care around the world

The Annual Meeting of the International Alliance of ALS/MND Associations brings together ALS/MND Associations from around the world to share initiatives and develop strategies for fighting ALS/MND. Presentations from the Alliance Meeting, Sydney, 2011, demonstrate a variety of care initiatives by ALS/MND organisations internationally. Available [here](#)

## Presentations from the Allied Professionals Forum (International ALS/MND Symposium) – Sydney November 28 - 2011

The PowerPoint presentations from the Allied Professionals Forum are now available online. The presentations cover a range of topics relevant to medical, palliative, nursing and allied health professionals working with people living with ALS/MND. If you wish to use the presentation or slides from it contact the author by email and seek permission. Available [here](#)

## Ask the Experts

As promised in our December Newsletter links to the **Ask the Experts** session (International Symposium) are now available on the [MNDcare website](#). The presentations have been uploaded to the new MND Australia youtube channel. Experts from the UK, USA and Ireland - Kevin Talbot, Kevin Eggan, Robert Brown Jr, and Orla Hardiman - discuss the impact of advances in research on the care of people living with MND, stem cells, genetics and clinical trials.

People with MND and their carers pose questions to this international panel of MND experts in the Ask the Experts Q and A session. The expert responses provided have the potential to assist clinicians encountering similar questions during their work with MND clients.

All presentations on the MND Australia youtube channel available [here](#).

***We hope for another exciting year marking new advances in the fight against MND.***