



Press Release

Conduct Disorders in Female Adolescents: Understanding Mechanisms and Adapting Therapies

International conference on conduct disorders in female adolescents: Findings from the FemNAT-CD European multicentre study

Friday, 26 January 2018, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. (CET)

Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt am Main

Casino - Campus Westend

Nina Rubinsteinweg 1, 60323 Frankfurt am Main, Germany

After four years of intense research and collaboration, the EU-funded FemNAT-CD project will present its results to the broader public. The multicentre study has explored the mechanisms of conduct disorders (CD) in girls with CD from childhood to young adulthood and is aiming to develop improved treatments for this disorder. The European Union has funded FemNAT-CD with six million Euros over the course of four and a half years.

The number of girls with CD (severe antisocial behaviour and aggression) is steadily increasing, notably in western societies such as the European Union. About two percent of girls suffer from it. Typical problems connected with CD are teenage pregnancy, difficulties integrating into working life, drug abuse, delinquency and chronic mental and physical health problems.

In order to explore the underlying mechanisms of this disorder and allow the development of new therapies, FemNAT-CD has conducted an unique large scale, multidisciplinary study which has examined genetic and environmental risk factors, changes in brain structure and function, and whether girls with CD have problems in controlling and recognising emotions. In addition, the efficacy of an evidence-based intervention aiming to improve emotion regulation in girls with CD placed in youth welfare institutions was investigated.

Prof. Christine Freitag, director of the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Psychosomatics and Psychotherapy at Goethe University Frankfurt and coordinator of the project, said: "Over the past four years we have comprehensively investigated conduct disorder in girls and

we now understand the disorder much better. We have gained a deeper insight into the underlying genetic and neural mechanisms and know more about the roles of the autonomic and stress hormone systems in conduct disorder. The consortium has also been able to describe the specific clinical presentation as well as the needs of girls with conduct disorder. These findings will provide the foundations for the development of new therapies for the patients.”

On Friday, 26 January 2018 the consortium members will present the study’s initial results. As well as giving an overview of the project’s progress and its findings, the conference aims to encourage a lively and productive discussion on how to improve existing healthcare and youth welfare systems across Europe, and thus better help patients and their families. “We see this conference as a chance to collectively discuss actions which result out of our findings and to identify ways to improve the existing system”, says Prof. Freitag. “In addition, we want to look at the problems and challenges we have experienced when working at an European level.”

The conference will be divided into two parts: An introduction to the FemNAT-CD study from the members of the Consortium in the morning and an open panel discussion with experts in the field in the afternoon. Anyone who is interested in or working in the field of CD is invited: patients and their families, psychiatrists, psychologists, staff at welfare institutions, researchers, patient or parent support organisations, and politicians. Detailed information about the conference and its agenda will follow.

The FemNAT-CD study has been supported by the European Union’s FP7-Health-2013-Innovation Programme since September 2013. Project members are: Goethe University Frankfurt am Main, University Hospital Aachen, Stichting VUmc Amsterdam, University of Southampton, University of Basel, University of Heidelberg, University of Birmingham, University of Regensburg, Fundación Vasca De Innovación E Investigación Sanitarias (BIOEF/Osakidetza), Szegedi Tudományegyetem, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Varionostic GmbH, DAACRO GmbH & Co KG, Cardiff University, ARTTIC SAS, GenXPro GmbH.

For further information:

www.femnat-cd.eu

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