



CECAD Cluster of Excellence. Cologne University

Press Release

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Cologne Specialist for Infectious Diseases Prof Oliver Cornely from the CECAD Cluster of Excellence and University Hospital of Cologne Elected ECMM President

Fungal infections are often associated with the aging process and research in this area is highly relevant given our aging population. Confirmation of Cologne Mycologist Prof Oliver Cornely's role as President of the ECMM - the European Confederation of Medical Mycology - is an exceptional accolade for his research. The successful translation of findings from basic research into clinical therapy is one of the key criteria.

Cologne, 19 May 2014. The re-election of Prof Cornely as President of the ECMM Confederation at the 2014 ECMM Council Meeting on May 14 in Amsterdam was a great honour and recognition of his research into infectious diseases. Over the course of his first presidency, Cornely brought Ireland and Croatia into the ECMM, bringing the number of member countries up to 24. His most important objective is to continue to successfully focus the synergies generated by international cooperation. Cornely's plan is to integrate his group's high-end technology databank with sets of data collected from diverse epidemiological studies into a range of invasive fungal diseases by establishing a standardized data format. A fungal sample will be obtained from each patient and added to publically accessible strain banks available to all interested researchers. To date clinical data on diseases has been collated separately from microbiological data and isolates. Integrating these two approaches promises to yield a wealth of findings likely to further our understanding of the origins and possible treatments of fungal infections.

As we age, our immune systems weaken and we become more prone to colonisation by harmful and hard-to-treat fungi. The internationally successful ECMM European Confederation of Medical Mycology drives scientific progress forward with new, innovative ideas by actively supporting research, coordinating scientific and clinical activities, and organising international congresses and trainings.

Prof Cornely's research in the international network is also an innovative driving force for research at the CECAD Cluster of Excellence. Access to samples of rare infections creates new opportunities for decoding the pathogens involved and developing new therapies. Prof Cornely, Director of the Clinical Trials Center in Cologne funded by the BMBF, and a senior physician at

University Hospital of Cologne, adds: "Translational research, that is the systematic transfer of findings from basic research into clinical treatments, is giving us an international edge in the fight against fungal infections. Just merging information from clinical practice and laboratory research gives us a decisive boost - a huge advantage for our patients."

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