

## **First Cholesterol Round Table at the annual meeting of the German Cardiac Society in Bonn/Germany on November 7, 2023**

On Saturday, November 7, 2023, the World Heart Federation, the German Cardiac Society (DGK) and the German Society of Lipidology (DGFF Lipid-Liga) invited experts with a special interest in lipidology to their first Cholesterol Roundtable in Bonn, Germany. This initiative aims to bring key opinion leaders in Germany together, in order to discuss current projects in the field of lipidology to improve scientific co-operations and patient care.

In addition to preparing the agenda for this meeting, Professor Frank Edelmann (Berlin) and Professor Oliver Weingärtner (Jena) chaired the session.

Professor Kausik Ray (London) started the program with a short introduction into the **Cholesterol Roadmap**, an initiative started by the World Heart Federation. The aim of this initiative was according to Professor Ray to establish joint research and awareness projects to improve identification of high-risk patients, improve guideline recommended advice and reduce cardiovascular burden on a national scale.

In a second presentation Professor Holger Thiele (Leipzig), the current President of the DGK, reported on the first meetings with Professor Karl Lauterbach (German Minister of Health) about plans of the National Heart Alliance (*Nationale Herz-Allianz*) a national campaign of cardiac medical societies and patient organizations under the aegis of the German Ministry of Health to reduce cardiovascular diseases and promote cardiovascular health. Professor Thiele stated that there was a need for a “change in paradigm” in the German health care system. He declared that the political focus laid on four fields of action:

1. Improvement of early identification of high-risk patients.  
Two studies already under way in München and Hannover (VRONI- and FRIDOLIN-Study) to detect familial hypercholesterolemia in 5 to 6-year-old children.
2. Check-up programs should identify patients at increased cardiovascular risk.
3. Improvements of currently established disease management programs.
4. Reduction of smoking as cardiovascular risk factor.

In an effort to introduce current research projects in the field 45-minutes presentations followed with discussion.

### **1. “Germany on Target - GoT”**

The project was presented by the principal investigator (PI) Professor Oliver Weingärtner. GoT is a multi-center, prospective, randomized clinical trial in which an app-based approach is compared to standard care to attain LDL-C target levels in patients with myocardial infarction. The follow-up period is up to two years and LDL-C target attainment at 6 months is the primary endpoint. The study was initiated by the DGFF-Lipid-Liga and is supported by the DACH Society of Prevention, Center for Health Services Research of the German Cardiac Society (DGK-ZfKVF) and by SANOFI.

## **2. “Statin Intolerance Registry – SIR”**

Professor Ulrich Laufs (Leipzig) as the PI of this study introduced the world’s first registry of patients with statin intolerance. A multi-center registry conducted in Germany which enrolled over 1000 patients with statin intolerance to improve the understanding of this disease entity.

## **3. VRONI-Study**

Dr. Veronika Sanin (München) as PI introduced a screening program for familial hypercholesterolemia (FH) in early childhood. The VRONI-Study is supported by the German Heart Foundation (DHS) and aims at identifying children 5-14 years old with FH. Dr. Sanin reported 150 children identified in Bavaria of which more than 50 % were already on statin medication. The study will be introduced to the North of Germany in the next couple of months, supported by the DGK, DHS and Dr. Rolf M. Schwiete Foundation.

According to the German Ministry of Health this study will be an integral part of standard care in Germany.

## **4. Care-High**

Care-High is the first German registry for familial hypercholesterolemia. In “Care-High” general practitioners (GP) and other specialists can register patients with suspected FH. The aim of this registry is to identify high-risk patients and their families to improve screening and treatment of these often neglected and unidentified patient population.

The participants agreed unanimously that the Cholesterol Roadmap is an important initiative to reduce cardiovascular burden in Germany. Moreover, the NHA, accordingly, aims to tackle similar problems, i.e. CVD prevention and health promotion. All of the above-mentioned projects are in coherence with the current action plan of the NHA.

A second meeting at the annual conference of the DGK in Mannheim in April 2024 will be highly appreciated to further the discussion and highlight the importance of the establishment of coordinated research and awareness projects, in order to reduce cardiovascular burden on a national scale.

Protocol: Prof. Dr. Oliver Weingärtner, Universitätsklinikum Jena