



THE EARLY NUTRITION PROGRAMMING PROJECT

Project Number: FOOD-CT-2005-007036

Acronym: EARNEST

(EARLY Nutrition programming - long term follow up of Efficacy and Safety Trials and integrated epidemiological, genetic, animal, consumer and economic research.)

NEWSLETTER 1

Report of Tarragona Progress Meeting

The second progress meeting was held in Tarragona, Spain and the EARNEST consortium greatly appreciated the warm hospitality of Professor Ricardo Closa and his team from University Rovira i Virgili. Tarragona is a picturesque town with extensive Roman ruins on the coast south of Barcelona and the group enjoyed staying on the seafront with views over the remains of an amphitheatre and hippodrome. The meeting also did its bit for European cultural integration with hotel staff getting used to providing a quick lunch at 12.30pm and everybody else getting used to having a relaxed dinner at 10pm!

Though the bulk of the time was taken up with meetings of the different themes, it also provided an opportunity for the coordination team to introduce the internal website and encourage everybody to use it as their main method of communication. The forum facility in each theme section allows the whole group to discuss issues without having to send out and keep lots of different emails. Another facility allows files to be uploaded and shared with everybody in the consortium. Members were encouraged to place on the internal website copies of their presentations.



The remains of the Roman amphitheatre outside the group's hotel.

The theme meetings enabled the members of each theme to become more familiar with the other projects in their theme and so identify common approaches and opportunities. During Theme 1 discussions, members discussed sharing databases, pooling analyses on outcomes such as blood pressure and harmonising methodologies. They identified a need for greater integration with Theme 4. The Theme 2 discussions focussed on progress on enrolment in the different cohorts and recognised the need for more collaboration with Theme 3. The discussions in the Theme 3 meetings were primarily about standardising protocols and technologies. They also recognised the need for deeper integration with other themes. Theme 4 agreed data collection and logging procedures while Theme 6 agreed the next steps for the two clinical trials they will be carrying out.

A common desire arising from each of the individual theme sessions was for greater integration between the themes and more opportunity to explore common interests. It was agreed that more time would be allocated to this at the next General Assembly meeting in Brussels.

Virtual Academy of Early Nutrition Programming up and running

The Early Nutrition Programming Project brings together most of Europe's top experts in the field of early nutrition programming and the research being carried out by these scientists is at the forefront of research in this area. One of the aims of the project therefore is to harness this creative energy for the benefit of the wider research community by the formation of a virtual Academy of Early Nutrition Programming. This will act as a centre for information and training in the field of early nutrition programming and will form a section of the website on the Early Nutrition Programming project website (www.metabolic-programming.org).

The Academy has got off to a good start with a service listing the results of a PubMed search on recent publications in early nutrition with links to the relevant abstracts. This will be updated every couple of months and will allow those working in the field to keep abreast of new developments without having to search out the information for themselves. Research in this area is published in many different journals and this service will draw it together in one place in the form of a virtual journal of early nutrition programming.

Future plans for the Academy include the organisation of conferences on early nutrition programming and training opportunities for scientists to spread the skill and expertise of the consortium to a wider audience. Training opportunities which are open to any interested researchers in the different techniques and procedures involved in the investigation of programming will be advertised in the section of the website devoted to the Academy.

www.metabolic-programming.org
email: programming@med.uni-muenchen.de

Training courses

The training courses are an important part of the Early Nutrition Programming Project's activities. They help to ensure common standards across different studies and as their focus is on graduate students, they will help to produce a new generation of researchers with a unique blend of complementary skills. Thirteen training courses have been held so far, of which five were joint training courses with other institutions such as the ESPGHAN summer schools.

A recent course on Methods of measuring energy expenditure in animals was held at the Research Institute for the Biology of Farm Animals in Dummerstorf, Germany from 30th January to 3rd February 2006 and organised by Professor Cornelia Metges. Training was provided in methods of measuring energy expenditure by indirect calorimetry and doubly labeled water in mice; glucose and amino acid metabolism using stable isotope labelled nutrient tracers in laboratory and farm animals, and laboratory work and mass spectrometry. Four members of the Earnest consortium attended the course and said afterwards that they had found it very useful for the work they are doing on early nutrition programming.



Vladimir Kus "Because I use indirect calorimetry in my experiments, this training was for me very useful. I could see other machines than the ones we have and it helped me to better understand the principles of this method. We also discussed our own problems with measurement and data evaluation. Stable isotope methods was for me very interesting because I had never seen it before. Now I know that these methods are very powerful and I believe that I can use them in the future. "

Anne-Maj Samuelsson "I joined the training course (in the pictures I have light blue clothes) to be able to learn more about the techniques calorimetry and double water isotope for future applications in the EARNEST project. The course was very informative with both lectures, practical demonstrations and open discussions. The size of the group allowed us to have vivid discussions, exchange ideas, and not least understand the programming aspect from different backgrounds."



Relevant Meetings

2006

16th ECOG Workshop

Rzeszow, Poland, June 1-3, 2006 - www.ecog2006.medforum.pl

39th ESPGHAN Annual Meeting

Dresden, Germany. 7-10th June, 2006 - www.espghan2006.org

10th International Congress on Obesity

Sydney, Australia. 3-8 September 2006 - www.iaso.org/conferences/10ico

4th World Congress on Developmental Origins of Health and Disease

Utrecht, The Netherlands. 13-16th September 2006 - www.dohad2006.org

Nutrition Society and Neonatal Society

Nutrition in early life New horizons in a new century
Cambridge, UK. 11-13 December 2006 - www.nutrition society.org

2007

Early Nutrition Programming Project International Conference

Early Nutrition and Health Outcome in Later Life: Obesity and Beyond
Budapest, Hungary. 20-21st April 2007

15th European Congress on Obesity

Budapest, Hungary. 22-25th April 2007 - www.eco2007.org

9th European Congress on Endocrinology

Budapest, Hungary. 28th April-2nd May 2007 - www.ece2007.com

5th International Congress on Developmental Origins of Health and Disease

Perth, Australia. 6-9th November 2007 - www.dohad2007.org

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

The first International Early Nutrition Programming Project Conference will be held in Budapest, Hungary on 20-21st April 2007. Put the date in your diary now!

It will be a pre-satellite meeting of the 15th European Congress on Obesity meeting. It will focus on the consequences of early nutrition programming for obesity and related issues.