
Meeting Report

Report from the 1st Annual RICiFA Meeting (International Meeting on Pharmaceutical Sciences 2010)

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The 1st International Meeting on Pharmaceutical Sciences (RICiFA 2010) took place from the 23–25th of June 2010 in the National University of Cordoba, Cordoba, Argentina. The purpose of this conference was to bring together renowned scientists, researchers, and students in order to reflect upon recent advances in pharmaceutical sciences. The meeting offered a strong representation of all the disciplines including Phytopharmacy and Pharmacognosy, Pharmacology, Drug Quality Control, Microbiology, Pharmaceutical Technology and Biotechnology, Medicinal Chemistry, Clinical Pharmacy, and Pharmaceutical Education.

The opening session began with a keynote lecture given by Dr. Rubén Manzo, President of the Scientific Committee (Argentina), entitled *Research and Development of the Pharmaceutical Sciences and its Relationship with the Academic Education in Argentina*.

Three invited plenary lectures were given by internationally known researchers including Dr. Jean Pierre Benoit (France), Dr. Maria Esther Gil Alegre (Spain), and Dr. Lee Kirsch (U.S.A.).

Professor Benoit's presentation was entitled *A New Generation of Oncological Nanomedicines: The Lipidic Nanocapsules*. Professor Benoit teaches pharmaceutical technology and biopharmacy at the Faculty of Pharmacy, Angers University. He is currently the director of a 50-strong research team, recognized and financed by INSERM. His dynamism has also led him to fulfill numerous administrative tasks within national and international institutions: for example, he has been made a member of the Board of Governors of the CRS (Controlled Release Society), and he has been vice-president then president of the International Microencapsulation

Society from 1999 to 2003. His research activity has resulted in the publication of over 220 original refereed scientific articles and reviews, 25 patents and more than 110 contributions at conferences. He was recognized as an AAPS Fellow in 1994. His research, at the frontiers of physical chemistry, pharmaceutical technology, and biology, concerns both the development of new encapsulation methods for active ingredients without recourse to organic solvents, and drug targeting in tumors, particularly in the brain. In the area of drug targeting, Professor Benoit's research group was the first to demonstrate the biocompatibility and the biodegradability of poly(lactide-co-glycolide) microspheres implanted in the brain. Their studies have led to two phase I/II clinical trials and one phase IIb trial in patients suffering from glioblastoma; a significant increase in patient survival has been observed. Currently, his interest is directed towards the conception of bio-inspired nanocapsules (lipid nanocapsules) as new drug delivery systems to target tumors.

Dr. Maria Esther Gil Alegre presented a lecture entitled *Delivery Systems in Dermatocosmetics*. Dr. Gil Alegre is Professor of Pharmaceutical Technology and Researcher of the Industrial Pharmaceutical Institute at the Complutense University of Madrid (UCM), Spain. Her research activity has resulted in the publication of many original refereed scientific articles and reviews, patents, and more than 100 contributions at conferences. She is the author of several book chapters and books. She was engaged with the Spanish Real Pharmacopeia for many years. Her research interests are based on drug delivery systems, microencapsulation of drugs for human and veterinary medicine. She has been involved in the development of new encapsulation methods for active ingredients applied particularly to cosmetic products.

Professor Lee Kirsch's talk was entitled *A Case Study on Linking Solid-State Stability to Manufacturing Design in the FDA's Quality-By-Design Pharmaceutical Development Paradigm*. Dr. Kirsch is professor of Pharmaceutics and Chemical and Biochemical Engineering at The University of Iowa. The research he presented was part of a multi-institutional research project supported by the US-FDA and conducted by the National Institute for Pharmaceutical Technology and

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Education (NIPTE). Professor Kirsch is the editor-in-chief of *AAPS PharmSciTech*.

An additional ten invited podium presentations were given by distinguished Argentinean scientists and educators including Dr. María E. Fátima Nader: *Trends in the Design of Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms using Lactobacilli Strains*; Dr. Carlos Lanusse: *Pharmacology of the Anthelmintic Therapy in Veterinary Medicine*; Dr. Juan Gallo: *New Trends in Antiangiogenic Ophthalmology Treatment*; Dr. Luis E. Bruno Blanch: *Applied Methodology to the Design of Anticonvulsant Drugs*; Dr. Julio A. Zygadlo: *Essentials Oils and its Biological Activities*; Dr. Marcelo Naccuchio: *Pharmaceutical Technology and Regenerative Medicine*; Dr. Virginia Rivero: *Research and Development Applied to Novel Vaccines*; Dr. Joaquín V. Rodríguez: *Trends in Cryopreservation of Cells and Tissues*; Dr. Claudia Balagué: *Advances and Evaluation of the Contents of the Pharmacy Profession*; and Dr. Marcela Longhi: *Advances of the Applied Analytical Chemistry and Drug Quality Control*.

Over 230 posters were presented at the meeting. The abstracts were selected and reviewed by the conference's Scientific Committee. We are sincerely grateful to the contributing authors for their outstanding cooperation and valuable support. All are experts in their respective fields and we are honored that each of them not only agreed to participate, but also clearly devoted a great deal of time and diligence to their efforts. Special thanks are also due to all the peer reviewers for their valuable comments, criticisms, and suggestions.

This first annual meeting was attended by nearly 500 pharmacists, pharmaceutical scientists, academics, researchers,

and students; it signified a major contribution to scientific exchange in Latin America. Although mainly from Argentina, the symposium attracted participants from neighboring South American countries. We thank the participants for submitting their contributions for publication. Please visit the following URL for a complete compilation of presentation titles, authors, and abstracts: www.fbioyf.unr.edu.ar/ricifa.

In conjunction with the RICiFA 2010, a day-long pre-satellite symposium on pharmaceutical education took place wherein participants were exposed to topical issues on the role of the pharmacist in health care and its links to pharmaceutical education.

The social side of RICiFA 2010—finding new friends and greeting old ones—was an excellent complement to the meeting program.

The outstanding success of RICiFA 2010 was achieved by the joint effort of many coworkers and colleagues who worked very hard. Thanks, to all of them. The scientific committee of RICiFA 2010 is already looking forward to welcoming participants once again next year at the *2nd International Meeting on Pharmaceutical Sciences (RICiFA 2012) in Rosario, Argentina*

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