Orphan Diseases Working Group

Saturday October 11, 2025

ISCTM 2025 Autumn Conference, Amsterdam Marriott

Chairs: Joan Busner, Ph.D. and Gahan Pandina, Ph.D.

Welcome and Introductions to New Members

Preregistered Attendees

Preferred Name	Last Name	Credentials	Organization
Jeffrey	Apter	MD	Global Clinical Trials
Linda	Berkowitz	Other	Signant Health
Joan	Busner	PhD	Signant Health, and Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine
Francesca	Cormack	PhD	Cambridge Cognition
Corine	de Boer	MD, PhD	Tulip Medical Consulting
Fiona	Forrestal	MSc	Biogen
Sofie	Mesens	MD	Johnson and Johnson
Gahan	Pandina	PhD	Johnson and Johnson
Georgios	Papazisis	MD, PhD	School of Medicine, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Vanina	Popova	MD	Johnson and Jonhson
Sian	Ratcliffe	PhD	Biogen
Mathieu	Seynaeve	MD	Beckley Psytech
Aikaterini	Stravoravdi	PhD	Clinical Research Unit, School of Medicine, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Annemieke	Vink	MSc	IQVIA

Updates

- Continuing our streak of high productivity!
- February 2025 session: “Using Novel Biomarkers and Advanced Analytics to Optimize Measurement, Endpoint Selection, and Signal Detection: Lessons for the Broader Neuroscience Community from Orphan Disease Trials”
  - Results of a year’s worth of meetings and planning – many thanks to all!!
- 5 excellent papers already published
- Three manuscripts underway
  - CGI in Rare Disease Trials – plan to meet after October meeting
  - Measuring Cognition in Rare Disease – new partial available, plan to meet after October meeting
  - (Ethical Issues in Rare Disease Trials) – update from subteam?

News from the field…

HEALTH • 4 MIN READ

Experimental gene therapy found to slow Huntington's disease progression, company says

SEP 24, 2025

By Jacqueline Howard

"The Amsterdam-based company announced Wednesday that patients who received a high dose of its AMT-130 therapy for Huntington's disease saw disease progression slow by 75% after 36 months."

The treatment was "generally well-tolerated," with a "manageable" safety profile, the company said. The full study results have not yet been published in a peer-reviewed journal."

- Regulatory pathway – use of RWE database for natural history control group
- Surgical delivery system w/ DNA targeted therapies – potential for other delivery systems or other treatments?
- FDA vs. EMA and other HA approaches?

FDA NEWS RELEASE

FDA Advances Rare Disease Drug Development with New Evidence Principles

For Immediate Release: September 03, 2025

https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-advances-rare-disease-drug-development-new-evidence-principles

- "The RDEP – developed and implemented jointly by the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER) and the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research (CBER) – addresses the inherent uncertainties of rare disease drug development by assuring sponsors that reviews will encompass additional supportive data. Approval under the process may be based on one adequate and well-controlled study plus robust confirmatory evidence, which may include:
  - Strong mechanistic or biomarker evidence
  - Evidence from relevant non-clinical models
  - Clinical pharmacodynamic data
  - Case reports, expanded access data, or natural history studies
- Sponsors may apply to the process any time prior to the launch of a pivotal trial. To be eligible, investigative therapies must specifically address the genetic defect in question and target a very small, rare disease population or subpopulation (generally fewer than 1,000 patients in the United States) facing rapid deterioration in function leading to disability or death, for whom no adequate alternative therapies exist."

Brainstorm

- Session proposals
- Manuscripts
- New research concepts / position papers

Next Steps

- Manuscript meetings to be scheduled ASAP
- Final version to be prepared by January 2026