

The Brussels Declaration

To the Editors:

In the December issue of the *European Respiratory Journal*, HOLGATE *et al.* [1] published "The Brussels Declaration: the need for change in asthma management". This article originated from a Policy Roundtable on Asthma held at the European Parliament in January 2006.

Although the European Respiratory Society (ERS) strongly supports and prioritises research on asthma, the publication should NOT be interpreted as an official opinion of the ERS. The ERS took part in this summit and decided, based on exclusive sponsorship of Merck Sharpe and Dohme (Hoddesdon, UK), to cease further participation. The whole project was financially supported by the Asthma, Allergy and Inflammation Research Charity, based in the research institute of Southampton Hospital (Southampton, UK), and sponsored by an "unrestricted" grant from Merck Sharpe and Dohme.

As stated earlier, the ERS strongly endorses initiatives such as the Brussels Declaration Group for prioritisation of research on asthma. The pro-active role of the ERS and the European Lung Foundation (ELF) recently resulted in awarding the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) project on severe asthma, in which both the ERS and the ELF have a central role in the

dissemination. In the future, the ERS and the ELF also hope to create an ideal platform for research in respiratory diseases, such as asthma (IMI), COPD (IMI) and tuberculosis (TB PAN-NET), and are looking to form close collaboration with research groups of the ERS and other (non)respiratory societies.

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REFERENCES

- 1 Holgate S, Bisgaard H, Bjermer L, *et al.* The Brussels Declaration: the need for change in asthma management. *Eur Respir J* 2008; 32: 1433–1442.

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