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Financial assistance from ASCEPT supported my attendance at two international conferences in China. The first was the International Conference of Pharmacogenetics (IUPHAR & PRACP) held in Changsha from 28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> of June, and the second the 15<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Pharmacology (IUPHAR) 2006 held in Beijing from 2<sup>nd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> of July.

The International Conference of Pharmacogenetics was held as a satellite conference to IUPHAR. The major themes of the conference were; the impacts of ethnic and racial diversity on the pharmacology of drugs, the role of Pharmacogenetics in international drug development and clinical trials, and new technologies improving the translation of Pharmacogenetics research in to clinical practice. Keynote and plenary lectures, and oral presentations by Dr Meyer, Prof Eichelbaum and Prof Wood, respectively, outlined the common problems encountered in pharmacogenetics research as well as potential solutions, including the potential impact of technologies such as the availability of ultrarapid / low cost whole genome sequencing on improving the efficiency of pharmacogenetic research and clinical application. These integral issues were echoed and addressed in a number of excellent presentations throughout the conference. Another highlight of the conference was the plenary lecture by Prof Suarez-Kurtz outlining the importance of genetic admixture and the concept of genetic individuality in personalized drug therapy. I also presented my own work (as a poster) on the influence of *ABCB1* genetic variability on methadone requirements in opioid substitution therapy, which attracted particular interest from Prof Eap and Severine Crettol from CHUV, Switzerland. Both were giving lectures on their own research of the pharmacogenetics of methadone at the conference, and it provided an excellent opportunity to discuss and compare our results, possible future directions and considerations for my work, and possible collaborations between our research groups.

The 15<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Pharmacology also offered me an excellent opportunity to present my own work and promote my research to a wider audience of pharmacologists. Examining the program I was looking forward to visiting a number of the posters listed, hoping to discuss methodologies and experiences with those performing work in my area of research. I was disappointed to find that most of the posters I was interested in were either not there or left unattended. However, during my own poster session I was pleased to find a number of people interested in my work, and had productive discussions regarding haplotyping programs incorporate in my project, as well as people's experience with various genotyping/phenotyping assays I was considering applying in future stages of my PhD. Highlights of the extensive program were symposia on Transporters and Adverse Effects of Drugs and Addiction, as well as lectures on pharmacogenetics/genomics by Prof Weinshilboum and Prof Zhou, and Dr Maurel's lecture on nuclear receptor interactions and regulation of P450s.

I would sincerely like to thank ASCEPT for the financial support that allowed me to travel to China to attend my first international conferences. I look forward to applying the experience, knowledge and new ideas I have gained from these conferences to improve my ongoing research in the area of opioid pharmacogenetics.