

# CINP Special Congress on Addiction and Mental Health

It's a sad fact that substance abuse and addiction is a significant problem for many nations, ruining the lives of addicts and their families, increasing the risk of individuals contracting infections such as HIV and Hepatitis C, and placing a huge financial burden on governments. In many cases there are also extremely high levels of substance abuse amongst people with mental illness, which can complicate the illness and by doing so, impede treatment. In South East Asia opioid addiction is a particular problem, with many nations taking proactive and innovative steps to combat substance abuse and addiction, and as well as the problem of drug use by the mentally ill.

Tackling the problem head on recently was the CINP Asia-Pacific (International College of Neuropsychopharmacology) Special Congress on Addiction and Mental Health, which was held at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, Malaysia, in October 2013.

## Conference goals

Presented in partnership with the Malaysian Psychiatric Association (MPA), the congress aimed to gather experts in addiction together in one spot to review advances in clinical research, efforts in the field to reduce substance dependence, and the link between addiction and mental illness.

Featuring a wide ranging

agenda, the congress highlighted topics including the prevalence of chemical addiction such as amphetamine-like substances, alcohol and nicotine addiction, practices around substance abuse leading to increased risk of infections such as HIV, as well as the rising trend of internet addiction and gambling.

Local organisers MPA hoped the conference would enable Malaysian delegates to gather first-hand knowledge of the issues involved, and share their own research on managing heroin addiction.

MPA also hoped that hosting the congress would highlight the potential of Kuala Lumpur as a hub for academic conferences to foreign delegates.

The three day congress attracted 322 delegates, mostly psychiatrists or scientists involved in the fields of addiction and mental illness, from 23 nations including Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, China, Denmark, Peru, the Ukraine, New Zealand, Australia, the UK and the US.

## The verdict

Since coming to a conclusion, the congress has been hailed as a success, having achieved its goals of creating a forum for discussion and an exchange of ideas.

"The presentations at the CINP Pacific Asia and Malaysia Psychiatric Association Special Congress on Drug Addiction 2013 were of an extremely high standard across the full breadth

of topics from basic science to current treatment best practice," said Congress chair Professor Brian Dean. "This high level of content was reflected in all sessions being well attended. The high attendance in each session meant that the discussions after each presentation were very interactive, had to be ended by

the Chairman in the interests of time, and were of a very high standard.

"Between discussions in each session and during the breaks there was a high level of interchange of information between delegates from different countries about the current best practice in both tackling the problem of

addictions and the biological basis of addictive behaviour. "The CINP Pacific Asia and Malaysia Psychiatric Association Special Congress on Drug Addiction 2013 therefore achieved its goal which was to bring a focus on the many addiction problems faced across Asia and to stimulate

discussion on how to reduce levels of addiction, best deal with addiction when it occurs and the importance of treating mental illness with comorbid addiction as a special case."

**Alexandra Yeomans** was a guest of the Malaysia Convention and Exhibition Bureau. **CEM**

The CINP Special Congress on Addiction and Mental Health attracted more than 300 delegates to the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre.



**Client:** CINP Pacific Asia region, with the Malaysian Psychiatric Association  
**Venue:** Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, Malaysia  
**Attendees:** 322 delegates  
**Date:** October 1-3, 2013



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