

# VPH Newsletter: June issue



## *VPH Newsletter*

### **Monthly newsletter of the Virtual Physiological Human Institute for Integrative Biomedical Research & The Digital Patient News**

**-June 2012-**

Summer is the time for conferences, holidays, grant proposals deadlines, but it is also a good time to draw some summary of the last year. The VPH ICT call 9 was closed some time ago, and in the last few days we got the Evaluation Summary Reports. Some of us are happy, many are disappointed; but this is part of the game. Still, some elements of general reflection can be drawn. The competition was fierce, probably more than usual. This is a good sign for the VPH initiative, as more and more scientists are attracted to this research domain, but it is unquestionably also a sign of the financial difficulties of some member states, and on the impact this has on national research funding. It is reasonable to expect call 10 will be the same, or possibly worse. But call 10 will be a whole different game: the call revolves primarily on the clinical translation of VPH technologies. Call 10



will also be the last funding call for the VPH initiative as such at European level, but this clearly is not the end of this research domain. Already in the preparatory documents on Horizon 2020 there is an important sector name in silico medicine, which will clearly reflect a large part of the VPH research agenda.

Another important change is the re-organisation of the DG INFSO (including the change of its name to DG CONNECT). There are many changes, most of which with little impact on our community. As part of this re-organisation, and in the respect of the EC policies that expect officers to change unit every few years, Joel Bacquet has been moved to another unit, and he will stop soon to work on VPH projects. If the VPH vision is becoming a reality this is largely due to two officers of the European Commission: Ilias Iakovidis and Joel Bacquet. While other capable officers are joining the ICT for Health unit, and I am sure they will work with all consortia involved in VPH research with the same spirit of positive collaboration of their predecessors, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Joel, on behalf of the entire VPH community, for the passion that he invested in the VPH initiative from the very beginning. It was truly a pleasure to work with you, Joel; I hope our paths will cross again in the future.

That's all folks: enjoy the summer.

Cheers

Marco Viceconti

Executive director, VPH Institute

## **VPH at large**

*News of general interest for the VPH Research community*

### **Virtual Physiological Human on TEDxSheffield**

Wearing his double hat of both Executive Director of the VPH Institute and Director of the new Insigneo Research Institute, Prof Viceconti gave a 9 minutes talk on "The Virtual Physiological Human or Why computer simulation is our best hope to understand life".

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### **The Virtual Liver Network keynote debate during SBMC conference**

On Tuesday, 10th July in Leipzig, the VPH Institute President, Denis Noble, and Sydney Brenner proposed and opposed respectively the motion that "There is no privileged level of causation: an organism is not defined by its genome".

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### **Policy Affair Work Group established**

At the last Board of Directors meeting (Paris May 24th, 2012), it was formalized the establishment of the so called "Policy Affair Work Group" which will coordinate the future policy activities of the Institute. The Work Group has now been formed and it will kick off with a first teleconference on Friday the 13th of June.

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## **Cypriot Presidency highlights benefits of Virtual Clinical Trials**

On 1 July 2012, Cyprus took over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union from Denmark. On 9 July 2012, the Cypriot Presidency was present at a meeting of the European Parliament's Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee (ENVI), at which they presented their work programme for their term.

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## **FP7 2013 Work programme promotes funding for imaging technologies**

On 9 July 2012, the European Commission's DG Research and Innovation published their 2013 Work Programme in the field of Health: in the document there is a specific reference to "biomedical engineering"!

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## **European Commission to set up independent health expert panel**

On 5 July 2012, the European Commission adopted a Decision to set up a "multisectoral and independent expert panel to provide advice on effective ways of investing in health".

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## **European Parliament workshop on eHealth held**

On 7 June 2012, a workshop was held in the European Parliament on eHealth.

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## **5th ARTreat newsletter now available**

ARTreat is an EU-funded eHealth FP7 collaborative R&D project aiming at developing a multi-level, patient-specific computational model of the cardiovascular system for atherogenesis progression and propagation. Periodically ARTreat issues a newsletter to give information about the latest development in the project. You can now read the 5th issue.

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## **DISCIPULUS News**

Dear Colleagues,

As you know, the DISCIPULUS team have been tasked by the European Commission with the

responsibility of setting up a roadmap for the Digital Patient, which is essentially the medical application of the “virtual physiological human” personalised into a specific patient under the care of a clinician, in other words, a computational avatar of the patient.

The goal of the Digital Patient is to enhance clinical decision making.

We have started the consultation process involving both clinicians and computational scientists/modellers/programmers to help us develop this roadmap and we held a successful event in Barcelona, in late March 2012.

A first draft of the roadmap, born from this first consultation event, was submitted to the European Commission in early July 2012, and the final report will be submitted in March 2013. In this newsletter, we briefly describe the structure of the draft of our roadmap report and outline the next steps and beyond. This roadmap is by no means final... your input is needed!



## **DISCIPULUS: Structure of the First Draft of the Roadmap**

The first draft of the roadmap illustrates the vision of the Digital Patient with the goal of enhancing medical practice and patient care.

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## **Sign on to the DISCIPULUS forum**

It is now available an on-line forum where anyone can contribute to the debate on the DISCIPULUS road-mapping exercise. Do not miss the chance to express your opinion.

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## **The DISCIPULUS Wiki**

Are you a clinical or a technology expert? Leave your comments on our wiki pages! We need your input to identify both clinical and technological challenges and the way these can be put together to create a new valuable Digital Patient technology.

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## **Forthcoming events**

### **VPH Institute 2012 General Assembly**

The VPH Institute invites you to attend the first General Assembly meeting scheduled for September 17th 2012 in London.

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## **5th International Advanced Research Workshop on In Silico Oncology and Cancer Investigation (5th IARWISOCI)**

22-23 October, 2012, Athens, Greece

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## **2012 Multiscale Modeling (MSM) Consortium Meeting**

22-23 October, 2012 Bethesda, MD

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## **EFGCP Conference on emerging technologies in clinical trials research**

29 & 30 January 2013 - Brussels, Belgium

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## **5th Int. Conference on Computational Bioengineering (ICCB 2013)**

11-13 September, 2013, Leuven

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Virtual Physiological Human Institute for Integrative Biomedical Research  
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