

PRESS RELEASE

Prof. Dr. Matthias Schneider breaks new ground in his research into the autoimmune disease SLE

Düsseldorf-based medical scientist awarded the Klüh Foundation prize

Düsseldorf, 20.10.2022 – This year, the award of the Klüh Foundation for the Promotion of Innovation in Science and Research, which comes with 25,000 Euros in prize money, goes to the rheumatologist and specialist for autoimmune diseases and endocrinology **Prof. Dr. Matthias Schneider** (67). The medical scientist has been Professor of Internal Medicine and Rheumatology at the University of Düsseldorf since 1994 and is also Director of the Hiller Research Centre for Rheumatology, founded by him, at the University Hospital Düsseldorf.

The medic, Dean of Studies at the Clinic of the Medical Faculty of the University Hospital Düsseldorf, coordinates the Rheumatism Centre Rhine-Ruhr as Director of the Polyclinic and the Functional Area Rheumatology. Prof. Schneider has achieved outstanding results in the medical fields of rheumatology, bone, joint and autoimmune diseases and endocrinology.

The specialist area of the clinician and doctor with comprehensive research and care approaches is research into what is known as “systemic lupus erythematosus” (SLE), an autoimmune disease in which the immune system attacks healthy cells within the body and triggers inflammatory reactions that can lead to organ damage. His research results have been improving the chances of early diagnosis as well as the long-term therapy and re-integration of chronically ill patients into their living and working environment for decades.

The laudator, **Stefanie Kemp**, Chief Transformation Officer at Sana Kliniken AG, accompanied and promoted Prof. Schneider’s scientific work in her previous function as German head of the database specialist Oracle. The medical scientist’s achievements are, she says, primarily due to his highly dedicated approach to developing therapies based on pan-European data collection, which drew on the participation of around 400,000 patients across Europe. Stefanie Kemp: “The disease known as lupus displays one of the most complex rheumatic clinical pictures. The data collection initiated by Prof. Schneider provides information to lupus centres throughout Europe so that targeted therapies with a European perspective can be applied.” Oracle is a leader in data analysis and therefore predestined to accompany the long-term project.

The approach of the Düsseldorf medic could make it possible to recognise patterns and thus contribute to the success of Professor Schneider’s motto “Live well healthier for longer”. In the words of the top manager: “Professor Schneider’s approach also sets a signal for the broad-based collection of experience in a medical field by means of qualified data collection, an approach that is currently still being used far too little.”

SLE is widespread: of every 100,000 people in Europe, between 20 and 50 have SLE (36.7 in Germany). Women are affected considerably more often than men. In Germany, the ratio of affected women to affected men is 4:1. The SLE patients Lady Gaga and Seal are known worldwide.

Professor Schneider's guidelines for SLE patients and relatives have been published in three new editions since 1993. The medic was instrumental in the development of principles, and networks research and patient perspectives for evaluation purposes. In order to ensure future-oriented research and care, the Düsseldorf-based medical scientist intends to dedicate himself in future exclusively to the establishment of a Germany-wide and later Europe-wide network for recording, researching and treating SLE. The Europe-wide study "Treat to Target" (T2T) in systemic lupus erythematosus (lupus-BST)" aims to scientifically examine various newly developed concepts for SLE.

About the Klüh Foundation:

For Klüh, responsibility has always been among the company values. Responsibility towards the employees, the environment, the community and the market. These are also the four pillars on which Klüh's corporate responsibility strategy is built. The Klüh Foundation is part of Klüh's corporate commitment to the community.

The Foundation for the Promotion of Innovation in Science and Research, established in 1987 by the company's owner Josef Klüh to mark the 75th anniversary of the Düsseldorf-based family business Klüh Service Management has, since then, awarded foundation prizes totalling 800,000 Euros. In recent years, the foundation has supported a wide range of medical research projects.

About Klüh:

Klüh Service Management GmbH is an internationally operating multi-service provider from Düsseldorf, which celebrates its 111th company anniversary this year. Founded in 1911, the family-run company has decades of experience in the area of infrastructural services. The departments Cleaning, Catering, Clinic Service, Security, Personnel Service, Airport Service and Integrated Services offer both individual services as well as multiservice concepts. With more than 52,000 employees in seven nations, the company achieves sales of around 814 million Euros (2021). For further information see www.klueh.de.

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