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**D** iabetologists across Europe and beyond continue to tackle the growing burden posed by diabetes and its complications. Over the course of nearly 50 years, the Annual Meeting of the European Association of the Study of Diabetes (EASD) has become the world's leading international forum for diabetes research, covering the most relevant and cutting-edge aspects of the efforts currently underway to understand, prevent and cure diabetes. As Chairman of the 49th EASD Annual Meeting taking place this year in Barcelona, I would like to highlight certain aspects of the meeting's Scientific Programme, comprising five keynote lectures, 30 symposia, 48 oral presentations and six poster events, all of which are organised into six parallel tracks spanning four days.

First, the symposium entitled "UKPDS: 15 years on from Barcelona", aims to put into perspective the results of the largest clinical study ever conducted in diabetes research. This study helped to position metformin as the treatment method of choice and also proved the importance of controlling diabetes for the prevention of complications. What has changed since its results were presented at the last EASD Annual Meeting held in our city? What do long-term interventions with metformin now show? This symposium promises to stimulate an interesting debate.

Also, several sessions will look at exciting, potential therapies for treating diabetes, including those focusing on G-protein coupled receptors, the endocannabinoid system and incretin hormones. The search for new biomarkers for measuring risk and for tracking the progression of diabetes will also be explored. In terms of cell-based therapies, two sessions will address new strategies for obtaining beta-cells and for regenerating damaged islets. Epigenetics, metabolomics and the cross-talk between tissues are emerging areas of interest that will also receive coverage, reflecting a new, metabolite-orientated approach to studying the mechanisms underlying the disease.

Finally, as usual, this year's Minkowski, Camillo Golgi, Albert Renold and Claude Bernard keynote lectures promise to be especially engaging, bridging basic and clinical topics and offering the best of beta-cell research, screening techniques, pancreatic islet studies and the genotyping and phenotyping of diabetes.

Barcelona, with its mild Mediterranean climate, open personality and world-renowned art and architecture, proves to be a perfect setting for the EASD Annual Meeting and for hosting its nearly 20,000 delegates. Furthermore, the festivities of 'La Mercè', in honour of patron saint Our Lady of Mercy, are also scheduled to take place at the same time, attesting to Barcelona's lively and dynamic spirit. In short, an outstanding location has been chosen for a remarkable diabetes meeting.

*European Endocrinology* would like to take this opportunity to thank all participants in this edition, from organisations to individuals. A special thanks goes to our Editorial Board for their continuing support and invaluable guidance, while the biggest thanks are reserved for our expert authors, who spared precious time and effort to produce a perceptive selection of articles. The expert discussion and the wide variety of topics covered ensure there is much interest for every reader. We hope you find this edition as useful and insightful as those before it. ■