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**PHARMA  
SUMMIT 24**

Exploring Values of Healthcare

**18th April 2024**

**Croke Park conference centre**

# Speaker Slides:

## Prof Orla Hardiman, Beaumont Hospital

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# Prof Orla Hardiman

Professor of Neurology, Head of the Academic Unit of Neurology and Academic Director of Trinity Biomedical Sciences Institute, and Consultant Neurologist at Beaumont Hospital.



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## *“Precision Medicines in Rare Disease ”*

### Bio:

*Orla has been HSE Clinical Lead in Neurology from 2019-2023. She is a science and medical graduate from UCD and trained in Neurology in Boston. She is the Director of the National ALS Clinic at the National Neuroscience Centre, Beaumont Hospital Dublin Ireland, where she provides clinical care for over 80% of Irish patients with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS).*

*She is the author of over 470 peer reviewed publications and editor of a textbook of Neurodegeneration. Her research group comprises over 5 individuals and her interests include the epidemiology, phenotype, biomarker discovery and genetics of ALS and related neurodegeneration. She is Co-Chair of the European Network for Cure of ALS (ENCALS) and is editor in chief of the journal Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis and the Frontotemporal Degenerations, and a founder of the Neurological Alliance of Ireland and the Irish Brain Council. She is the Lead Investigator of the SFI funded Academic/ Industry Programme PRECISION ALS. She is the recipient of a number of international and national honours and awards including the AAN Sheila Essey Award in ALS Research and the International ALS Alliance Forbes Norris Award, the Tom Connor Distinguished Investigator Award in Neuroscience, The Trinity College Innovation Award, The SFI Researcher of the Year Award, and the HRB Research Impact Award.*



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# PRECISION MEDICINE in NEURODEGENERATION

## PATHWAYS TOWARDS MORE EFFECTIVE THERAPEUTICS

Professor Orla Hardiman BSc, MB,MD,FRCPI, FTCD, MRIA  
Head, Academic Unit of Neurology, Trinity College Dublin

# COMMON FEATURES OF NEURODEGENERATION

- Progressive & irreversible human diseases
- Advancing age is a risk factor
- Variable in how condition presents
- Associated cognitive & behavioural impairment
- Mendelian inheritance in a percentage of cases

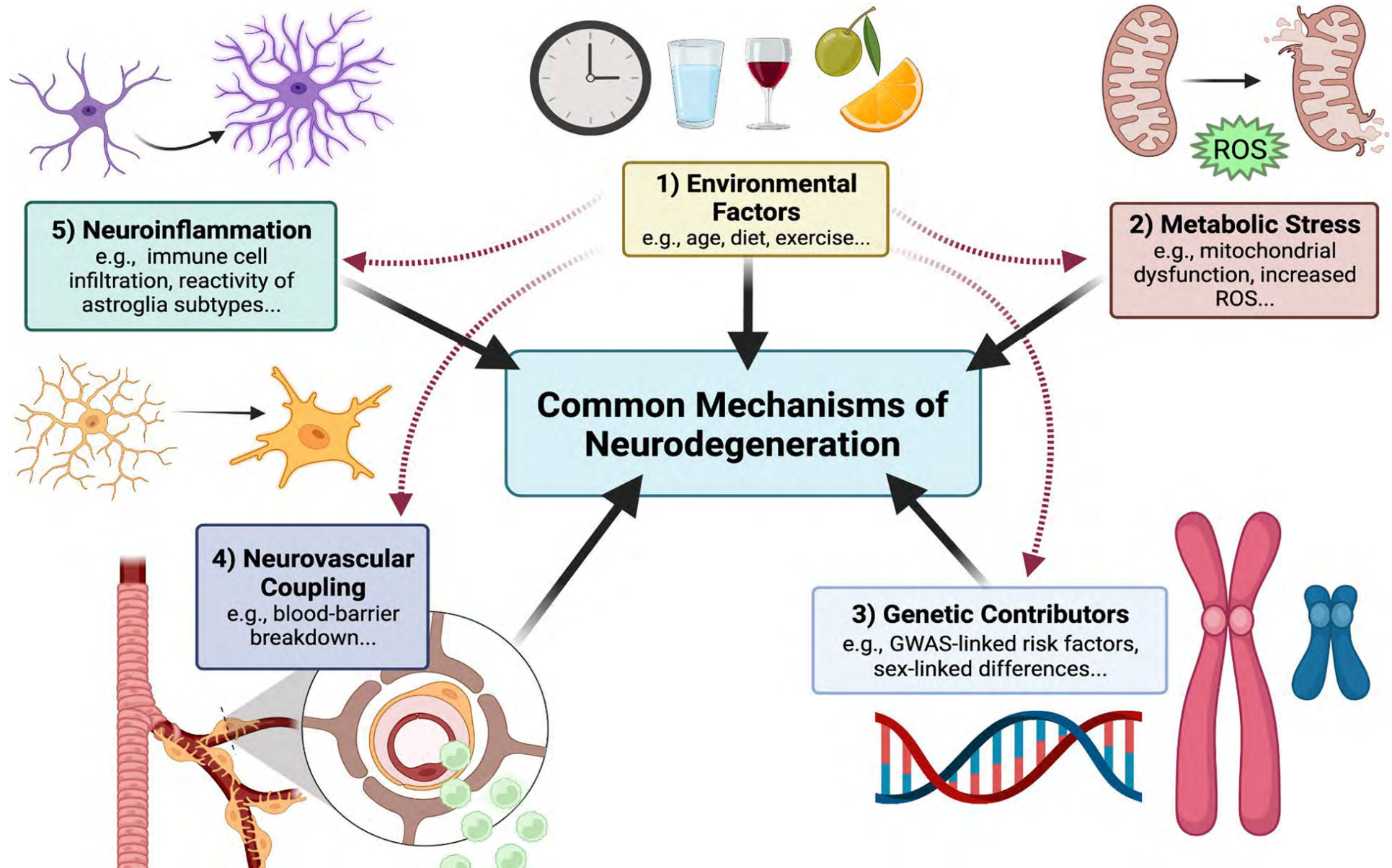
# COMMON FEATURES OF NEURODEGENERATION

- Diverse clinical phenotypes may share similar genotypes
- Clinically similar phenotypes may be associated with a wide variety of genotypes
- Different neurodegenerative diseases (and neuropsychiatric disorders) may appear together within a family

# CLINICAL OVERLAP OF COMMON NEURODEGENERATIONS

- Frontotemporal dementias with ALS
- Frontotemporal Dementia/Progressive Supranuclear palsy/corticobasal degeneration
- ALS Parkinsons Dementia complex of Guam
- Dementia in Parkinsons Disease (40%)
- Parkinsonism in Alzheimers Disease (30%)
- Psychosis in FTD , ALS
- Psychosis in Parkinsons Disease
- Chorea in ALS / Fasciculations in Huntingtons Disease
- Spinocerebellar Ataxia 2 and ALS

# FACTORS DRIVING PATHOGENESIS





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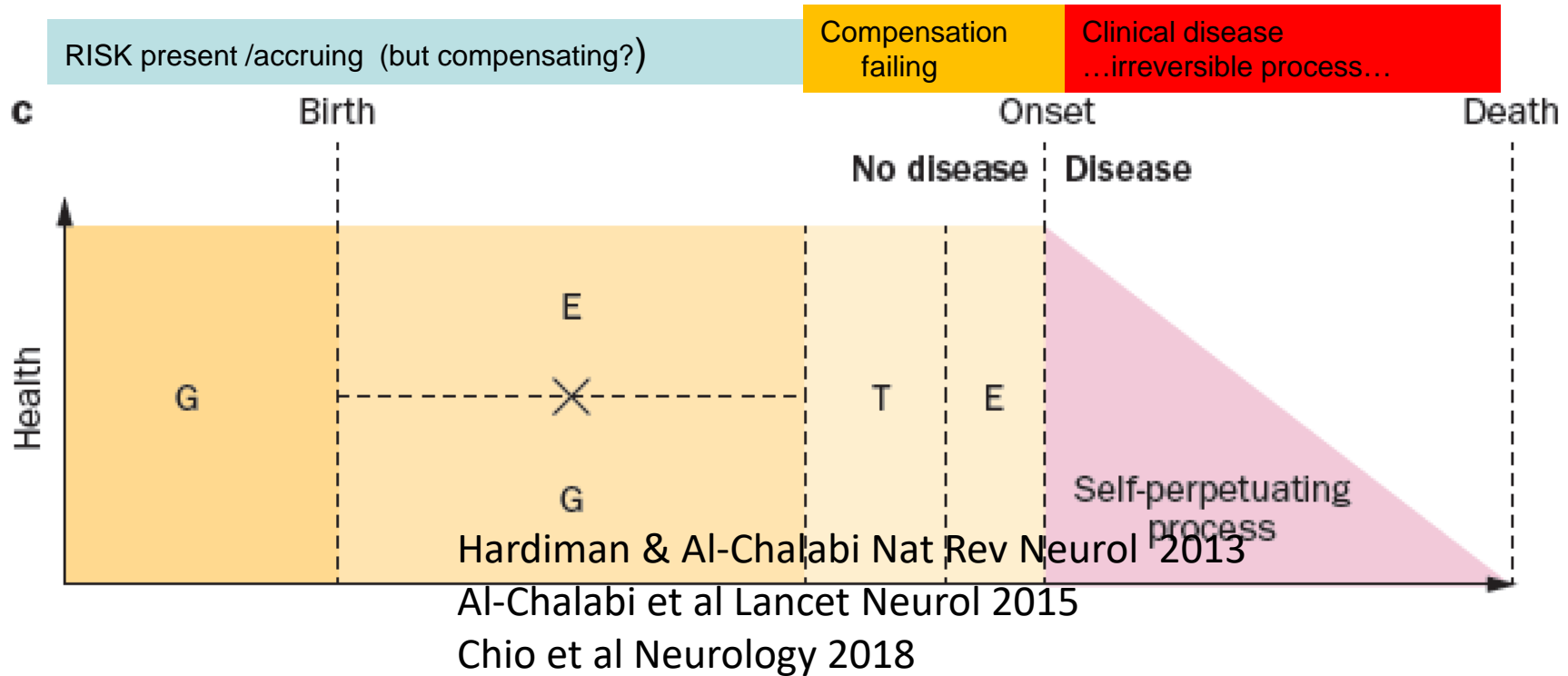
# AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS AS A MODEL NEURODEGENERATION



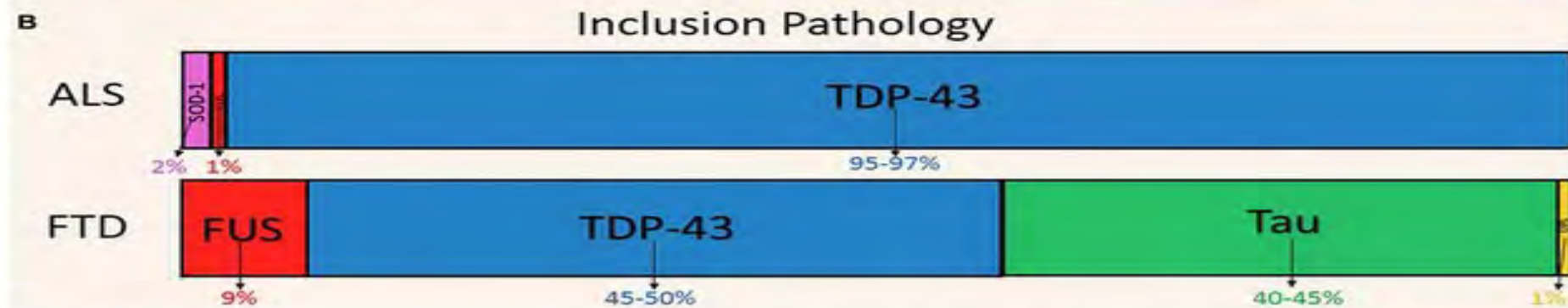
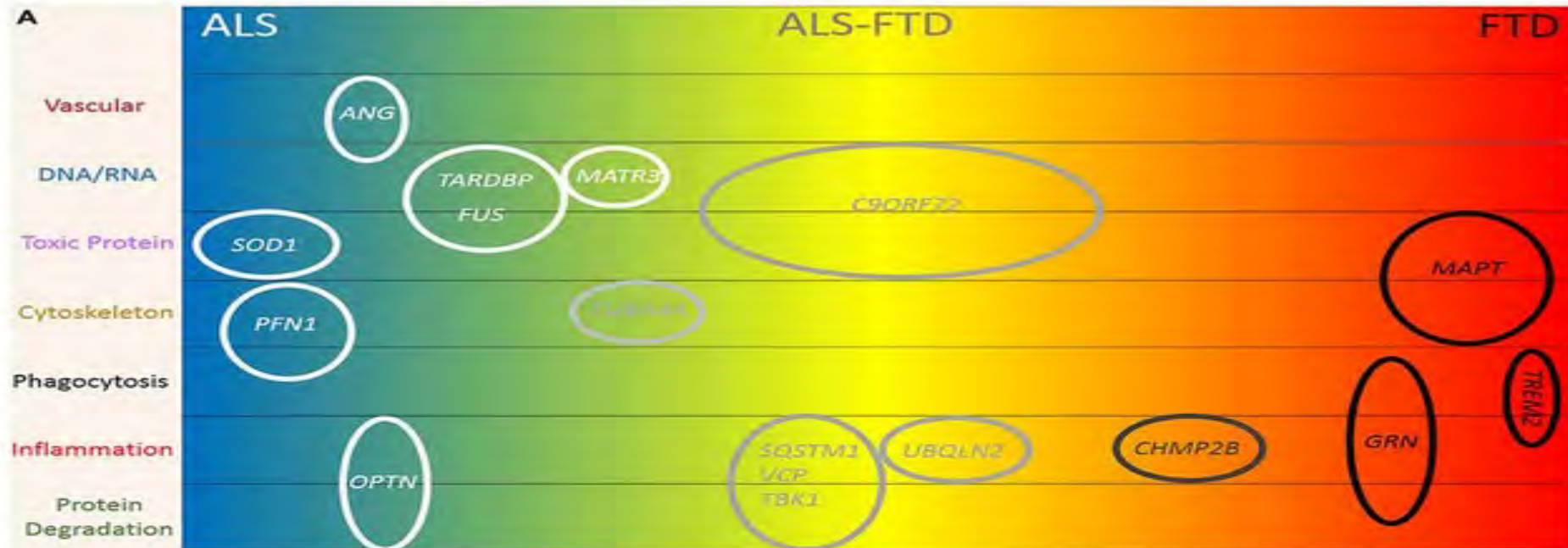
# AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS (ALS)

- Upper and lower motor neuron degeneration, cognitive & behavioural change
- Incidence of 3.1 per 100,000: Lifetime risk is 1:350
- Progressive, incurable and terminal
- Overlaps with Frontotemporal dementia (FTD – “Picks” disease)
- 50% fatality within 30 months of symptom onset

# DISEASE PATHOGENESIS: GENE /ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION + TIME 6 Step Hypothesis in ALS



# OVERLAP BETWEEN ALS and FTD



# CLINICAL OUTCOME MEASUREMENT

## ALSFRS-R

48 point scale in 4 domains

Bulbar

Gross Motor

Fine Motor

Respiratory

### ALS Functional Rating Scale

#### 1. Speech

- Normal speech processes
- Detectable speech disturbance
- Intelligible with repeating
- Speech combined with nonvocal communication
- Loss of useful speech

#### 2. Salivation

- Normal
- Slight but definite excess of saliva in mouth; may have nighttime drooling
- Moderately excessive saliva; may have minimal drooling
- Marked excess of saliva with some drooling
- Marked drooling; requires constant tissue or handkerchief

#### 3. Swallowing

- Normal eating habits
- Early eating problems-occasional choking
- Dietary consistency changes
- Needs supplemental tube feeding
- NPO (exclusively parenteral or enteral feeding)

#### 4. Handwriting

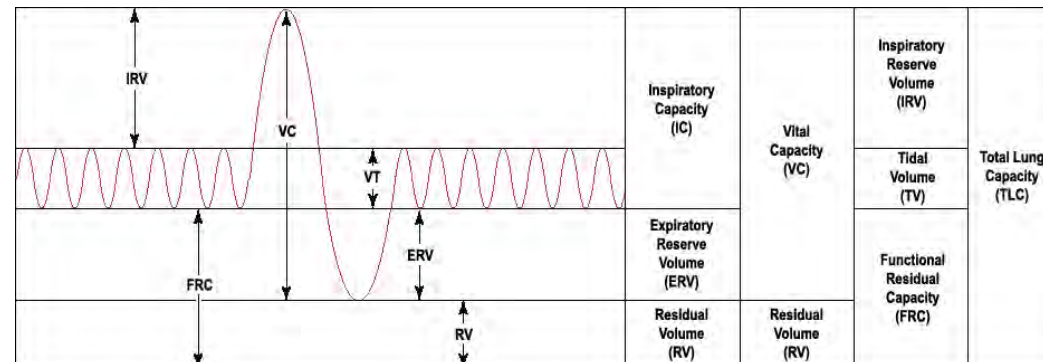
- Normal
- Slow or sloppy; all words are legible
- Not all words are legible
- Able to grip pen but unable to write
- Unable to grip pen

#### 5. Cutting food with gastrostomy

- Normal
- Somewhat slow and clumsy, but no help needed
- Can cut most foods, although clumsy and slow; some help needed
- Food must be cut by someone, but can still feed slowly
- Needs to be fed

## RESPIRATORY

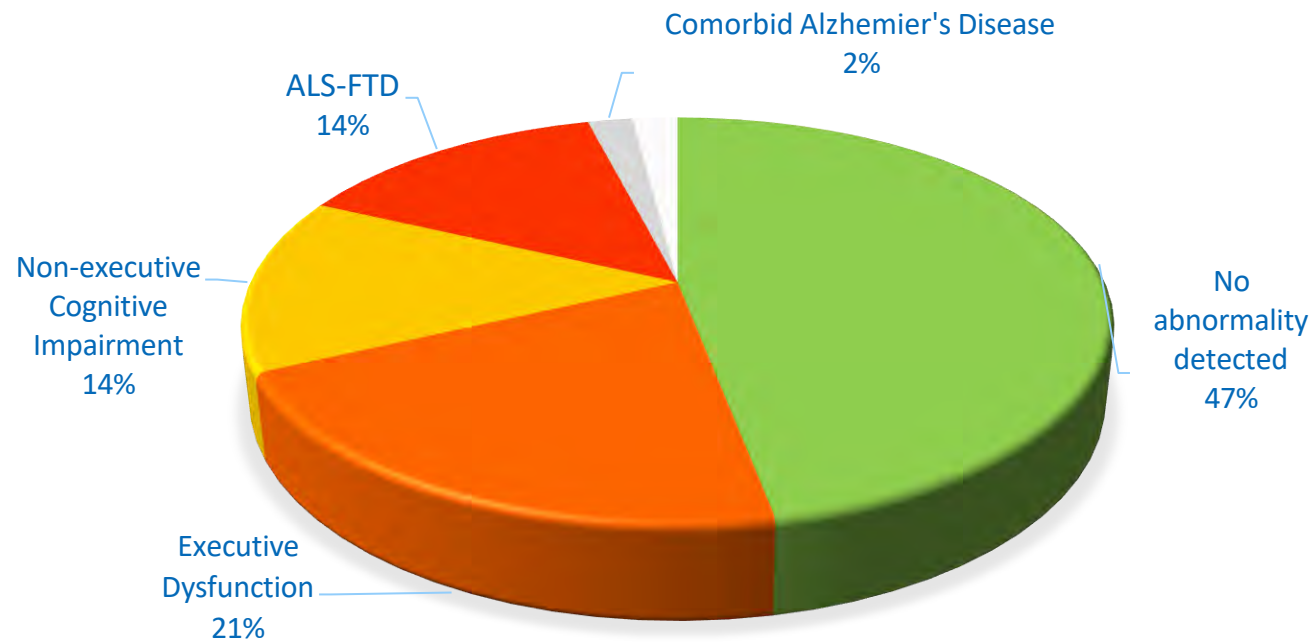
Vital Capacity



RESEARCH PAPER

# The syndrome of cognitive impairment in amyotrophic lateral sclerosis: a population-based study

Julie Phukan,<sup>1</sup> Marwa Elamin,<sup>1</sup> Peter Bede,<sup>1</sup> Norah Jordan,<sup>2</sup> Laura Gallagher,<sup>2</sup>  
Susan Byrne,<sup>1</sup> Catherine Lynch,<sup>1</sup> Niall Pender,<sup>2</sup> Orla O'Connell,<sup>1,2</sup> *J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry* 2012;**83**:102–108. doi:10.1136/jnnp-2011-300188



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# BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES

<b>Factor Loading</b>	<b>Superordinate Classification of Dysfunction</b>	<b>Cognitive/ Behavioural Dysfunction</b>
<b>1</b>	Initiation (Apathy)	Loss of interest; inability to plan; impulsiveness; decreased sex drive; lack of appropriate embarrassment.
<b>2</b>	Adherence to social norms	Emotional changes; social disinhibition; social seeking.
<b>3</b>	Social Engagement	Social withdrawal; distractibility; cognitive rigidity.
<b>4</b>	Interpersonal Engagement	Aggressiveness; irritability; Increased lability; hypersensitivity to stimuli.
<b>5</b>	Self-regulation	Reduced concern for hygiene; change in food preferences; new onset repetitious/obsessive behaviour.

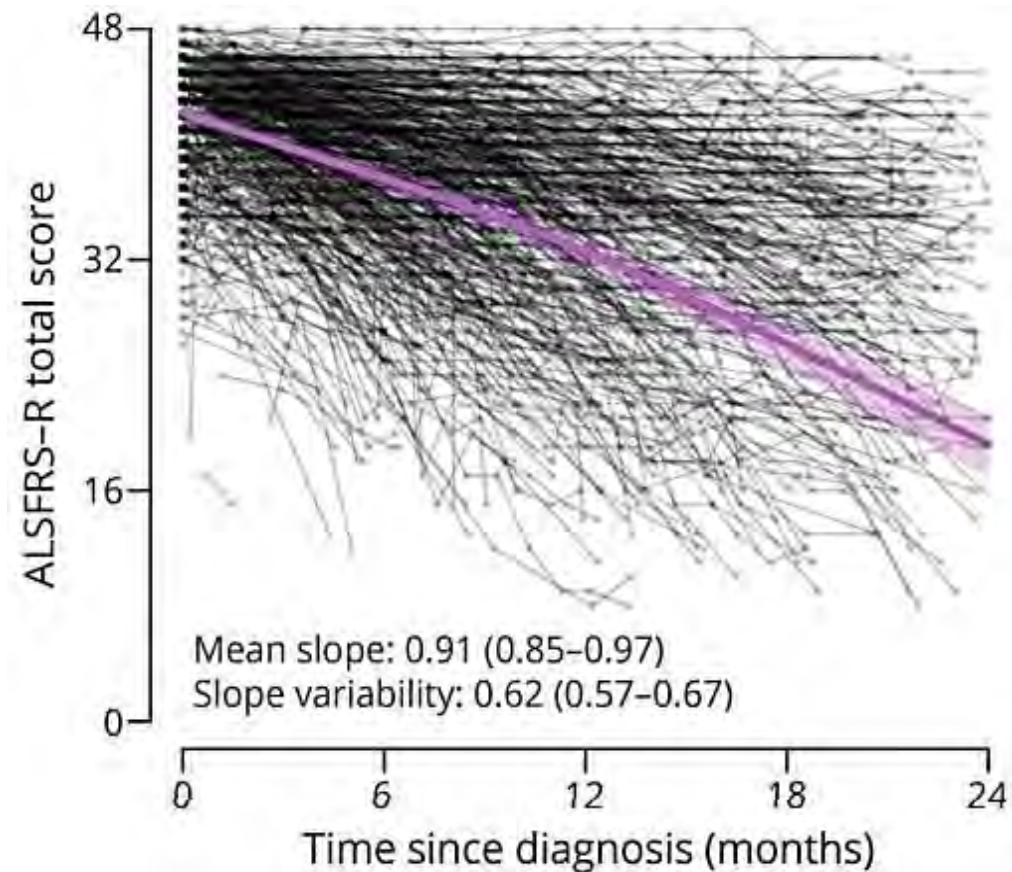
Elamin M et al; Identifying behavioural changes in ALS: Validation of the **Beaumont Behavioural Inventory (BBI)**. Amyotroph Lateral Scler Frontotemporal Degener. 2017 Feb;18(1-2):68-73

# ALS PROGRESSION IS NOT UNIFORM IN HUMANS

Variable symptoms and severity

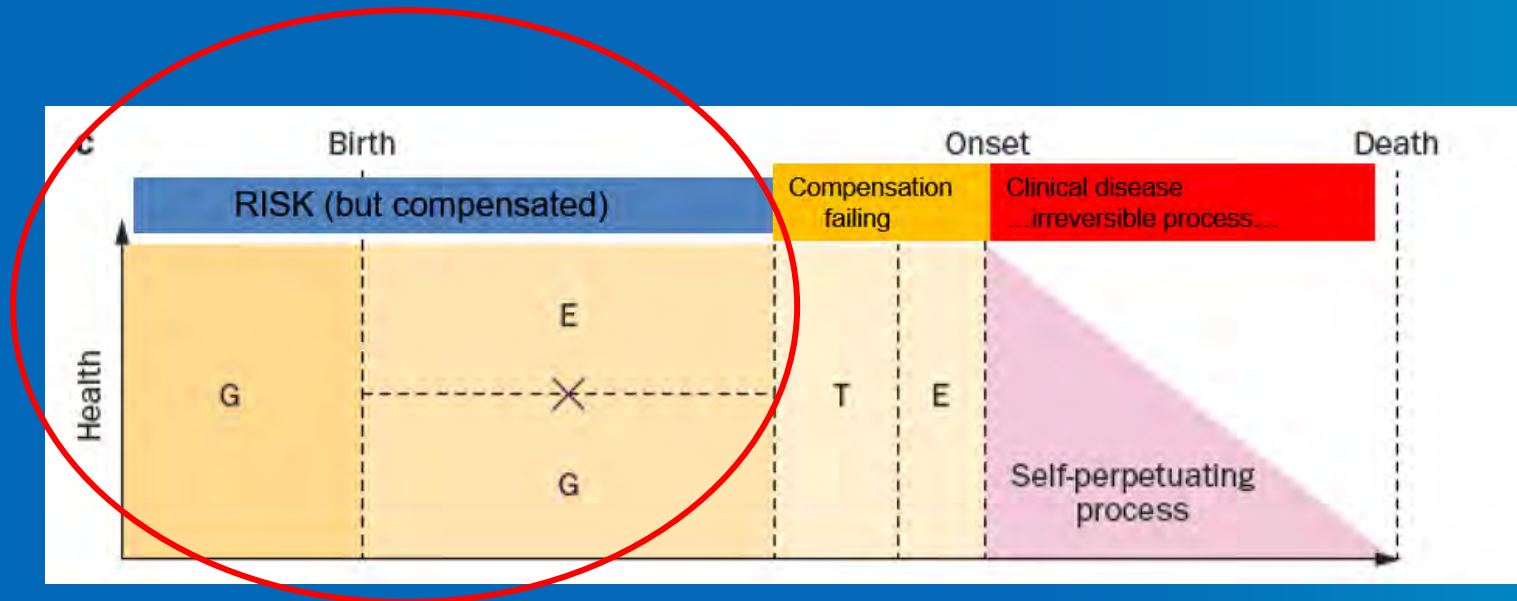
PROGNOSTIC FACTORS:

- Cognitive change (ignored by ALSFRS!)
- Site of onset
- Rate of decline (as measured by the ALS Functional Rating Scale (ALSFRSR))



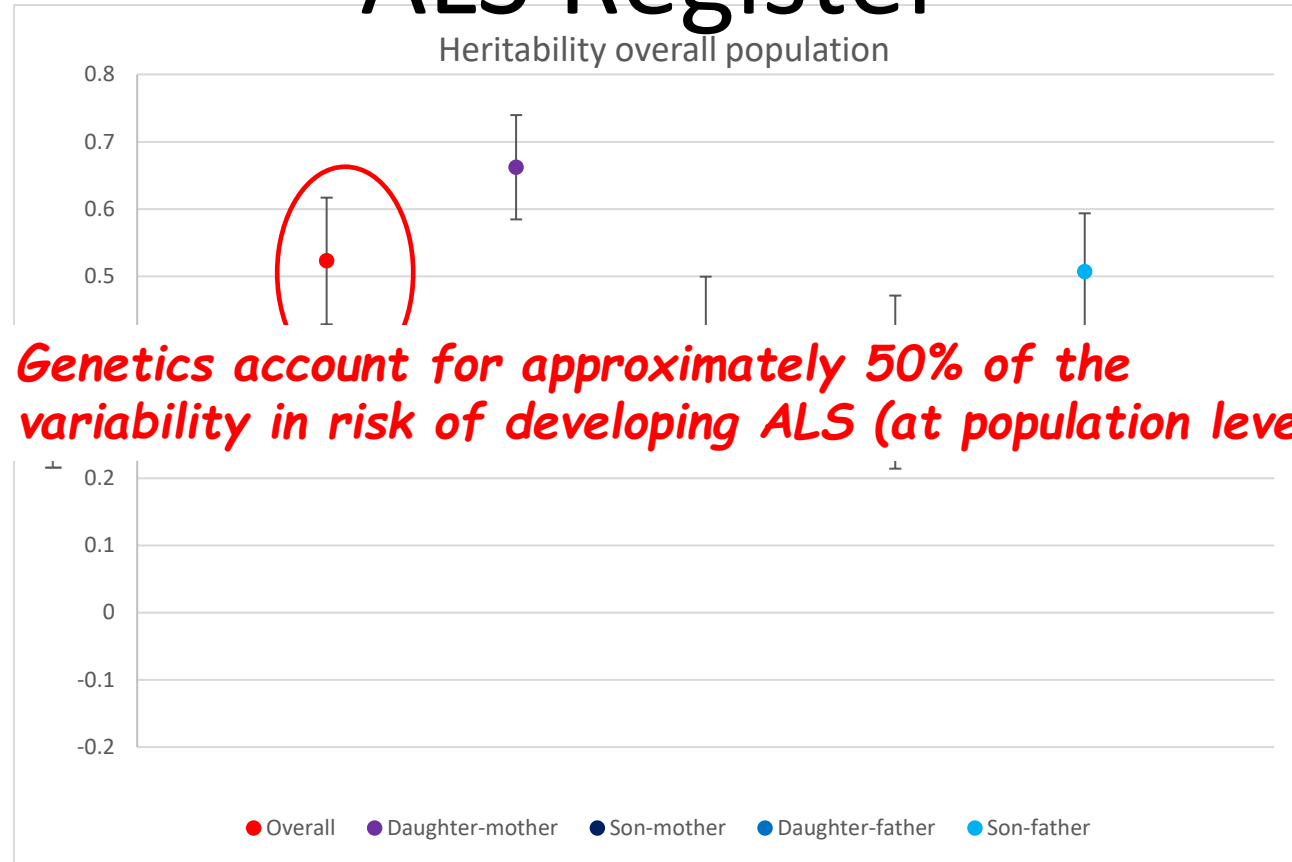


# FINDING THE “CAUSE(S)” of ALS





# Heritability Estimates using the Irish ALS Register

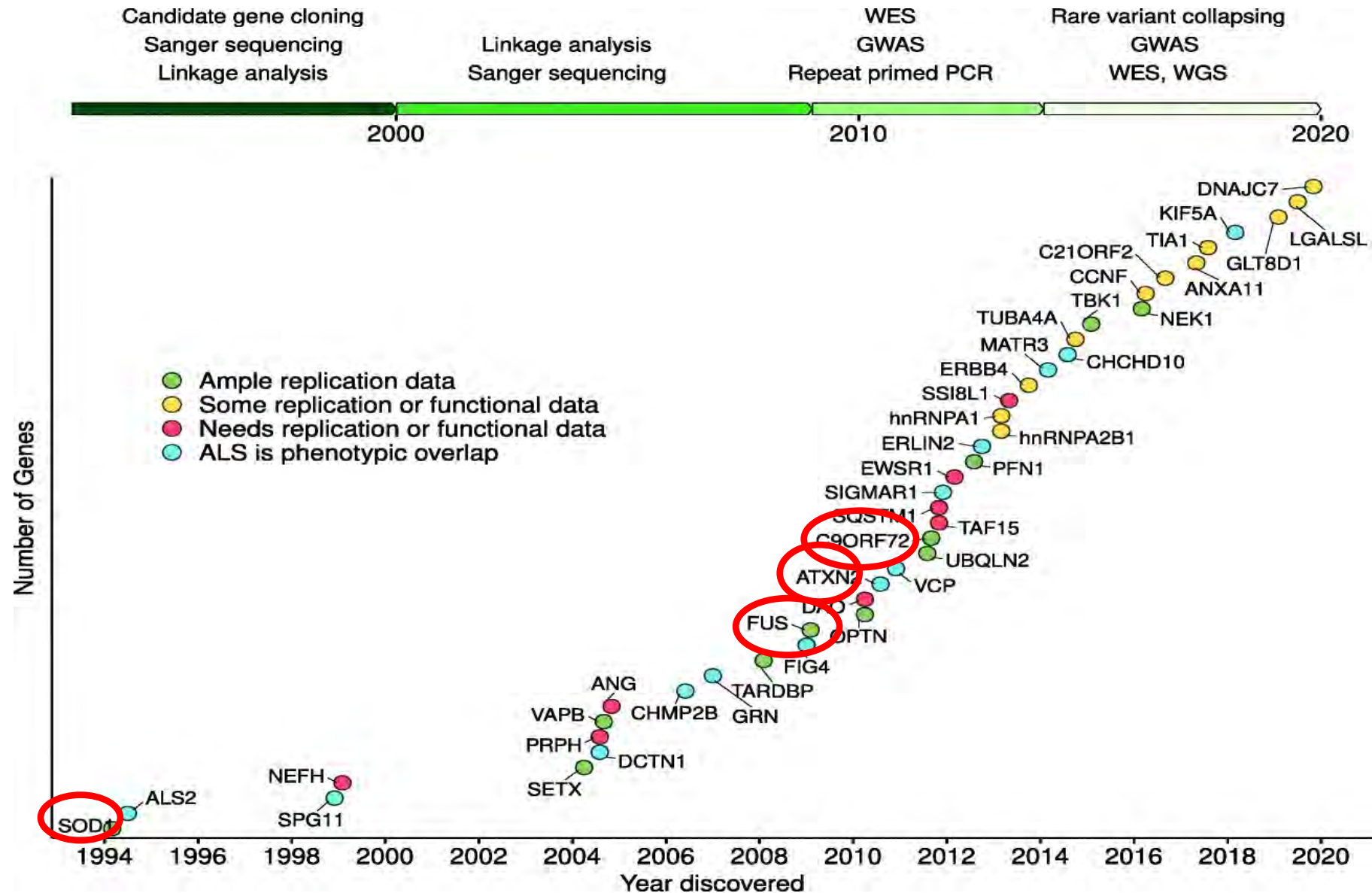


Research

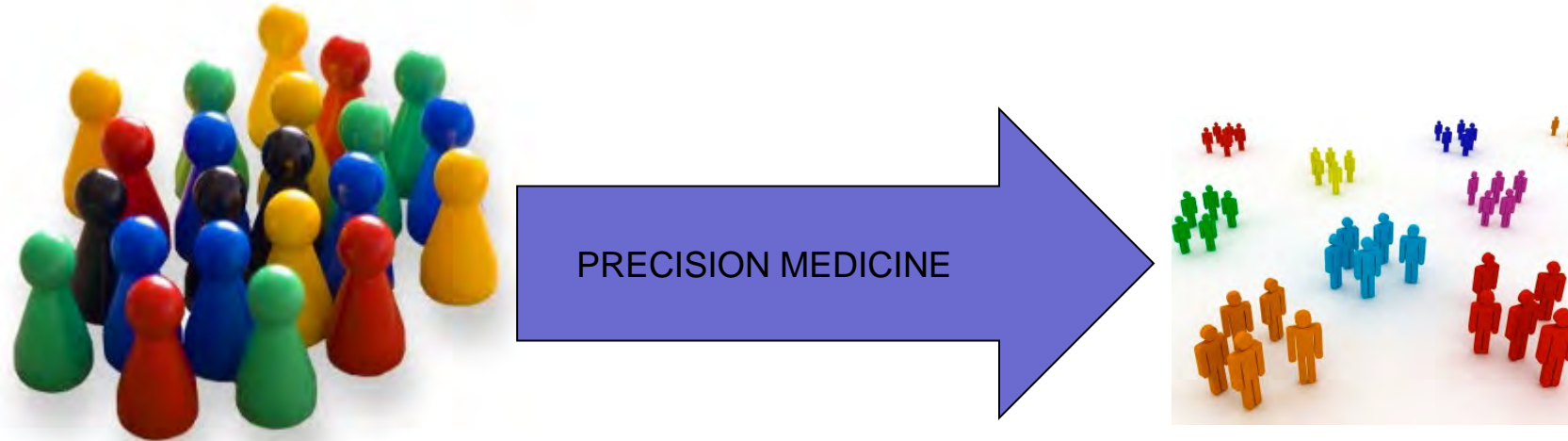
JAMA Neurology | **Original Investigation** JAMA Neurol. 2019 Nov 1;76(11):1367-1374.  
**Lifetime Risk and Heritability of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis**

Marie Ryan, MRCPI; Mark Heverin, MSc; Russell L. McLaughlin, BSc, HDip, PhD; Orla Hardiman, BSc, MD, FRCPI

# MAJOR GENES ASSOCIATED WITH ALS



# ALS IS MORE THAN ONE CONDITION



## ..A FEW CONSIDERATIONS in ALS...

- Disease pathobiology indicates that ALS is a **syndrome rather than a singular condition**
- Not all Familial ALS is the same- different pathogenesis & different phenotypes
- Risks for developing ALS may differ from factors that drive disease progression – this should determine how we target treatments (but often does not)
- Disease “onset” is best viewed as an arbitrary definition bounded by clinical phenomenology
- **We do not fully understand the underlying biological processes leading to disease onset, clinical presentation or progression**



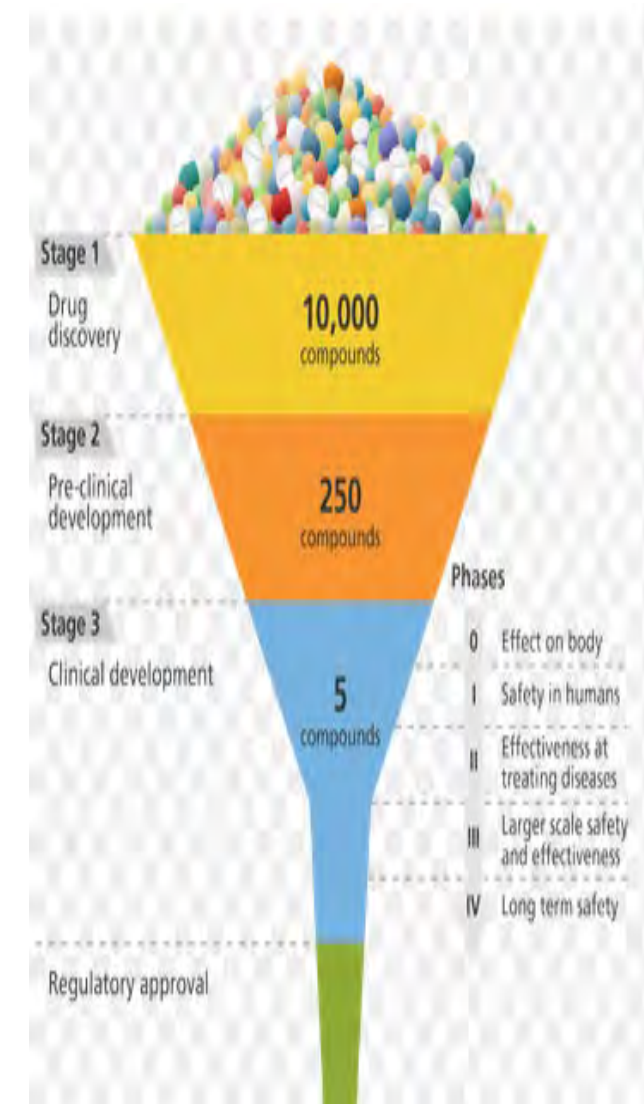
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# FINDING EFFECTIVE TREATMENTS

*...(NOTWITHSTANDING)...*

# CLINICAL TRIALS

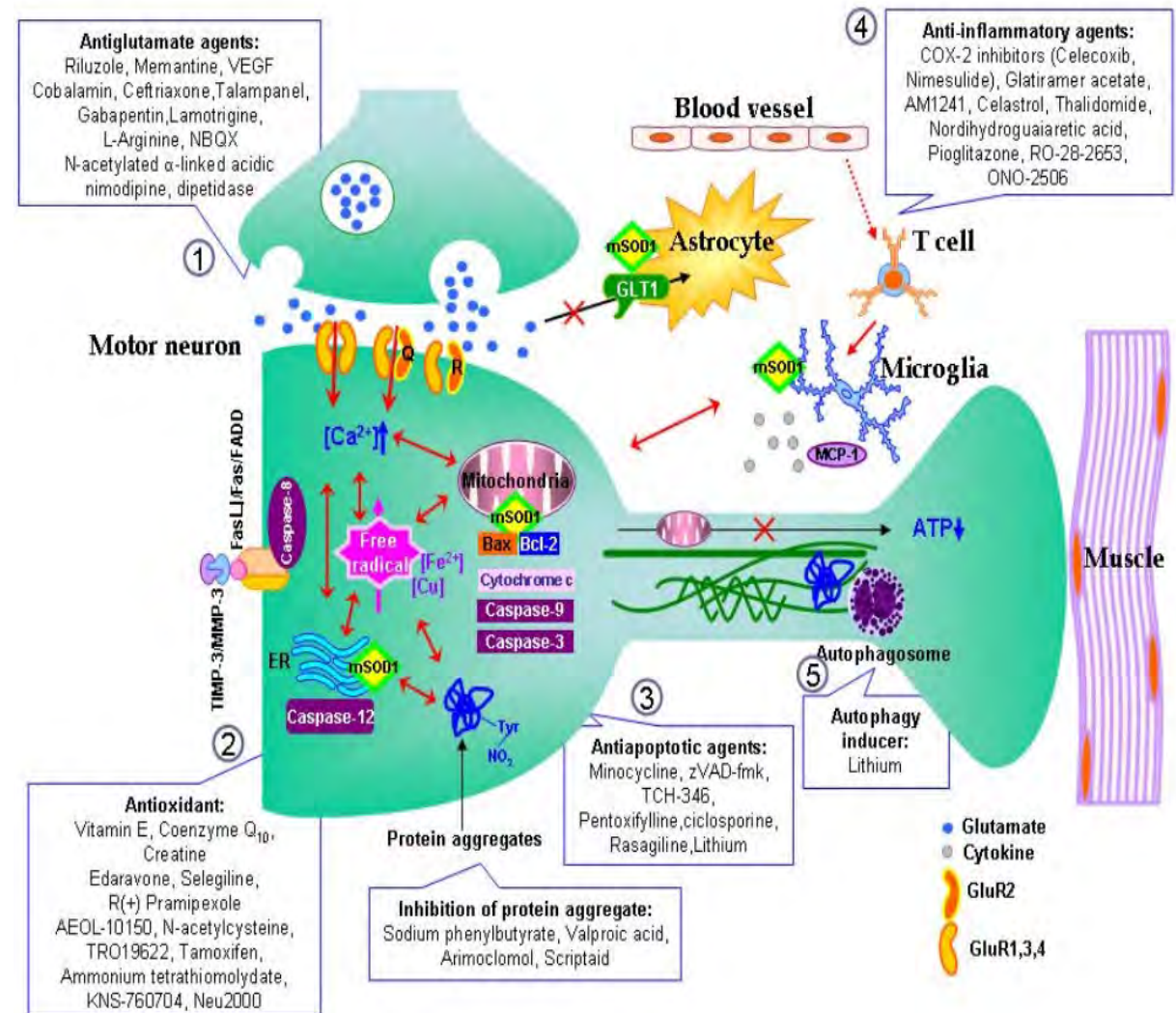
- **PRE-CLINICAL** Drug screening, efficacy, safety, toxicity
- **PHASE 1** : Safety  
Healthy controls and /or patients with disease
- **PHASE 2**: Safety & Tolerability  
Patients with disease, toxicity & dose finding
- **PHASE 3**: Pivotal  
Submission to regulatory authorities
- **PHASE 4**: Post marketing



# LESSONS FROM ANIMAL MODELS



SOD1 mouse



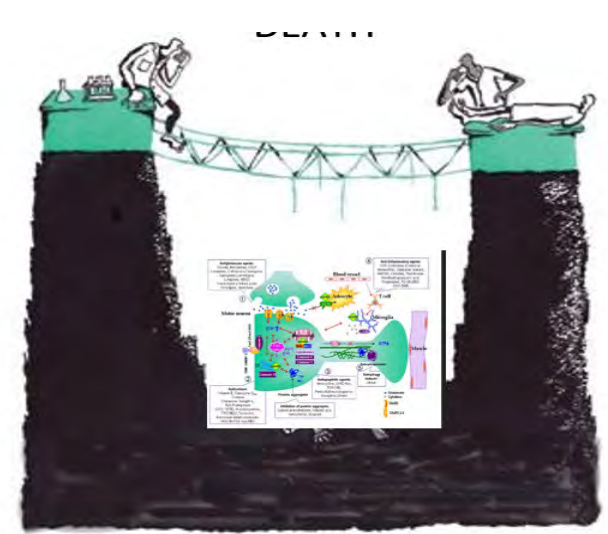




# PRE-CLINICAL PROBLEMS

- Animal models useful but limited...
  - Anatomy differs
  - Genetic background important: “strain effect”
  - Gender Differences
  - Copy number effects
  - Small studies, Poor replication

# HUMAN PROBLEMS

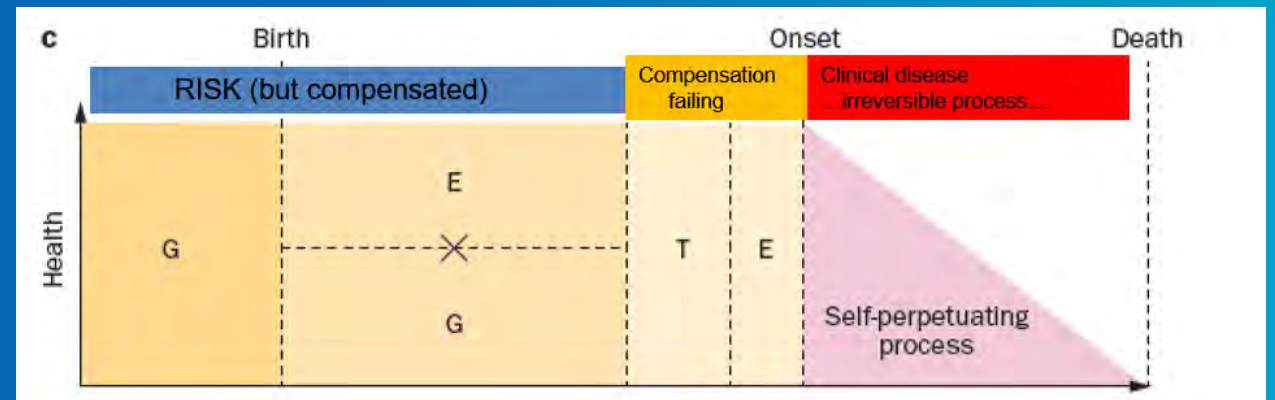
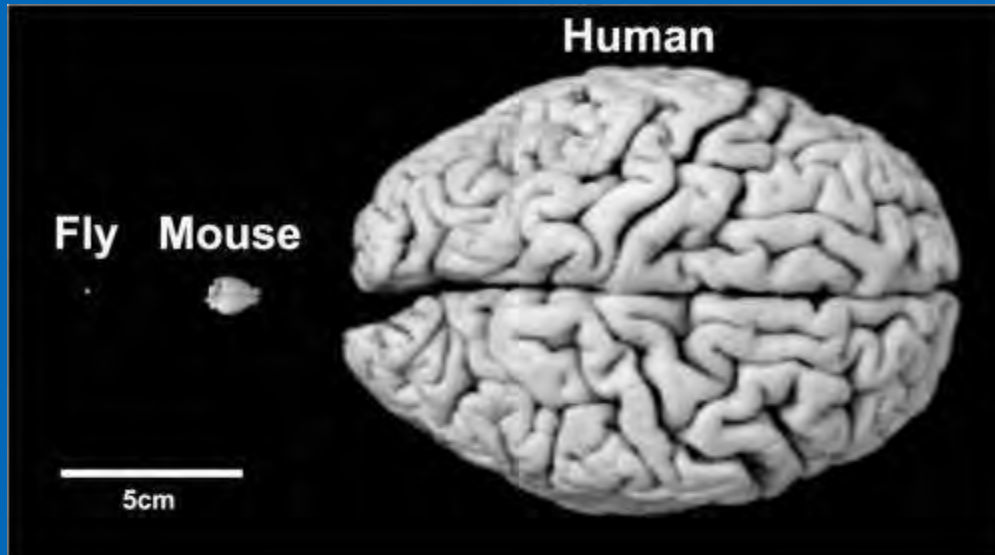


..>100 negative human trials.....

- Drug didn't work (poor translation from mouse to human)
- Many treatment paradigms are designed based on biological factors that confer risk... disease progression is likely a different pathogenic process
- Bad clinical trial design
- Not clear that the drug did what it was supposed to do
- Effect may be confined to subgroups of patients



# WHY HAVE TREATMENTS FAILED?



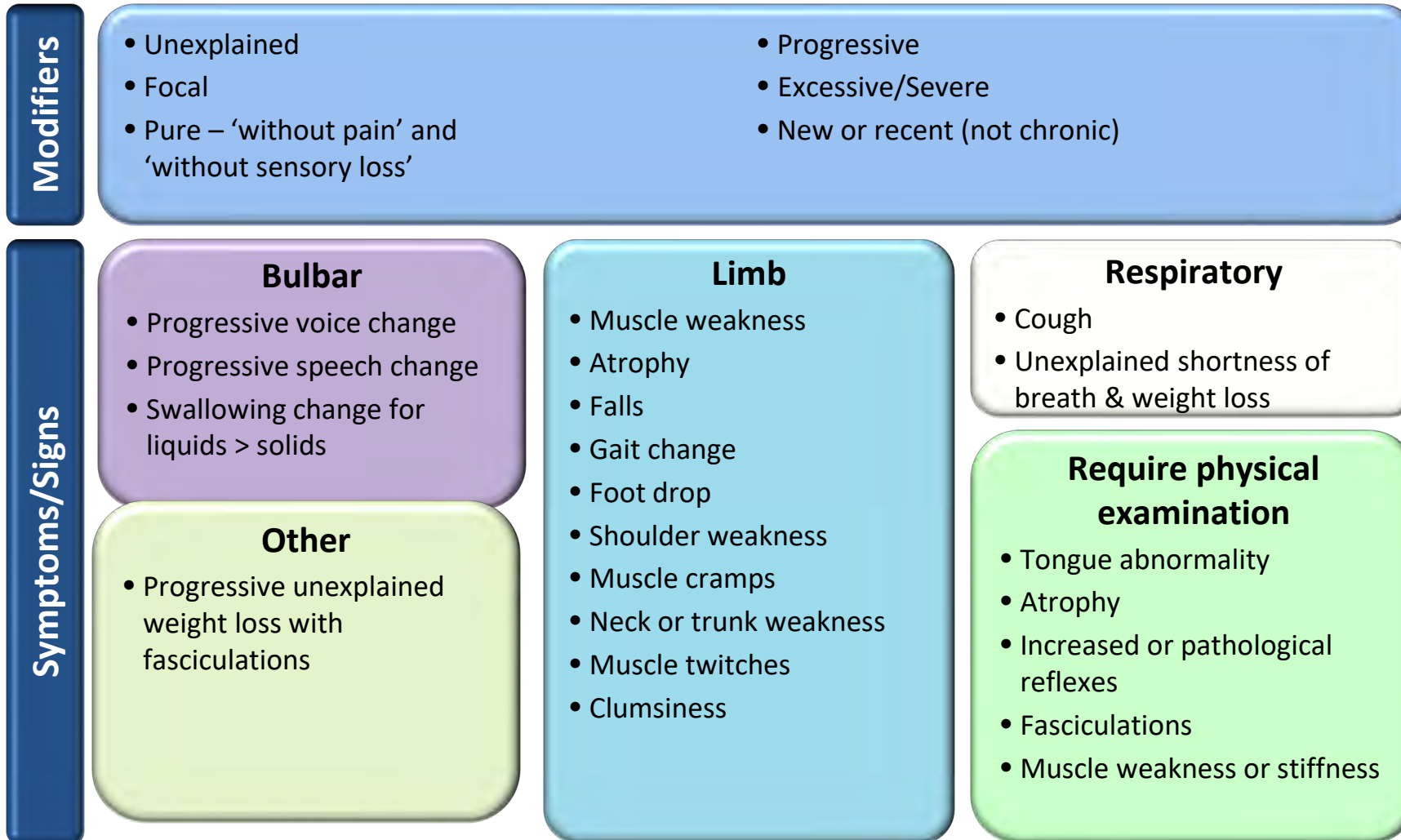
# LESSONS LEARNED ..We need...

- EARLIER DIAGNOSIS and EXPERT MANAGEMENT IN SPECIALIST CLINICS
- BETTER DRUGS : Discriminate between Risk and Progression
- BETTER TRIAL DESIGN
- BETTER PATIENT SELECTION –(PRECISION MEDICINE)
  - Not all patients are the same
- BETTER OUTCOME MEASURES
- BETTER BIOMARKERS

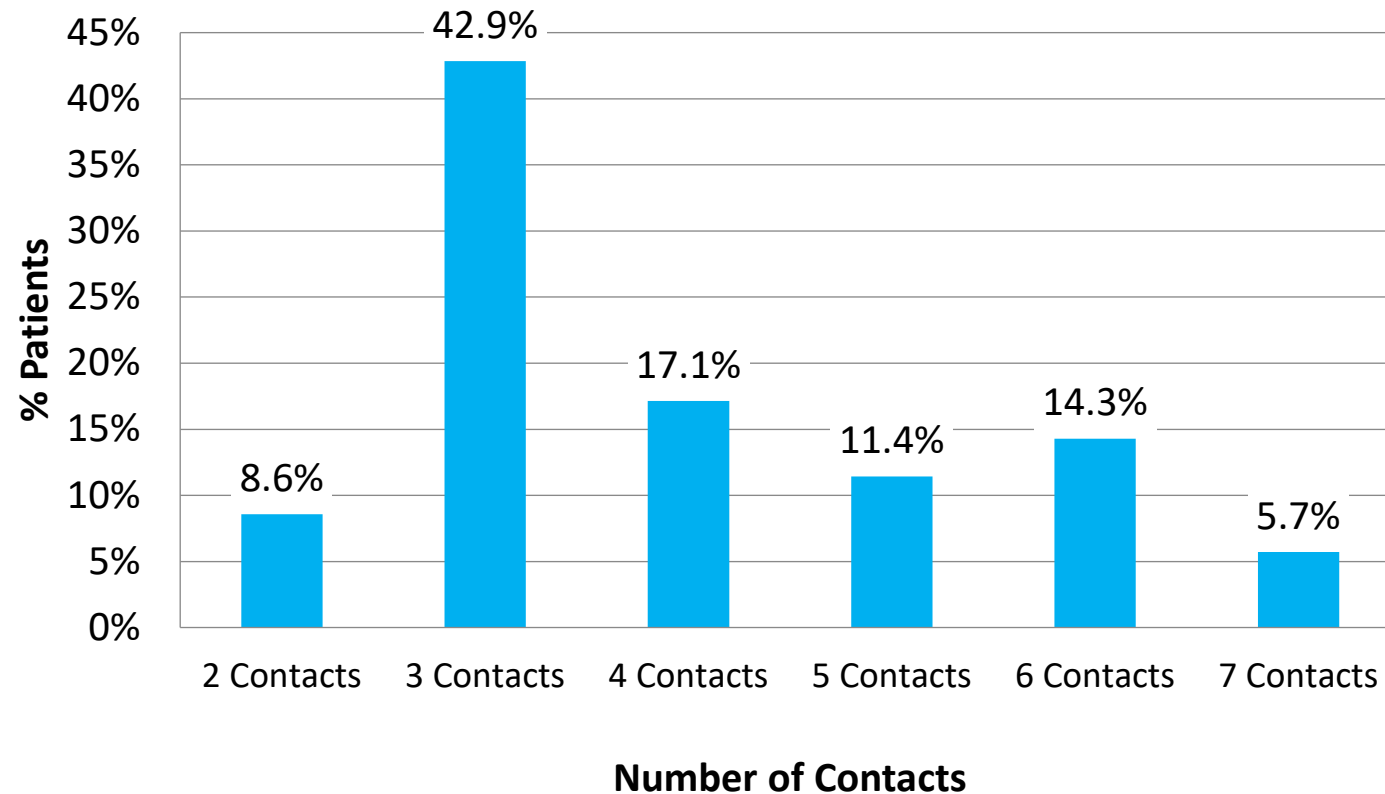
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# RED FLAGS: IS THIS ALS??



# ALS DIAGNOSIS: CONTACTS WITH HCPs PRIOR TO DIAGNOSIS



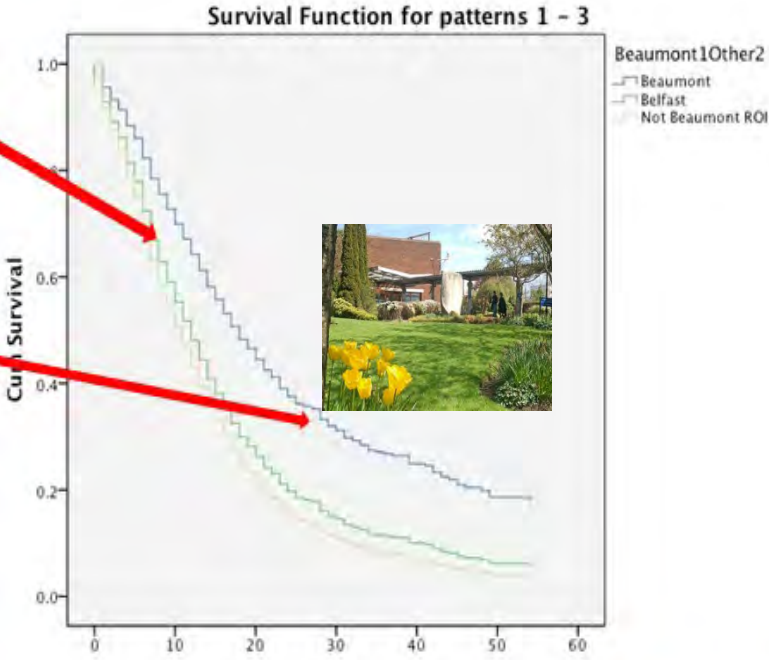
# TIMELINES

Figure 2 Timeline –First Symptom Timeline

	A. First Symptom to GP Visit	B. First Symptom to First Neuro	C. First Symptom to Diagnosis	4. First Symptom to MDC
<b>Months</b>	● ----- 5.5 mths----->	● ----- 11.2 mths----->	● ----- 16.0 mths----->	● ----- 19.1 mths----->
Mean	5.5	11.2	16.0	19.1
Median	3.0	8.0	13.0	14.6
SD	6.8	8.4	9.5	11.6
Range	0 - 25	0 - 35	4 - 48	8 - 54
N	31	33	35	35



# COMPARISON BETWEEN MDC, DEVOLVED CARE & GENERAL CARE



Rooney et al JNNP 2015

# LESSONS LEARNED We need...






- EARLIER DIAGNOSIS
- **BETTER DRUGS**
- BETTER TRIAL DESIGN
- BETTER PATIENT SELECTION –(PRECISION MEDICINE)
  - Not all patients are the same
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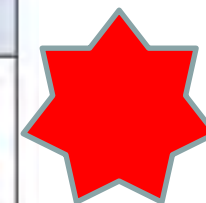


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# GENOME BASED THERAPIES FOR KNOWN MUTATIONS (True “Precision Medicine”)

# ANTI SENSE OLIGONUCLEOTIDES

Drug / Company	Target	Phase	Mechanism of Action and Comments	Clinical Trial Number
Tofersen 	SOD1	3 (completed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Antisense oligonucleotide against SOD1</li> <li>The trial did not meet its primary endpoint in 2021, but several positive biomarker results emerged</li> <li>Open-label extension trial on-going.</li> </ul>	NCT02623699
ION-363 	FUS	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Antisense oligonucleotide against FUS</li> <li>Safety, efficacy, pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics trial</li> <li>Estimated completion in 2024.</li> </ul>	NCT04768972
ION-541 	ATXN2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Antisense oligonucleotide against ataxin 2</li> <li>Safety and pharmacokinetics trial</li> <li>Estimated completion in 2023.</li> </ul>	NCT04494256
BIIB-078 	C9ORF72	1/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Antisense oligonucleotide against C9orf72</li> <li>Safety and pharmacokinetics trial</li> <li>Completion in 2021 - results awaited.</li> </ul>	NCT03626012
WVE-004 	C9ORF72	1/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Antisense oligonucleotide against C9orf72</li> <li>Safety, pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics trial</li> <li>Estimated completion in 2023.</li> </ul>	NCT04921862



# ALS TRIALS IN IRELAND(2023-24)

- PHASE 1: Genomic (PRECISION MEDICINE APPROACH)
- WAVE ASO – C9orf72 **FAILED**
- ANQUR Stathmin2 In progress
- FUSION ASO – FUS In progress
- PHASE 2
- DAZALS Dazucorilant- corticoid receptor antagonist: In progress
- CARDINALS Utreloxastat – oxidative stress: In progress
- MERIDIAN Complement inhibition **FAILED**
- PHASE 3
- ADORE Oral edaravone **FAILED**
- PHOENIX Phenylbutazone & TUDCA **FAILED**
- TUDCA (Horizon funded investigator led study) **FAILED**
- LIGHTHOUSE Triumeq- anti HERV2 In progress
- MAGNET Lithium in carriers of U13A at risk alleles In progress

# LESSONS LEARNED

## We need...

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- BETTER DRUGS
- BETTER TRIAL DESIGN
- BETTER PATIENT SELECTION –(PRECISION MEDICINE)
  - Not all patients are the same
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- BETTER BIOMARKERS

# LESSONS LEARNED

## We need...

- EARLIER DIAGNOSIS
- BETTER DRUGS
- **BETTER TRIAL DESIGN**
  - ..Enrolment criteria, stratification parameters, biomarkers, duration, endpoints...
- BETTER PATIENT SELECTION –(PRECISION MEDICINE)
  - Not all patients are the same
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- BETTER BIOMARKERS

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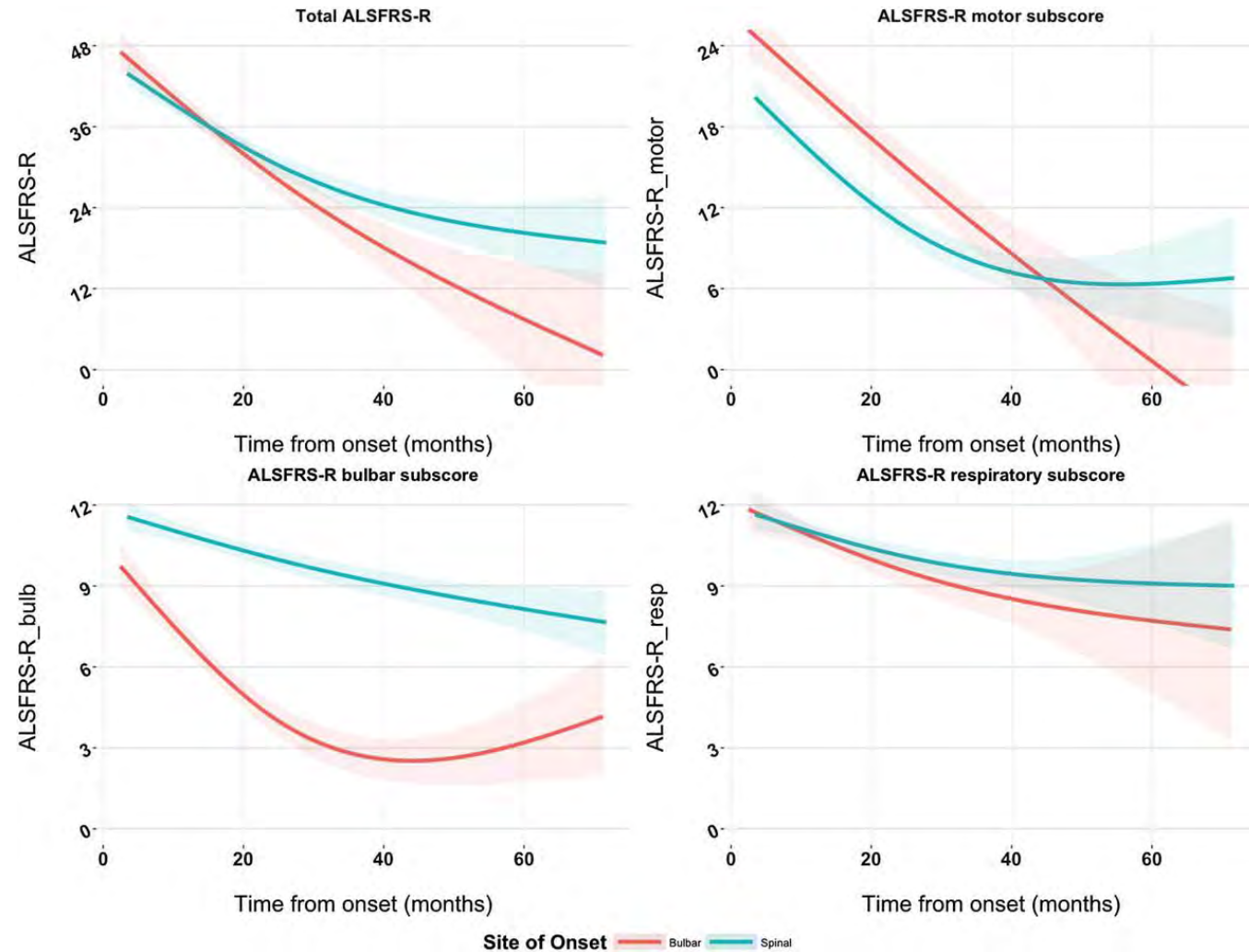
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# PROBLEMS WITH CLINICAL SCALES : ALS FRSR IS NOT LINEAR!

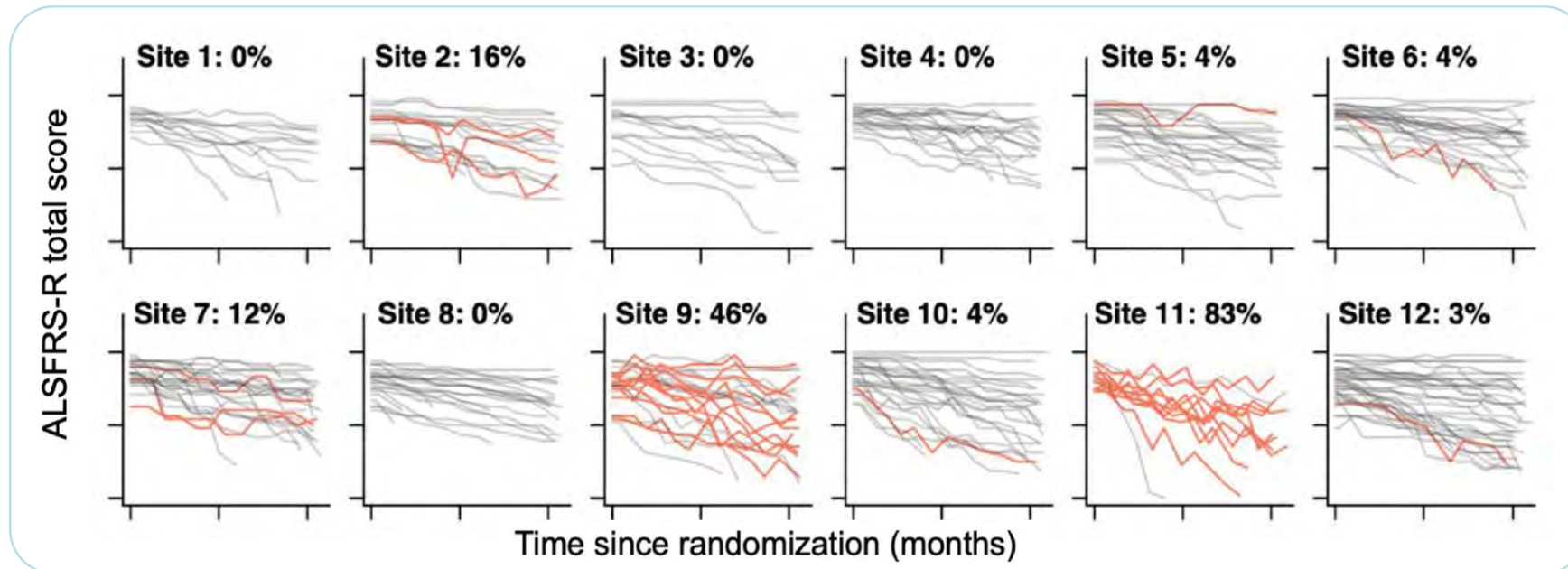
Graph of longitudinal total ALSFRS-R and ALSFRS-R subscores.



James Rooney et al. J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry  
2017;88:381-385



# RELIABILITY OF ALSFRSR ACROSS SITES ENGAGED IN CLINICAL TRIALS



Per centre, the number of patients with a **5-point or more increase in ALSFRS-R total score** are highlighted in red. ALSFRS-R, Bakkers JNE, et al. *Amyotroph Lateral Scler Frontotemporal Degener.* 2021; doi:

# POSSIBLE QUANTITATIVE OUTCOME MEASURES

Advance neurophysiology

Quantitative EEG, EMG

Digital technologies

Home monitoring devices

# REGULATORY ISSUES

Over the years, a number of suggestions have been made to innovate the design of clinical trials

Clinical trials have remained relatively conservative, especially when initiated by industry

Deviating from trial guidelines could affect regulatory acceptability

Amendments of the current regulatory guidelines are required to successfully adopt innovation

# LESSONS LEARNED

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- BETTER DRUGS
- BETTER TRIAL DESIGN
- BETTER PATIENT SELECTION –(PRECISION MEDICINE)
  - Not all patients are the same
- BETTER OUTCOME MEASURES
- **BETTER BIOMARKERS**

# Biomarkers in amyotrophic lateral sclerosis: current status and future prospects

Roisin McMackin<sup>1,2</sup>, Peter Bede<sup>2,3,4</sup>, Caroline Ingre<sup>5,6</sup>, Andrea Malaspina<sup>7</sup> & Orla Hardiman<sup>2,8</sup>✉

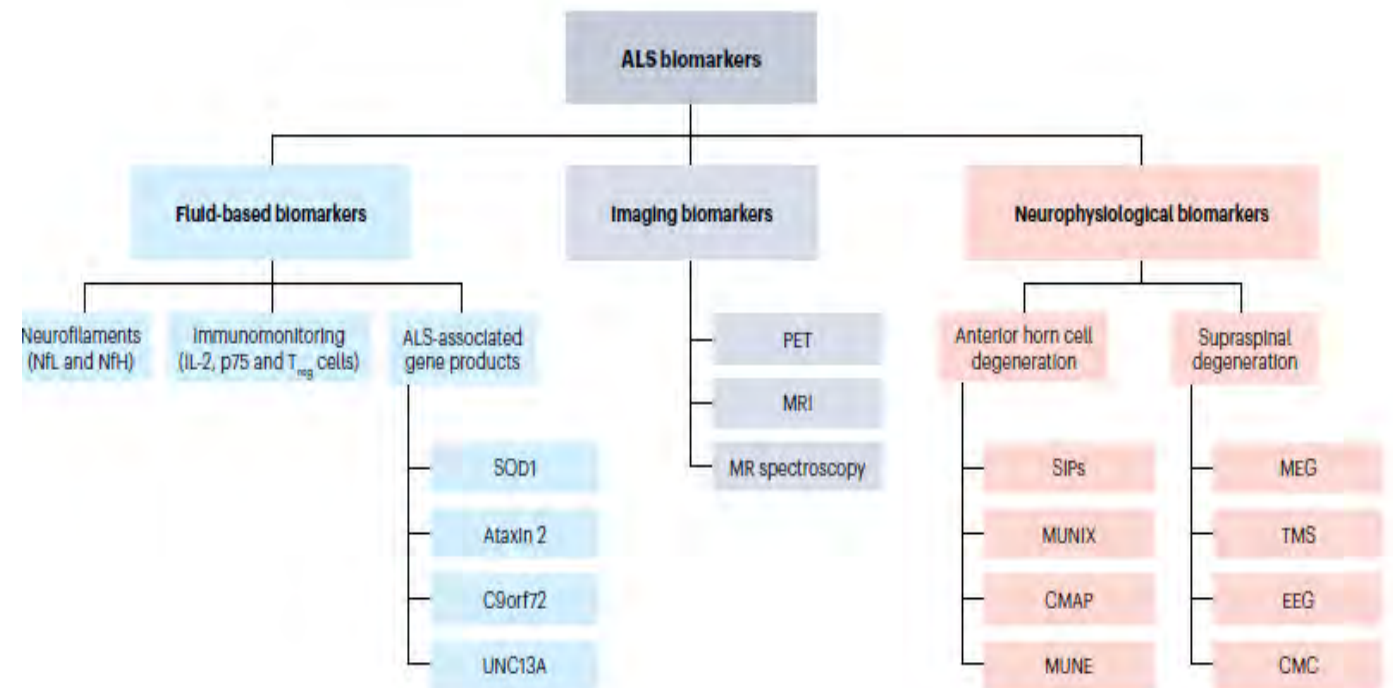
## Biomarkers: general principles

### Requirements

- Sensitive: can identify a disease or process.
- Specific: can discriminate between diseases and/or processes.
- Reproducible: repeated assessments of the same target produce the same result.
- Practical: cost-effective, ethical and applicable in the clinic.

### Categories

- Diagnostic: can discriminate the disease of interest (in this case, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis) from other conditions and enable early diagnosis.
- Categorical: defines disease subgroups with different characteristics and can be used to select individual patient cohorts.
- Prognostic and predictive: defines what will happen during the disease course and can be used for patient stratification in clinical trials.
- Pharmacodynamic: demonstrates target engagement.





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# NEXT STEPS..



# PRECISIONALS



An International Academic Industry Partnership  
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[www.precisionals.ie](http://www.precisionals.ie)

# OBJECTIVES

Enable electron integration of prospective multimodal and multi-sourced clinical, imaging, neuro-electric-signalling, genomic, and biomarker datasets: 6000 cases over 3 years

Develop novel ICT solutions towards data integration, interoperability, and analytics

Generate new knowledge to drive translational and clinical research in neurodegeneration

# CONCLUSIONS

Eponymous classification of disease is an over-simplification

Multiple subcohorts exist with differing pathogenic processes and disease trajectories

In ALS, early success with SOD1 anti-sense oligonucleotides point to future genomic therapies , but there are many caveats

Data driven approaches will help to tailor future treatments to patient subcohorts

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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DEIRDRE MURRAY  
PETER BEDE  
LARA MCMANUS  
ROISIN MCMACKIN  
NIALL PENDER  
MARIE MCCARTHY  
DARA MELDRUM  
JULIE KELLY

## MARK HEVERIN (Research Manager)

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ROB MCFARLANE  
COLM PEEL  
MARJORIE METZGER  
ROSIE GIGLIA  
MATTHEW MITCHELL  
SAROJ BISTA  
STEFAN DUKIC

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BRYAN J TRAYNOR (MD)  
STELA LEFTER (MD)  
GRAINNE GORMAN (MD)  
CONOR GALVIN  
SARAH HOSBECK  
MATTHEW GREENWAY  
SIMON CRONIN

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DAVID MURPHY  
MEGAN WALLS

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RUSSELL MCLAUGHLIN  
MARK DOHERTY  
ROSS BYRNE  
PETER BEDE  
SUSAN BYRNE  
KEVIN KENNA  
PARAMES IYER  
TAHA OMAR  
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MARTA PINTO-GRAU  
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JULIE PHUKAN  
MARWA ELAMIN  
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JAMES ROONEY  
DEIRDRE MURRAY  
GER FOLEY

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KATIE TOBIN MIRIAM GALVIN, DEIRDRE MURRAY  
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AMINA COFFEY



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