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Q1 Out of all your various responsibilities such as being a member of the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI), principal investigator of 15 national projects, and Deputy Editor of the *Allergy* journal, what do you enjoy doing the most and why?

All working facets of a researcher and scholar have interesting aspects. Designing and writing a research study is a very challenging activity, but it is also very rewarding to get your application approved and funded. Conducting the study is a hard and demanding process but generating new data that helps broaden the knowledge of a specific field is among the most satisfying experiences a scholar can have. Once the results are generated, it is very important to disseminate them in top-level scientific conferences and good quality research papers. Therefore, contributing to the growth and progress of EAACI is just a natural activity for a researcher in the allergy field. Similarly, it is crucial to count on top-quality journals in our field to both disseminate our research in an efficient manner and to increase the interest in allergy and clinical immunology among talented, international scholars.

Q2 You are a member of the local organising committee for this year's hybrid EAACI congress. What have been the biggest challenges of bringing this hybrid congress model into fruition?

First of all, I believe the hybrid model has been a great success. This fact illustrates how crises, like the current COVID-19 pandemic, are also opportunities for improvement and creativity. The capacity of the EAACI to adapt to such a challenging situation is a very good example of the commitment of our members and the excellent 'health' of the organisation. From a

practical point of view, it has been difficult to integrate remote and on-site Speakers and Chairs in the same session. Personally, I was amazed by the excellent coordination among the Chairs, Speakers, and technical team. We, as local organising committee members, tried help as much as possible, but the biggest credit should be given to the scientific programme committee coordinators, who did an outstanding job.

Q3 What does your role as coordinator of the Spanish National Network of Asthma and Allergy entail?

The network is called ARADyAL (Asthma, Adverse Drug Reactions, and Allergy Network). This structure functions as a translational network, combining innovative approaches in the field of immunology, genetics, nanomedicine, pharmacology, and chemistry, with a special focus on the search for new biomarkers and designing and evaluating intervention strategies for patients with severe allergic phenotypes. The ARADyAL consortium is composed of 28 groups from different Spanish regions, including clinical and basic researchers, and organised into three different scientific programmes. I am the coordinator of the whole network, and I am also directly in charge of conducting one of the scientific programmes. As the coordinator, I am responsible for the timely completion of the objectives and the smooth functioning of the network, especially guaranteeing a productive collaboration among research groups.

Q4 As a Deputy Editor of the *Allergy* journal and with over 180 publications to your name, what is the most interesting topic in allergy that you have come across and the current gaps in literature you have noticed?



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When talking about current hot topics in allergy and clinical immunology, one is obliged to refer to the COVID-19 pandemic. For the last year and a half, the *Allergy* journal performed a significant effort to adapt the journal to the urgent need for good quality research about the COVID-19 pandemic. Our main goal was to provide clinicians and scientists with good quality data, helping them to treat their patients and design proper research studies. We worked very hard to position the *Allergy* journal among the most appealing international journals to publish COVID-19 related studies. I am happy to say that our efforts were successful, as illustrated by the excellent performance of the *Allergy* journal in all bibliographic quality indicators. Nevertheless, there is always room for improvement. Despite having progressed significantly in the understanding of the immunological mechanisms of COVID-19 and in the identification of risk factors for severe disease, we still need evidence-based recommendations for the daily management of patients (e.g., effective preventive measures, suitability of biologicals, and other treatments during the pandemic, optimal time gap between COVID-19 vaccine and allergen immunotherapy, etc.).

Q5 In a recent paper you published in June, you discussed the prevention of severe allergic reactions to COVID-19 vaccines. What are some of the urgent clinical needs in diagnosing and treating patients who have suffered severe allergic reactions after vaccination?

Currently, we encounter many difficulties when approaching patients who experienced reactions after a COVID-19 vaccination. On the one hand, the sensitivity and specificity of any diagnostic test has not been studied. This fact implies that we are unaware of the real value (e.g., positive and negative predictive values) of skin testing or basophil activation test to diagnose allergic reactions to COVID-19 vaccines. On the other hand, the safety of drug challenges with COVID-19 vaccines remains unstudied. There is a really urgent need to address all these aspects in properly designed studies.

Q6 Has the COVID-19 pandemic influenced your current research and opened a new area of unmet research in drug/vaccine allergy?

The COVID-19 pandemic has heavily impacted our research activities, especially those involving lung function test or nasal challenges. For many months, these projects had to stop and only recently we have been able to partially resume, although at a significantly slower speed compared to pre-COVID-19 times. On the other hand, the pandemic has opened the opportunity for very interesting research lines. Our group has been focussed on drug hypersensitivity for decades, and we started investigating adverse reactions to COVID-19 vaccines as soon as the administration programme started in early 2021. Of note, we are correlating the tolerability of the vaccines with their immunological effect on the patient. We really hope these studies will contribute to the prediction of adverse reactions and a better selection of candidate patients for each type of COVID-19 vaccine.

Q7 What are some points of emphasis you incorporate into practice to be the best allergist you can be?

As a physician, it is very important to execute an evidence-based practice. To this end, it is crucial

to be up-to-date and to never stop studying and learning. As a matter of fact, regularly conducting research studies is the best guarantee for being aware of new discoveries and trends in clinical science. An evidence-based practice ensures that your patients are managed in the best possible way according to the current state of knowledge in a specific area.

Q8 Finally, what are your ambitions for the future and what future studies are you looking to explore in the next year?

From a research perspective, I am really interested in understanding the underlying mechanisms of allergic reactions to drugs and in searching for diagnostic biomarkers. Moreover, I find the research about prevention of allergic diseases and treatments able to modify their natural history fascinating. In the coming years, I would also like to continue contributing to the growth of the EAACI and *Allergy* journal and to position allergy and clinical immunology among the most appealing scientific disciplines for physicians and researchers. ■



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