Foundations

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Help us help!

HSP is Hereditary Spastic Paraplegia, a seldom and incurable hereditary motor neuron disease with childhood or young adult onset that constantly gets worse. HSP – those three letters make walking difficult and can imply life in a wheelchair. Between 2000 and 3000 people suffer from Hereditary Spastic Paraplegia in Germany.

This is why in 1998, Dr. Tom Wahlig from Münster in Westfalia, whose son Henry has also suffered from HSP since childhood, established the foundation named after him. Since 1998, the Tom Wahlig Foundation has set up HSP-consultation in cooperation with many hospitals throughout Germany and Austria to help facilitate the beginning of this path. The core assignments of the Tom Wahlig Foundation include promoting research on HSP through start-up funding of projects, awarding research scholarships and building networks by means of our symposium.

When the Tom Wahlig Foundation was established in 1998, none of the genes which, when mutated, can cause HSP were known. By now, around 50 gene loci and close to 20 genes have been identified. The hope of causal therapy linked to these discoveries has yet to be fulfilled. One of the BioSysNet project leaders, Dr. Beate Winner, and her colleagues are currently working with the support of a Tom Wahlig Foundation research scholarships to create human HSP neurons from skin cells.

HSP is not curable – yet. The work of medical doctors, neuroscientists, and researches of other areas of expertise gives those affected by HSP daily hope that a way to cure or to alleviate this disease will be found. Since 1998, the foundation has been able to significantly advance basic research in HSP - after having remained static for close to 100 years. Also many new insights were gained by means of the Tom Wahlig Foundation support.

Help us help!
Help those affected by HSP by contributing to a vision of a future without HSP. The foundation will support you in this quest by all available means!

http://www.hsp-info.de