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Sub: Sun Pharma Science Foundation Research Awards -2023: Nomination for Prof. MANJARI TRIPATHI (Medical Sciences - Clinical Research)

Sir/Madam,

It is with great enthusiasm and pleasure that I write this letter of nomination for Dr. Manjari Tripathi, Professor of Neurology at the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi. I have known her since 1998 when she first joined the institute faculty and more closely for the past more than one decade through our mutual collaboration towards evaluating the immunogenetic basis of response to drug therapy in various neurological complications.

Dr. Manjari is a keen and astute clinician, a popular teacher, and an excellent researcher. Starting from virtually nothing, she has developed a great team of young researchers dedicated to the field of epilepsy, cognition, and sleep disorders, all of which are now recognized as important subspecialties in Neurology. She has one of the best publication records in Neurology, with papers in high-impact factor journals like NEJM and Lancet. Currently, she is spearheading the clinical, teaching, and research areas in Epilepsy and is the officer-in-charge of the "DBT Centre of Excellence in Epilepsy"which is the largest centre looking after epilepsy care and cutting-edge research in the country. Her inputs, knowledge, and dedication towards this disease have resulted in several refractory patients becoming seizure-free and taking control of their lives.

Recently, her work on epilepsy has been published in NEJM, which is regarded as the mecca of Medicine with the highest impact factor of 79.0 (Surgery for Drug-Resistant Epilepsy in Children. N Engl J Med 2017; 377:1639-1647). In this study, children with drug-resistant epilepsy (DRE) were randomly assigned to undergo early surgery as compared to the medial group (usual wait list surgery).This is the first randomized trial of surgery in the paediatric epileptic population with a dedicated team under her mentorship. She conceived the concept and performed meticulous studies involving caregivers and children with DRE. Further, she infused her research team with enthusiasm to conduct this landmark trial. The findings of the study are applicable to all populations particularly those in Asia where the treatment gap for epilepsy surgery is huge as compared to the rest of the world.

Indeed, DRE in children remains largely unaddressed with devastating consequences and long-term challenges for patients and families. There is a long delay before children are brought in for evaluation. Seizures in kids can be misleading and non-focal, impacting the vulnerable developing brain and the fact that they are resistant to AEDs needs them to be considered for possible early

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surgical control. Delay results in catastrophic consequences in terms of seizures and their unpredictably continuing and collateral developmental delays occurring. These children lose vital years, which sets them back, never to catch up again. During the 12 months follow up post following surgery, 77% of the patients assigned to surgery became seizure-free as compared to 7% of those assigned to medical management alone by the ILAE seizure scale (Primary outcome). Significant improvement in the secondary outcomes of seizure severity, cognition, and behaviour favouring surgery over continued medical management; these were measured by the Hague Seizure Severity scale, the Child Behaviour Checklist, the Paediatric Quality of Life inventory, and the Vineland Social Maturity Scale.

The findings underscore the need for physicians to promptly refer such patients to comprehensive epilepsy care centres, neurologists, and others specializing in epilepsy. Her study has impacted and galvanized international remarks to the study -web links.

1. Listed as thebiggest breakthrough studyof 2017 bymedscapehttp:/www.medscape.com/viewarticle/8898892nlid=119720_405&src=WNL_mdpl sfeat_171226_mscpedit_neur&uac=96769DG&spon=26&impID=1519244&faf=1
2. HighlightedbyNeurologyToday http://journals.wv.com/neurotodayonline/Fulltext/2017/12070/1n_Clinic_Pediatric_Epilepsy_Surgery_fro.10.aspx
3. Podcast by American Neurologist ofIndia-athttp://www.4aina.com/Latestncws/5723457.https://www.Aaina.com/resources/Documents/AINA%20audio%20podcast%2 0-%20Tripathi%20and%20chandra.mp3.

This indeed is the groundbreaking study that shows for the first time that epilepsy surgery is better than continued medications for epilepsy that doesn't respond to the first two lines of antiepileptic(AED) therapy in children. Many parents who are fearful of surgery for DRE now have hope, as evidenced by the Level 1 study.

In my opinion, Prof. Manjari Tripathi has steadily grown into an excellent clinician-scientist with a great degree of maturity, independent thinking, and meticulous planning. She has attained remarkable national and international recognition in the area of Epilepsy research and management. This is evident from her rich CV with more than 378 original articles in high-impact journals like NEJIM,LANCET, JAMA, NEUROLOGY, EPILEPSIA,etc., and publications of high impact. She has trained scores of DM and PhD students at the AIIMS. I have therefore no hesitation in recommending her candidature for the Sun Pharma Science Foundation Research Awards - 2023under the 'Medical Sciences – Clinical Research' category.

Sincerely

Prof. N.K. Mehra
Former Dean (Res) and National Chair AIIMS
Vice President (international), Indian National Science Academy