Press Release

**Excellent Beta Cell Research: Dr. Bengt-Frederik Belgardt Receives the 2017 Hellmut Mehnert Project Grant**

**At this year’s Annual Meeting of the German Diabetes Association (DDG) in Hamburg, Dr. Bengt-Frederik Belgardt received the 2017 Hellmut Mehnert Project Grant of the DDG. Currently the Deputy Director of the Institute for Beta Cell Biology at the German Diabetes Center is studying the pathological processes in beta cells during the development of diabetes. Belgardt convinced the jury with his proposal “Necrosis and necroptosis of pancreatic beta cells in type 2 diabetes”.**

**Düsseldorf (DDZ)** – Which cell defects occur at the molecular level in the pancreatic beta cells during diabetes development? What pathological processes and signaling pathways take place in the body during the development of diabetes? – "Questions about harmful effects on cells and tissues are important in diabetes research in order to understand mechanisms and to develop approaches for the treatment of diabetes," said Belgardt on the occasion of the award ceremony.

The Diabetes Congress of the German Diabetes Association took place under the motto "Progress for Our Patients". “The basic research on beta cells shows that with every new research finding, we can better explain diabetes and thus provide the basis for improving the treatment and life of patients in the long term,” said Professor Eckhard Lammert, director of the Institute for Beta Cell Biology at the German Diabetes Center (DDZ). In numerous lectures and poster presentations, the German Diabetes Center, a partner in the German Center for Diabetes Research (DZD e.V.), presented its latest findings to people with diabetes, primary care physicians, scientists and many other Congress attendees.

**Brief biography:**

Bengt-Frederik Belgardt studied biology at the University of Cologne from 2001 to 2006. He then pursued his doctoral studies at the Institute for Genetics of the University of Cologne in the laboratory of Professor Jens C. Brüning, focusing on the neuronal and molecular regulation of body weight and glucose metabolism. He completed his dissertation in 2010 with “summa cum laude”. Following his work in Cologne, he conducted research from October 2011 to May 2015 at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) in Zurich at the Institute for Molecular Health Sciences under Professor Markus Stoffel with a focus on beta cell biology. Since June 2015, Dr. Belgardt has been head of the young investigator group Beta Cell Defects and deputy director of the Institute for Beta Cell Biology at the German Diabetes Center Düsseldorf. In 2016 he also received the Hellmut Mehnert Project Grant.

The Hellmut Mehnert Project Grant, named after the renowned diabetologist, is granted each year for the best project proposal by the German Diabetes Association.

**Photo:**

Dr. Bengt-Frederik Belgardt receives the 2017 Hellmut Mehnert Project Grant.

The German Diabetes Center (DDZ) understands itself as the German reference center for diabetes. It aims to contribute to the improvement of prevention, early detection, diagnosis and therapy of diabetes mellitus. At the same time the objective is to improve the epidemiological data situation in Germany. The DDZ is responsible for the multi-center German Diabetes Study. It is a contact for health care providers, prepares scientific information on diabetes mellitus and makes it available to the public. The DDZ is a member of the Leibniz Association (WGL) and is a partner in the German Center for Diabetes Research (DZD e.V.).

Recent press releases of the DDZ are available at [www.ddz.uni-duesseldorf.de](http://www.ddz.uni-duesseldorf.de)

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