



## EASL Recognition Award Recipient 2020: Prof. Patrick Marcellin

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Professor Patrick Marcellin richly deserves the high honour and recognition bestowed upon him by the European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL) in 2020.

Patrick Marcellin is currently Professor of Hepatology at the University of Paris and Head of the Viral Hepatitis Research Unit in Hôpital Beaujon, Clichy, Paris. Patrick was born in Paris. His mother was a Russian émigré and his father a research agronomist. Patrick commenced his post graduate studies in 1970. He first attained degrees in Mathematics and Physics from the University of Paris before commencing his medical studies at the University of Paris in 1972. During this period and subsequently, he remarkably, acquired ancillary degrees in biostatistics, parasitology, immunology and graduated in virology from the Institute Pasteur, Paris. His PhD in virology was acquired in 1994 from the University of Paris. Although he lacked “direction” initially, (his initial inclination was toward philosophy and writing, and when he began his medical studies his initial chosen career path was neuro psychiatry), he quickly realised his true potential as an internationally recognised Hepatologist. His career advancement began immediately after receiving his medical degree and he has never looked back.

His imagination and intellectual drive were fired after beginning his post-graduate medical studies. He completed his residency in internal medicine and hepatology and gastroenterology between 1979 and 1984. His interest in research was kindled at this point, and in 1981 he commenced a research fellowship in immunology in the laboratory of VP Butler at Columbia University in New York, and subsequently, a research fellowship in virology in the laboratory of Prof. Pierre Tiollais and Prof. Christian Brechot, at the Institute Pasteur between 1984 and 1986. He was then appointed as the Assistant Professor in the Hepatology Department in the Hopital Beaujon, Clichy, and became Associate Professor in the Department in 1991. From 1997 he was Professor of Hepatology- Gastroenterology at the University of Paris and head of the Virus Hepatitis Clinical Research Centre and Viral Hepatitis Physio-Pathology and Therapy Research Unit, INSERM, Hopital Beaujon. From 2017 he has served as vice president at the Directorate of Clinical Research and Innovation of Paris hospitals.

His decision to apply to the Hospital Boujon was a far-reaching decision that resulted in his training as a hepatologist under the celebrated and distinguished mentorship of the late Prof. J.P. Benhamou at Hopital Beaujon, at Clichy. The unit at the



time included Bernard Rueff, Serge Erlinger, Didier Lebec, Dominic Pessayre, Dominic Valla and Thiery Poynard, and was thus a major crucible of French hepatology. His sojourn in training at Beaujon proved to be an expansive period working in one of the world's major liver units. Patrick was soon charged with, and became responsible for the creation of the Viral Hepatitis Clinical and Research unit which has proved to be a stimulating platform for an array of young hepatologists who have in turn emerged as leaders in the field under his tutelage. They have been able to learn incrementally from a powerful intellectual group in the unit with a specific configuration that served the development of modern Hepatology in France and internationally. Patrick takes the credit for building and developing the viral hepatitis unit, and within the unit, compiling a remarkable professional career.

His many responsibilities have included the appointment to the EASL scientific committee, organiser of the European Consensus Conference on Hepatitis C (EASL 1999), organiser of the European Consensus Conference on Hepatitis B (EASL 2002), secretary of the organising committee of the French Consensus Conference on hepatitis C (2002) and coordinator of the scientific committee for the 1<sup>st</sup> EASL Clinical Practice Guidelines on the Management of Hepatitis B (2009). Importantly it should be pointed out that these clinical practice guidelines set the stage for a wide series of EASL guideline committees which have stood the test of time to become widely accepted internationally. I can

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attest to his drive, passion and leadership, as well as his intellectual prowess and generosity during the organisation, collation and writing of the guidelines and consensus meetings.

He was founder, secretary and then president of the French Hepatitis Network (1995- 2015), Organiser of the French National Annual Hepatitis Day, founder and president of the French Viral Hepatitis Molecular Biology group (GEMHEP) and amongst his recent proud achievements, has been the organiser of the annual International Paris Hepatology Conference from 2004 to date. He has also organised and has been president of the young European Hepatology course from 2013 to date, providing a unique forum to encourage an ethos of research and clinical expertise amongst young hepatologists.

His involvement in laboratory and clinical research on viral hepatitis and liver diseases dates back to 1984. His major focus has been on viral hepatitis and the therapy of hepatitis, and as such he has been a leader in the field, and a frequent principal investigator on initial trials of interferons and antivirals, leading many pivotal studies to investigate improved therapies for chronic hepatitis B and C. His distinguished academic achievements and major contributions to the field of hepatology and viral hepatitis have taken the field forward through several different eras of advancement.

By bestowing this honour EASL rightly recognises an exceptional hepatologist whose H index of 113, 55,597 citations and 2,264 coauthors (<https://www.mendeley.com/authors/7102079502/>) mark him as a remarkably prolific and driven clinical scientist. He is a methodical and even obsessional perfectionist who has published scientific manuscripts in all the major high-impact internal medicine and hepatology and gastroenterology journals. His diligent and assiduous efforts have led to great progress in viral hepatitis and antiviral therapy over the past 3 decades.

He has demonstrably compiled numerous attainments. His notable publications have included the impact of interferon therapy on long-term outcomes on the disease, early observations of the adverse events of interferon therapy and long-standing outcomes, vasculitis associated with non-A non-B hepatitis (hepatitis C), clinical outcomes in patients with hepatitis C, and the influence of gender and hormonal influences on the outcome of hepatitis C. Subsequent publications have focussed on virological drivers of hepatitis B and C, HBsAg quantitation and HBsAg loss and predictors of HBsAg loss, the impact of antiviral therapy on hepatic fibrosis in treated patients, the use of non-invasive markers including baseline HBsAg and HBcrAg for precision medicine, the global public health problems of chronic hepatitis, long term efficacy of nucleoside analogues in HBeAg-negative patients, unusual genotypes and variants of hepatitis C, detailed studies of the efficacy of new direct-acting

antivirals, and last but not least, the efficacy of combinations of interferon and nucleoside analogues for hepatitis B.

Thus, Patrick has played a pivotal role in clinical trials of new agents in viral hepatitis, which have proven of great consequence and which have framed our understanding of the disease (for example identifying histological regression in hepatitis B, and the time course of a sustained virological response in hepatitis C). His systematic reservoir of bioinformatic data and biobanking of research tissues, and the vision to complete longer terms studies have proven of immense value. His ability to impart knowledge led to his invitation to several NIH consensus conferences on the management of chronic viral hepatitis. The scientific endeavour of his unit, tracking the revolution of antiviral agents for hepatitis B and C with considerable flair, intellect and novelty have provided important career opportunities for his fellows.

Patrick's unique ability over the past 30 years to undertake progressive clinical and scientific research and his pivotal insights have enabled the progressive integration of clinical findings with research observations, leading to therapies and consensus guideline programs that have optimised treatment for the time. The progressive nature of this research has led to the Paris hepatology conference becoming one of the most important and inclusive educational meetings on the calendar, to which participants from all corners of the globe consistently flock. Prof. Marcellin's thoroughness and attention to detail ensures that the meeting succeeds.

Patrick remains an interesting personality. While not often evident, he is a highly accomplished ballroom dancer, and his other passion is playing and singing the blues (with a French accent). Starting from age 16, he travelled around the world with a backpack, fascinated by different countries and cultures. Fortunately, he has satisfied his curiosity and passion for travelling as a researcher and conference speaker!

Patrick is an excellent physician whose opinion is widely sought; he is a respected institution in the discipline of Hepatology. He is hard-working, and regularly burns the midnight oil. His persistence and work ethic are widely recognised but at the same time he has been generous to his collaborators and fellows and inspired their efforts, intellectual rigour and curiosity with a passion. Prof. Marcellin has been tempered by the exigencies and labours of life in an academic environment but can look back and now forwards to an exceptional career in clinical medicine, science, education and training. He is a deserved recipient of the 2020 EASL recognition award who can take considerable pride in his endeavours, and who should savour the warm congratulations of EASL for this high honour.