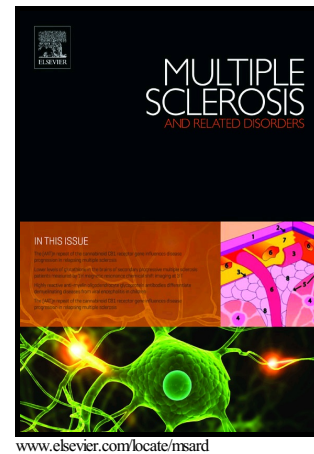


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Variations in multiple sclerosis practice within Europe – is it time for a new treatment guideline?

Martin Marziniak MD^a, Karima Ghorab MD^b, Wojciech Kozubski MD PhD^c, Claudia Pflieger MD PhD^d,
Lívia Sousa MD^e, Karen Vernon RGN, PgDip^f, Mauro Zaffaroni MD^g, Sven G. Meuth MD PhD^{h*}

^aDepartment of Neurology, kbo-Isar-Amper-Klinikum München-Ost, Ringstrasse 56A, 85540 Haar, Germany

^bCHU de Limoges Hôpital Dupuytren, 2 Avenue Martin Luther King, 87042 Limoges, France

^cDepartment of Neurology, Poznań University of Medical Sciences, Poznan 49, Przybyszewskiego St. 60-355,
Poznan, Poland

^dAalborg University Hospital, Neurologisk Afdeling, Ladegaardsgade 5, 8. Sal, 9000, Aalborg, Denmark

^eHospitais da Universidade de Coimbra, Serviço de Neurologia Centro, Rua Fonseca Pinto, 3000-075 Coimbra,
Portugal

^fSalford Royal NHS Foundation Trust, Neurosciences Dept, Stott Lane, Salford, M6 8HD, United Kingdom

^gCentro Studi Sclerosi Multipla, Ospedale S. Antonio Abate, via Pastori 4, 21013 Gallarate (VA), Italy

^hDepartment of Neurology and Institute of Physiology, I – Neuropathophysiology, Albert-Schweitzer Campus 1,
Gebäude A10, 48149 Münster, Germany

***Corresponding author.** Professor Dr Sven Meuth, Tel.: +49 251 83 444 63; fax: +49 251 83 468 12. e-mail
sven.meuth@ukmuenster.de

Abstract

In the past 5 years, the combination of developments in diagnostic strategy and approval of new disease-modifying therapies has provided an opportunity to achieve dramatic improvements in patient outcomes in multiple sclerosis (MS). However, across Europe there are several factors that may prevent patients from receiving the best therapy at the appropriate time, and there is variation among countries in terms of which of these factors are most relevant. Here, we review current MS clinical practices in a number of countries in the European Union to identify differences regarding initiation of treatment in patients with clinically isolated syndrome or relapsing–remitting MS, and differences in the timing of treatment switch or escalation. While recognizing that policy is not static in any country, we believe that patients' interests would be better served if a European treatment guideline was developed. Such a guideline could both inform and be informed by national policies, facilitating the dissemination of best clinical practice internationally.

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