

Forging New Links in Infection, Immunity, Inflammation and Repair

On 27th June scientists, the MAHSC Inflammation and Repair Domain and the University of Manchester infection, Immunity, inflammation and Repair Domain joined forces to bridge the interface between biological research and its clinical application. Academics, Healthcare Professionals and Industry Representatives attended the event, which showcased the leading research occurring within both domains and facilitated fruitful discussions on the challenges and opportunities for translational research.

The session theme of Infection welcomed presentations from NHS consultants Andrew Ustianowski and Ray Borrow, and several University academics including Professor Paul Dark and Professor Jeremy Derrick who also acted as chairs. The discussion that followed explored the potential of interdisciplinary working and how to maximise connections from bench to bedside by understanding the needs of the local population and improving communication across the professions.

Immunity

The Immunity session was chaired by Professor Tracy Hussell who introduced talks by Dr Matt Hepworth, Dr Amy Saunders on the control of the skin immune system, and Dr Mark Travis who introduced new concepts in gastrointestinal immunity. Facilitated discussions touched on the presence of commensal bacteria in diabetic foot ulcers, the potential of connecting research within the domains with the biomaterials groups in the Faculty of Science and Engineering, and the benefits of better understanding common co-morbidities such as cardiovascular disease and hypertension in relation to rheumatoid arthritis.

Inflammation

The speakers on Inflammation included Clinical Research Fellows and Scientists (Amy Foulkes and Alex Horsley) and University of Manchester academics (Professors Tony Day and Michelle Briggs, Drs Rebecca Dearman and Steve Fowler). Professor Michelle Brigg's work on chronic pain sparked later discussions, highlighting the potential to explore the relationship between chronic pain and inflammation in further depth.

Repair

The theme of chronic pain ran into the final session of Repair, chaired by Professor Judith Hoyland who introduced the translation-focused, multidisciplinary Manchester Regenerative Medicine Network. Speakers included Professors Sue Kimber, Aline Miller (from the Faculty of Science and Engineering and Manchester BIOGEL), Adrian Woolf, and Dr Sarah Herrick. Research presented linked back into the discussions on chronic pain and the role of adhesions, with discussions also exploring the role of chromatin modifications in the diabetic chronic wound response.

The meeting aimed to form new partnerships between scientists and health professionals, facilitating future collaborative research to bring discoveries from the laboratory bench to the bedside, and vice versa. The excellent turnout and strong attendance from across the professional spectrum ensured fruitful discussions that will inform the future development of the domain and forge new cross-disciplinary collaborations.