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PhD in Medical Sciences  
2015-2016

INVITATION to the Public defence of

**Elisabeth DE GREEF**

To obtain the academic degree of '**DOCTOR IN MEDICAL SCIENCES**'

**Paediatric Crohn's Disease in Belgium: Phenotype at  
diagnosis and after three years follow up:  
*The BELCRO cohort.***

**Monday 18 April 2016**

Auditorium **Brouwer**, 18:30  
Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy, Laarbeeklaan 103, 1090 Brussel

How to reach the campus Jette:

<http://www.vub.ac.be/english/infoabout/campuses>



Vrije Universiteit Brussel

## Summary of the dissertation

The Belgian Registry for paediatric Crohn's disease (BELCRO) recruited newly diagnosed and previously diagnosed paediatric Crohn's Disease (CD) patients (2008-20010) and followed them for 5 years. The aim was to evaluate disease presentation, evolution, treatment and outcome such as disease activity and growth. A close collaboration with adult gastroenterologists assured an optimal paediatric patient recruitment and allowed comparison between paediatric and adult CD related medical care. This PhD thesis presents the main results of the BELCRO analysis at diagnosis and until 3 year follow-up. Disease presentation and age at diagnosis are similar to the surrounding countries. We notice a good disease control with the actual treatment paradigms and we were not able to identify clinical predictors for disease diagnosis, growth or disease activity during follow-up, except for the type of physician following the patient: paediatric patients under adult care had worse disease activity at 3 year follow-up. As far as we know, adult and paediatric practices for paediatric CD have never been compared before. With the analysis performed, we were unable to identify why the type of physician is the only significant predictor, but we emit several hypothesis. This issue is worth investigating during further follow-up, notably after five yrs. We also notice that a >60% of our population is treated with biologicals at 3 year follow-up. Practices in biological administration, concomitant medication, safety and cost were evaluated for BELCRO patients.

BELCRO pictures the status of actual medical care in paediatric CD in Belgium, but not all disease related factors could be part of our analysis. Elaboration of this project could certainly broaden the knowledge on paediatric CD. The results of this project suggest that new concepts such as mucosal healing, drug levels, patient reported outcomes, ...should be part of a larger registration. BELCRO is just a beginning....

## Curriculum Vitae

Elisabeth De Greef, born on the 30<sup>th</sup> of December 1976, started her medical school at the 'Facultés Notre Dame de la Paix', Namur and continued her medical school at the Catholic University in Leuven, where she graduated in June 2001 with great distinction. She was accepted as a resident in general Paediatrics at the Catholic University in Leuven and worked during her paediatric training at the university hospital, as well as in several hospitals in Flanders and Brussels and in Montpellier, France. After her residency, she decided to pursue a training in paediatric gastroenterology. She started in the Queen Paola Hospital under the supervision of late Prof Dr M. Van Caille-Bertrand and went on to a clinical fellowship in paediatric gastroenterology at the Children's Hospital at Westmead in Sydney, Australia under the supervision of Prof Dr KG Gaskin and at the Sick Kids Hospital in Toronto, Canada under the supervision of Prof Dr A Griffiths. On her return in Belgium in 2009, she worked in the division of paediatric gastroenterology at the Queen Paola Hospital for a year before joining the paediatric gastroenterology division at the UZ Brussel Hospital as a staff member. Besides general paediatric gastroenterology, she participates in the IBD clinic and coordinates the oral aversion clinic. Since 2010 she joined the BELCRO project and has been responsible for the course of the project, the analysis and the scientific output. Results of this project, on which the PhD thesis is based, have been presented at national and international meetings on a yearly basis and have been published as full manuscripts. She also (co-)authored >30 papers in the field of paediatric gastroenterology in the last 5 years.