



Q & A with American Brain Foundation Researcher: Hristelina Ilieva, MD, PhD

Johns Hopkins School of Medicine

2015 Clinical Research Training Fellowship in ALS Research
Cosponsored by the American Academy of Neurology, American Brain Foundation and the ALS Association



Q: Explain how this research could benefit patients or the public.

A: I hope to answer the question of how different glial cells and neurons are affected in the most common subtype of familial ALS – the C9ORF72 linked ALS. Viewed as a predominantly neuronal disease, in ALS, dysfunction of glial cells may contribute to disease and open potential doors for intervention.

Q: Explain how you feel to have received this fellowship.

A: I am both honored and very excited. I view this as an opportunity to contribute to the clinical ALS research field. With this opportunity comes the sense of responsibility to both the patients and their families and also to the ALS scientific community to do the best job possible.

Q: How have colleagues or mentors influenced your career?

A: I have been lucky to train and learn from great physicians and scientists, who inspire generations to think critically and remain positive despite the fact that we are faced with many challenges. For example, ALS can present in different ways and be driven by different genes, but identification of common pathways may lead to feasible and realistic break-throughs for a wider variety of patients.