

Improving education quality in the field of rare diseases following European Union recommendations

Dear Friends and Readers,

This is always a pleasure to introduce the new issue of our Journal. This time we start from the article that confirms the importance of rare diseases problem – not only in terms of economy, but concentrating on professional education. Healthcare workers often have insufficient knowledge on rare diseases that may lead to delay in making a diagnosis and providing appropriate care. The fifth area of the Europlan entitled: “Gathering The Expertise On Rare Diseases At European Level” includes education, development and exchange of knowledge and experience in the field of rare diseases. This area was ranked high priority in rare diseases, because it determines appropriate and fast diagnosis and high level of healthcare. In the present review me and Prof. Grzegorz Kopeć summarize European Union recommendations on the implementation of education systems in the member states. We also show the implementation of the programme in the Jagiellonian University Medical College. The Steering Committee of the project funded by European Union entitled “Development of the European Network in Orphan Cardiovascular Diseases” together with the authorities of Jagiellonian University Medical College, Faculty of Medicine decided to establish a unique educational program on rare diseases for medical students. Scientists and tutors affiliated at the Jagiellonian University as well as partner Universities and organizations took part in the project. We welcome you to read the whole text and to share with us your remarks and suggestions concerning the education of students and medical professionals in the field of rare diseases.

The original article presented in this issue concentrates on a new markers that may help in decision-making

in patients with atrial septal defects. Closure of ASD in patients with hemodynamically significant shunt has become standard of care in recent years. Correction of ASD prevents the development of pulmonary hypertension, cardiac arrhythmia and heart failure. However, the most controversial issue is the selection of patients for ASD closure who have normal pulmonary artery pressure, absent or negligible clinical symptoms and are over 40 years of age. Prof. Monika Komar and co-authors tell us more about the usefulness of endothelin-1 level measurement in establishing indications for the defect closure.

The case reports contained here show the patients with recurrent pleural and pericardial effusion, tri-atrial heart, the thrombosis secondary to Glenn anastomosis in Ebstein’s anomaly and peripartum cardiomyopathy.

We conclude summarizing the *Fourth Conference of the Pulmonary Circulation Task Force of the Polish Cardiac Society that has taken place in Krakow in October 2014*. The sessions focused on the different aspects of right heart catheterization, current treatment options for patients with pulmonary arterial hypertension and the pulmonary hypertension emergencies. Prof. Nazzareno Galie from the University of Bologna, the author of the European Society Guidelines on diagnosing and treatment of pulmonary hypertension, presented 2013 Nice treatment algorithm.

We hope the lecture of the new issue of the Journal will lead you to your own considerations and will stimulate to undertake the further studies with which you might share with us in the future issues of the Journal.

Piotr Podolec

Editor-in-Chief

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