IHS Visiting Professor  
Estonian Headache Society’s annual meeting  
7 August 2014, Tartu, Estonia

On 7 August 2014 the Estonian Headache Society (EHS) had its annual meeting, which this time was in collaboration with International Headache Society’s (IHS) Visiting Professor Programme. As a contribution to regional development in the field of headache, two distinguished world-class headache specialists visited Estonia within the named programme: Professor Peter Goadsby and Professor Messoud Ashina.

Thanks to close cooperation between the national headache societies of Baltic countries, during the pre-registration process approximately 100 participants were registered not only from Estonia, but also from Latvia and Lithuania. The latter brought the level of the participating audience to truly international level. This achievement was assisted by provision of transportation from other Baltic countries to Tartu and back, which was organised by EHS’s supportive member and a co-supporter of the event – Berlin-Chemie (Menarini Group). The participation rate of the meeting was approximately 60%; mostly neurologists (both – adult and paediatric) from the Baltic countries participated, but there were also some general practitioners who are interested in the field of headache. Estonian headache nurses took part in the event too.

The event took place in the largest conference centre in Southern Estonia – Dorpat Conference Centre, situated in the centre of Tartu. After a welcome message announced by the president of EHS Dr Mark Braschinsky, the following topics were covered by the visiting presenters:

- Diagnosing and treating episodic migraine (Messoud Ashina)
- Diagnosing and treating trigeminal autonomic cephalalgias (Peter Goadsby)
- Mechanisms of migraine (Messoud Ashina and Peter Goadsby)
- Treating chronic migraine (Messoud Ashina)
- Other indomethacin responsive headaches (Peter Goadsby)

The format of presentations was divided into three major types: lectures, ‘pros and cons’ debate and practical discussion of presented cases. Every presentation was followed by a Questions and Answers section, through which interaction with the audience was encouraged.

Well-structured lectures covered mostly clinical aspects of migraine, trigeminal autonomic cephalalgias and other primary and indomethacin responsive headaches. Fundamental diagnostic aspects of the International Classification of Headache Disorders, 3rd edition (beta version) was stressed upon describing diagnostic criteria of named primary headache disorders. Several video case presentations were used by presenters to illustrate diagnostic work-up. Disorder specific treatment recommendations were based on the known evidence with extra attention paid to currently available treatment guidelines.
During the ‘pros and cons’ section presenters had to defend two major directions in known migraine pathogenesis – vascular and neurogenic. This section was especially well received by the audience.

The meeting was concluded by the extra session dedicated to interesting headache cases, which were presented by participants. Diagnostic difficulties and challenges in management of such cases attracted the attention of participants and were extensively discussed by the visiting professors.

As a generous contribution of Professors Messoud Ashina and Peter Goadsby, event-related materials were made available after the event on EHS’s official website, www.peavalu.ee.

As a part of a social programme, visiting historical Tartu and a farewell dinner was provided to our guests.

The first-hand feedback from the audience was highly positive. Several points were noted; very high level of presentations, practical selection of topics and a priceless chance to communicate with world-leading experts in the field were mentioned. The geographical location of the event was also noted as very good, since being the largest city in the southern part of Estonia, Tartu, with its academic history, presents a favourable destination for other Baltic states, especially Latvia. Last, but not least, to our knowledge it was the first time in the history of the region when a Past President of IHS with a Special Recognition Award visited one of the Baltic countries within the framework of a scientific format.

All named factors are essential for facilitating comprehensive developments within the headache field in the region. Further collaboration at an international level is very much warranted.

Sincerely
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