

IHS Visiting Professor

Estonian Headache Society's annual meeting

July 13th 2015, Tartu, Estonia

On July 13th 2015 Estonian Headache Society (EHS) had its annual meeting, which for the second year in a row was in collaboration with the International Headache Society's (IHS) Visiting Professor Programme. The event was also supported by two by EHS's supportive members – Berlin-Chemie (Menarini Group) and Zentiva (A Sanofi Company). As a contribution to regional development into the field of headache, two distinguished world-class headache specialists visited Estonia within the named programme: Professor Alan Rapoport and Professor Arne May.

Thanks to close cooperation between the national headache societies of the Baltic countries, during the pre-registration process over 110 participants registered, not only from Estonia, but also from Latvia and Lithuania. The latter brought the level of participating audience to a truly international level. The participation-rate of the meeting was over 80%, which was approximately 20% higher than the previous event in 2014. Mostly neurologists and neurology residents (both – adult and paediatric) from named countries participated, but there were some general practitioners interested in the field of headache as well. Headache nurses also took part in the event.

The meeting itself took place in the largest conference centre in Southern Estonia – Dorpat Conference Centre, situated in the centre of Tartu. This location indirectly favoured participation for those interested from other Baltic states. The scientific programme was designed to be as versatile as possible and divided into three sessions, the first one being theoretical, the second one concentrating on novel developments and the third one – practical. After a welcome message announced by the president of EHS Dr Mark Braschinsky, the following topics were covered by presenters:

- **Diagnostics in headache: your patient wants a scan, do you want it too?** (Prof. Arne May)
- **Chronic migraine with medication overuse headache** (Prof. Alan Rapoport)
- **Introducing the PRILEVEL online-questionnaire** (Dr Kati Toom)

- **Pros and cons session: computer versus physician in diagnosing headache**
- **Treating acute migraine** (Prof. Alan Rapoport)
- **Step-by-step treatment of easy and difficult headache cases** (Prof. Arne May)

Every presentation was followed by an oral Questions and Answers section, through which interaction by the audience was encouraged.

Well-structured lectures covered mostly diagnostic and treatment approaches to different headaches, clinical aspects of migraine and medication overuse headache. Fundamental diagnostic aspects of the International Classification of Headache Disorders, 3rd edition (beta version) were highlighted describing diagnostic criteria of named headache disorders. Several case-presentations were used by the presenters to illustrate diagnostic work-up. Disorder-specific treatment recommendations were based on the known evidence with extra attention paid to currently available treatment options.

After the “pros and cons” section participants were asked to vote if in favour of either classical or novel approaches to the diagnostic principles of the most primary headaches – there were two statements “defended” by presenters:

- 1. A computer can diagnose headache much better than most physicians** (Prof. Alan Rapoport)
- 2. No computer can compete with a physician’s diagnosis of headache** (Prof. Arne May)

This section was especially well received by the audience.

The meeting was concluded with an 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 Alan Rapoport and Arne May, event-related materials are made available after the event at EHS’s official homepage www.peavalu.ee.

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



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The first-hand feedback from the audience was highly positive. Several points were noted. Very high level of presenters, well-structured programme with practical, theoretical and futuristic topics and a priceless chance to communicate with world-leading experts in the field were mentioned.

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, thanks to EHS' media partner Med24, whom through the press-releases issued prior to the conference the event was found newsworthy by most of the large mass media channels, including national TV news of Estonia.

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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