



## Association for European Paediatric Cardiology

### Newsletter

**T**HE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION will take place during the Congress of the European Cardiac Society, which will itself be held in Barcelona over the period of August 29 through September 3. The business meeting will be held on Sunday, August 30. At that time, we will invite all our members to join us to discuss the activities of the Association. At the same time, we will also be electing a new President-Elect and a new Councillor, along with offering a warm welcome to all our new members.

#### Changes in the Council

##### *Replacement of a Councillor*

As we intimated in our Newsletter for December, we will be replacing one Council member, and electing our next President-elect, during the Business Meeting to be held in Barcelona. All members were invited to make their own proposals for each of these positions. We have, so far, received two nominations for the Councillor to serve from 2009 until 2012, namely Andreas Eicken from Munich, and Konrad Brockmeier from Cologne. It subsequently transpired that our colleague from Munich refused his candidacy, so Konrad Brockmeier, head of Paediatric Cardiology in Cologne, Germany, will take this position. He was proposed by over 30 members from 6 countries. After graduating from medical school at the Free University in Berlin, Konrad specialized in general paediatrics, and later in paediatric cardiology at the Universities of Berlin and Heidelberg. His scientific interest was directed towards computerized electrocardiography and signal processing by physicists of the National Institute of Physics in Berlin. By 1990, he was working in the field of magnetocardiography, and he intensified his studies in the computerization of the electrocardiogram with a period of 15 months spent in Rome. In 2004, he was asked to organize and chair the annual meeting of International Society of Computerized Electrocardiology, which was held in Florida.

As a board member of the International Society of Computerized Electrocardiology, he is now responsible for the support of young investigators. In the field of congenital cardiac disease, he collaborates and teaches at the Universities of Cairo, Egypt, and Sousse, Tunisia. At this stage, therefore, we welcome Konrad as our new councillor, but should more candidates have been proposed by May 31, then we will proceed to a secret ballot.

##### *Replacement of the Junior member in the Council:*

During the meeting of Council held in Malta on February 7, 2009, Tara Bharucha informed us that she will step down as the representative for Junior members in the Council. The Junior members, therefore, will elect their new representative prior to the Business Meeting of the Association to be held in Barcelona.

##### *Electing the President-Elect*

As of May 15, 2009, when this Newsletter was written, Council had received two official proposals for the office of President-Elect. Ornella Milanesi, from Padua, Italy, has been proposed by 11 members from 3 countries, while Shakeel Qureshi, from London, United Kingdom, has been proposed by 37 individual members from 8 countries. A ballot was organized to take place in June, and the result of this ballot will be known when you read this Newsletter.

Ornella Milanesi graduated from University of Padua, Italy, in 1974. Her training in paediatrics, cardiology, and neonatology was completed in Padua. Subsequent to the completion of her training, she spent periods working in the morphology laboratory of the Cardiothoracic Institute at the University of London in June 1984, and the non-Invasive cardiac laboratory at Children's Hospital, Boston, in 1990, 1992, and 1999. During the latter visit to the United States, she also visited the pediatric cardiac programme at Duke University. Ornella was appointed Assistant Professor in the

Department of Pediatrics at the University of Padua in 1979, and promoted to Associate Professor in 2000. Since 1992, she has served as Chief of the Pediatric Cardiac Unit at the School of Medicine of the University of Padua. She is a member of several societies and associations, specifically the Italian Society of Pediatrics, the Italian Society of Pediatric Cardiology, the Sociedad Latina de Cardiologia Pediatrica, and the Association for European Paediatric Cardiology. She is also a member of the Italian Society of Echocardiography, from which she received the certificate of competence in cardiovascular echography. She has served as councillor of the Italian Society of Pediatric Cardiology from 1995 to 1997, President-elect from 2005 to 2007, and became President of the Society in 2007. She is also secretary of the Cardiac Imaging Working Group and a member of the Coding Committee of the Association for European Paediatric Cardiology. She was the local President of the remarkably successful annual meeting of the Association held in Venice in 2008. She is a regular reviewer for the American Journal of Cardiology, the Journal of Cardiovascular Medicine, the Italian Journal of Pediatrics, and the Italian Heart Journal. She has published 145 scientific papers, along with 324 small publications or letters. She has also been speaker, invited speaker, or chair at 180 international or national meetings. Ornella has now been serving the Imaging Working Group for 2 years as secretary, and her term of office will finish in May 2010 at the meeting to be held in Innsbruck. Ornella is a cultivated colleague, enthusiastic and painstaking paediatric cardiologist, and bright academic woman. At the University of Padua, she continues to work at the front line of clinical care, remains deeply involved in clinical research, and is well appreciated as mentor and teacher. With her candidature, Ornella is not pursuing a particular personal achievement, but rather is putting her ideas, energy, and commitment towards servicing the goals of the Association. For all these reasons, she hopes she will be successful in becoming our first female President.

Shakeel Qureshi graduated from the University of Manchester in 1976. His training in paediatric cardiology was completed in the United Kingdom, subsequent to which he spent time in Pakistan, when he was asked to establish a department of Paediatric Cardiology in Rawalpindi. He returned to the United Kingdom in 1987, becoming Consultant in Paediatric Cardiology in Liverpool, before moving to Guy's Hospital in 1988. From that time, together with Michael Tynan, he developed a major interest in interventional techniques, resulting in the invention of the Tyshak balloon, as well as 2 additional patents. He is a member of the British Cardiac Society and President-Elect of the British Congenital Cardiac

Association. He was the founding Honorary Secretary of the latter association, when it was formed in 1991 as the British Paediatric Cardiac Association, and will assume his position as President in November of this year. He has long been a member of the Association for European Paediatric Cardiology, and helped to form its Interventional Working Group, of which he was the Honorary Secretary from 1994 to 1996. He subsequently became a member of the Council, and was Scientific Secretary of the Association from 2003 to 2007. During his career, Shak has been a member of councils of various associations in the United Kingdom. He was Honorary Secretary of the Specialist Advisory Committee for Paediatric Cardiology, Member of Committee on Safety of Medicines, Honorary Chairman of the Scientific Advisory Committee for Paediatric Cardiology, Specialist Advisor to National Institute of Clinical Excellence, and Chairman of the Specialty Training Committee for Paediatric Cardiology, London Deanery. Internationally, he has been a member of the National Delegate on the Education Committee of the Association for European Paediatric Cardiology, a member of the Union of European Medical Specialists, where he continues to represent Paediatric Cardiology for the United Kingdom. Over the years, Shak has been a co-director of many courses around the world, such as those organised at Children's Memorial Hospital, Warsaw, Poland, at Bethanien Hospital, Frankfurt, Germany, at St Katharinen Hospital, Frankfurt, Germany, the Pediatric Cardiac Interventional Symposium, Chicago, the interventional symposium in Milan, and the meeting held in Kuala Lumpur. He is regularly invited all around the world to present lectures and to perform workshops in interventions. As a result, he has taught and trained many paediatric cardiologists around the world. In 2004, he received from the President of Pakistan one of the highest civilian awards available from the Government of Pakistan for helping to develop Paediatric Cardiology in Pakistan. He has also received an award for outstanding achievement in Interventional Paediatric Cardiology from the annual meeting of the Pediatric Interventional Cardiology Society held in Chicago in 2004. Shak has published over 130 papers in peer-reviewed journals, contributed over 15 chapters to books, has authored over 20 review articles, and was co-editor of an interventional textbook, which was published in 2007. He has co-authored recommendations for work in the catheter laboratory for the Association, as well as for the British Congenital Cardiac Association. He has undertaken several missions with Chain of Hope, a charity in the United Kingdom, to develop interventional programmes for paediatric cardiology in developing countries. He was asked by the Ministry of Health in Egypt to help expand their interventional programme

in upper Egypt. In 2005, he took a team of volunteers to help earthquake victims in Kashmir. He has continued to raise funds, and carry out charity work, in the areas of natural disasters, having set up a charity called 4 Peace of Mind.

Over the years, Shak has made major contributions in increasing the profile of the Association around the world. During his tenure as Scientific Secretary, important changes resulted in an increase in membership and an improvement in the scientific content of the annual meetings. He has developed a wide network with paediatric cardiologists in all continents. His aim for the future is to consolidate this network with the Association, making the Association an organisation to which everyone refers around the world for educational and professional matters. He would encourage more affiliation of societies around the world with the Association, to encourage co-operation and collaboration.

### News from our current President

At the time you will read this newsletter, the process of election will be over, and we will announce the identity of our President-elect at the business meeting to be held during the Congress of the European Cardiac Society in Barcelona. Even if, as yet, we do not know who will be successful, from our knowledge of the candidates we can be sure that he or she will be a dedicated President, representing the Association within the International community, and keeping our Association democratic, independent, and friendly for the next three years, keeping in mind that our only ultimate goal is to improve the care of children with cardiac disease, and adults suffering from congenital cardiac malformations.

Because of the imminent World Congress in Cairns, our own Association will next meet during the Congress of the European Cardiac Society in Barcelona. I send my warmest thanks to Fausto Pinto, Chairman of the programme committee, to Roberto Ferrari, President of the European Cardiac Society, and to the staff of Heart House for facilitating the arrangements. During this important meeting, which is the most important in the world in terms of number of participants, our pre-arranged sessions on congenital heart disease will all be held on Sunday, August 30, and will take place in the Moscow room from 8.30 through 19.15. During the same day, a special combined session of the European Cardiac Society and the Association for European Paediatric Cardiology will target the topic of Anticoagulation in Congenital Cardiac Diseases. The Business meeting of the Association will take place during this session from 12.30 through 14.00, and lunch boxes will be provided.

Aside from the sessions arranged for Sunday, congenital heart diseases will be addressed in 6 abstract sessions, 3 of these encompassing 6 oral presentations, and 3 devoted to poster sessions, which will include 98 abstracts. The oral presentations have an attractive theme for the adult cardiologist, being concerned with unresolved issues related to closure of atrial septal defects, long-term problems in aortic coarctation, and the challenging patients with Eisenmenger's syndrome. The posters will concentrate on grown-up patients with congenital heart disease, imaging, and morphology, genetics, and fetal cardiology. An exhibit on congenital cardiac malformations will be held in Zone 3 on Monday, August 31.

On the evening of Sunday, 30 August, the usual concert will be replaced this year by a Charity dinner in order to raise money for the children in Europe who need cardiac treatment. This initiative came from Mrs Ferrari, wife of the president of the European Cardiac Society, who wants to create a "European Heart for Children" with humanitarian goals. Knowing that all our members are involved to some extent in paediatric humanitarian actions, it is my hope that many of you will be able to participate in the dinner. Congenital cardiac diseases, and the Association itself, therefore, will be very visible during the forthcoming congress of the European Cardiac Society.

In June, we anticipate that many of our members of the Association, undeterred by the "crocodile paradise", will be participants at the World Congress of Paediatric Cardiology and Paediatric Cardiac Surgery in Cairns, Australia. A combined session organised by the Association together with the Board of the Congress, with the theme of 40 years of the Fontan circulation, is scheduled for Thursday, June 25.

On May 29, I will participate in the Steering committee meeting of the Cardiology Section of the Union of European Medical Specialists, to be held in Nice. The important agenda includes the future of the European Board for the Speciality of Cardiology; relations between the European Board for Accreditation in Cardiology and the Association, and relations with the European Society of Cardiology.

The next annual meeting of our Association will be held in Innsbruck, Austria, and will be hosted by Jorg Stein, who will serve in the council as our next treasurer. The Council recently visited the venue, and confirmed the possibilities for a successful meeting. Thanks to the support of the members who have paid their annual fee, and who have participated in the Annual Meetings, the Association is in a good financial state. We can take a fairly optimistic view for the coming year, despite our gloomy economic surroundings.

## News from the Junior members

### *Training in the new era*

The challenge of training in the current era, is that our existing generation of trainers learnt mainly by apprenticeship. This generation of trainees, however, and the ones to follow, are working more and more as 'doctors for service' on shiftwork. The duration of training is shorter in many countries, and the intensity of experience has been reduced. This means that we have to adapt our method of learning, and our trainers need to adapt their method of training. It is no longer appropriate to 'see one, do one, teach one', as we were told as junior residents. It is probably also becoming clear that mere volume of cases is not sufficient on its own to ensure expertise. We all know that some people take longer to learn certain skills. And then, of course, we are now required to become expert in non-medical activities, such as management and finance!

The key is structure. We need a clear structure to our training, so that trainees know what it is they have to learn, and trainers know what they should direct us towards learning. It is also important that the public should know that those appointed as paediatric cardiologists have met certain standards, and know the subspecialty sufficiently well to be trusted with the specialist medical care required by the referred children.

In the United Kingdom, an effort has been made to provide this structure through the so-called Core Curriculum. Trainees could, and probably should, base their reading around this. Trainers could be encouraged to become familiar with the core curriculum, and use it to help to direct the learning of their trainees. This requires a small shift in the way the trainers view themselves, as well as in the way they regard their trainees. They need to view themselves as trainers in the active role of fostering trainees in the discipline. No longer are they merely mentors, who can impart their expertise passively to their apprentices. The trainers need to be trained.

None of this is meant to imply we do not also need mentors. There will always be an element of apprenticeship in learning. Trainees have all learnt much more than we can put into words about the kind of doctors that we want to be, the kind of humans that we want to be, by watching people who inspire us, as they interact with their patients and colleagues. Amongst others, characteristics such as compassion,

integrity and old-fashioned commonsense cannot be listed on a curriculum. Learning a structured curriculum is essential, but we need to do it whilst sitting at the feet of our mentors.

## Educational Committee

One of the key aims of the Association is to foster education in general paediatric cardiology and the main sub-specialties of our discipline. To this end, our courses designed to provide basic teaching are aimed primarily at trainees in paediatric cardiology, their goal being to provide the foundations of knowledge in the main subjects. For this reason, the Council has established an Educational Committee. The members of the Committee will serve a 3-year period. The current members are Jorg Stein from Innsbruck, András Szatmári from Budapest, Sandra Giusti from Massa, Francois Godart from Lille, and Tara Bharucha from London.

The main aims of the Committee are

- To assist the Council in defining training requirements for paediatric cardiology
- To plan and co-ordinate teaching courses and other educational activities
- To create the European examination and accreditation in paediatric cardiology
- To co-ordinate continuous medical education and possibly arrange re-accreditation in paediatric cardiology.

The first meeting of the Educational Committee took place on May 15, 2009. We will hear about the progress of its work during the Business Meeting in Barcelona.

## New members

The Association now has 974 members. This year, thus far, we have welcomed 67 new members, including 14 junior members. In closing, we wish you all a relaxing vacation, a lot of sunshine and warm swimming waters. We look forward to meeting you all in great numbers at the Business Meeting in Barcelona.

André Bozio  
Eero Jokinen  
Tara Barucha