

EFNS Regional Teaching Course, Minsk, Belarus, 26 - 28 May 2005

The third EFNS Teaching Course in Belarus took place in Minsk, at the International Educational Center.

Eight experts - European neurologists as well as some well-known Belarussian specialists were nominated by the EFNS and the Belarussian Scientific Society of Neurologists to participate in the Teaching Course as invited speakers. More than 270 participants from Belarus, Ukraine, Tajikistan and Russia came to participate in this event. There were residents, researchers, practicing neurologists, rehabilitologists, medical experts, lecturers of medical universities from Minsk, Vitebsk, Gomel and other cities, and there were young neurologists from the different regions of Belarus.

The TC structure corresponded to a broad spectrum of interests in neurology and neurorehabilitation. The main topics were stroke and its rehabilitation; neurophysiology; and spinal cord disorders.

The intensive and varied three-day program consisted of lectures and workshop presentations.

Some of the local specialists had the opportunity to submit their short reports related to the main topics, which were published in the abstract book and article collection issue.

22 posters and two satellite rehabilitation sections were presented during this meeting.

The TC was opened by the president of the Belarussian Scientific Society of Neurologists, Prof. Georgy Nedzved, and by the Head of Research Institute of Medical and Social Evaluation and Rehabilitation, Prof. Vasily Smychek. They emphasized the great possibilities, which were provided by EFNS and WFNR in elaborating Medical Sciences and Health Care in the Republic of Belarus.

Dr. Roman Huber (Ulm, Germany) focused on modern stroke therapy.

The profound academic lecture on stroke spasticity management with extremely important accent on clinical approaches was presented by Prof. Michael Barnes, President the of World Federation for Neurorehabilitation (London, UK).

Dr. Dietmar Fischer (Ulm, Germany) reported some experimental data concerning axon regeneration in the CNS and new approaches to neuron protection from degeneration.

Prof. Jean-Marc Léger (Paris, France) presented an update on the neurophysiological assessment of peripheral neuropathy and delivered an especially impressive workshop on management of demyelinating polyneuropathy. EFNS neurophysiological guidelines were recommended to unify peripheral neuropathy diagnostics.

Prof. Albert Ludolph (Ulm, Germany) focused on novel insights in the genetics, pathogenesis and therapy of ALS.

Management of pain after spinal cord injury was discussed by Dr. Tiina Rekand (Bergen, Norway).

Dr. Marit Gronning (Bergen, Norway) continued and focused on management of spasticity and sphincter disorders after spinal cord injury.

Dr. Khe Hoang-Xuan (Paris, France) presented interesting information concerning brain stem gliomas.

Priorities for development of medical and social aspects in rehabilitation in the Russian Federation were discussed in Prof. S. Puzin's (Saint-Petersburg, Russia) report.

Prof. V. Shestakov focused on the assessment of quality of rehabilitation of sick and disabled people.

The results of their investigations were presented by Prof. V. Evstigneev, O. Kisten, V. Ulaschik (Minsk, Belarus) concerning transcranial magnetic stimulation in stroke.

Prof. G. Nedzved (Minsk, Belarus) focused on the main aspects of neurorehabilitation after spinal cord injury in the Republic of Belarus.

The Teaching Course materials were handed out to all participants.

We are planning to further distribute our materials on CD among our colleagues.

The general opinion of our participants is that the Teaching Course was a great success. It was highly appreciated by our neurologists not only in regard to questions of special interest, high level of experts and their presentations, but also in regard to its comfortable atmosphere and possibilities to meet each other again and continue important personal and professional contacts, especially concerning health care organization and educational systems in Europe and Belarus.

In addition to the main programme our guests visited some memorial places of Minsk and the Opera Theater. The information about the Teaching Course appeared repeatedly in newspapers and TV-programmes.

It was the third EFNS Teaching Course in Belarus, but the first in Minsk.

We are happy that this time the majority of our participants was ready to a greater extent for this kind of educational activity. Unfortunately it was difficult to organize workshop sessions in small groups of specialists because the total number of our participants exceeded our expectations.

We would like to express our gratitude to the EFNS for its generous support in the organization of our EFNS Teaching Courses on Clinical Neurology in Belarus. We are very thankful to the coordinators of this project Professor Pavel Kalvach, Professor Krzysztof Selmaj, Professor Eberhard Deisenhammer, EFNS Executive Director Elisabeth Müller and all the other colleagues from the Education and Teaching Course Committees, and the EFNS Management Committee.

We would like to express our gratitude to all our speakers for their efforts, their active participation in our programme and their excellent presentations.

Sviatlana Vlasava

on behalf of the Local Organising Committee.