

Report

Introduction

The Research Steering and Scientific Committee had chosen the main theme of "Methodology of Research in Palliative Care" for its third forum, in order to underline the difference between the EAPC research Forum and the General EAPC Congresses.

Scientific Programme

The Scientific Programme was built up following 4 main aims.

- Be the meeting point for experienced researchers.
- Educate and encourage young researchers
- Present as much new information as possible and give young researchers space and visibility
- Include and encourage clinical studies as well as qualitative and non clinical research

The Scientific Committee decided to include only two Plenary Sessions, one traditional with two keynote speakers and one Plenary round table. All the rest of the programme was built by 27 sessions of four different types organised in parallel in 3 to 4 halls.

Five workshops

The purpose was to give participants the opportunity to explore knowledge and skills at an advanced level and to develop a critical understanding in research in the form of "open discussions" with experts to introduce the topics. No free communications were included.

Nine education sessions

The purpose was to give participants the opportunity to learn about key concepts in research on different topics. These more basic "teaching" sessions were organised by at least two coordinators / teachers. No free communications were included.

Eleven new research data sessions

These sessions were organised as "free communication" sessions, with a maximum of 8 selected abstracts 15 minutes each, discussion included, moderated by two or three chairs.

Two poster discussion sessions

These sessions were organised on the second and the third day of the Forum. The chairs selected 12 of the posters from Friday 4 June and 9 of those from Saturday 5 June and invited their authors to present and discuss their poster. All authors invited to present their posters attended the session.

In addition the programme offered two satellite lunch symposia and two satellite workshops.

53 invited speakers contributed to the success of the scientific programme as Chairs, coordinators and speakers.

308 Abstracts were submitted. They had been classified into the groups listed in table 1 and had been sent to two independent reviewers. The Scientific Committee had made the final selections of the posters and oral presentations based on the reviewers' scores. The selected abstracts (both oral and poster) were published in "Palliative Medicine", issue 18 (4) 2004.

76 abstracts had been selected to create the 11 New research Data sessions while other 4 presentations were selected for a workshop. 211 had been selected for poster presentations. 9 Abstracts had been rejected and 8 abstracts had been withdrawn prior to the printing of the abstract book. The posters selected had the following distribution by categories. Unfortunately of those 34 posters had not been presented at place.

The four reviewers who had chosen the posters for the discussion sessions also selected the three best posters to receive the EAPC Award. The posters were presented at the closing session and their authors received free registration to the 9th Congress of the EAPC to be held in Aachen 6 to 10 April 2005.

The winners were:

- Peter Hudson (Australia) Positive consequences of supporting a dying relative: findings from a randomized controlled trial
- Carol Thomas (United Kingdom) Place of Death: Preferences Among Cancer Patients and their Carers
- Ulrika Kreicbergs (Sweden) Ethics and Statistics A Population-based Nationwide Study on Parents' Perception of a Questionnaire on Their Child's Death in Cancer

For the first time the pre-registered participants had the possibility to built their personalised programme (programme at a glance) online before the Event by indicating their preferences for the sessions to attend. This also helped to reduce the risk of crowded halls.

Lesson learned for the future: The coffee and lunch breaks need to be longer in order to give more time to the participants for poster viewing and informal communication.

CME accreditation

The Forum is accredited by the European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (EACCME) an institution of the European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS), www.uems.be for a maximum of 23 hours of European external CME credits. "EACCME" credits are recognized by the American Medical Association towards the Physician's Recognition Award (PRA). To convert EACCME credit to AMA PRA category 1 credit, contact the AMA.

The Italian CME credits for physicians and nurses; as well as the Royal College of Physicians had been requested but have not yet been communicated at the preparation of this report.

The forum was attended by a total of 720 participants, including also 47 exhibitors from 5 publishers and 11 pharmaceutical companies.

TOf the 449 persons who had indicated their profession 342 were physicians (= 76%) and 51 where nurses (=11 %).

Follow up and thanks

The Research Steering Committee is planning to create together with Effetti, an on line course based on the registrations of the scientific contents of the main Auditorium, in order to give members who did not attend the Forum the possibility to view at least a part of the sessions. This project is subject to funding and will hopefully be online for the late spring 2005 and we are looking into the possibility of CME accreditation.

We would like to thank, the members of the Research and Scientific Committee, the Advisory Board, the Abstract Reviewers, abstract handling office in Trondheim, all the invited speakers and authors of the Abstracts included in the programme, the sponsors and our congress Organiser Effetti for the pleasant and successful collaboration and forward to welcome everybody again at the 4th Forum of the Research to be held in May 2006, in Venice, Italy.

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