International Nephrological Symposium, ‘Modern aspects of renal replacement therapy’

Moscow, Russia, 8–9 September 1998

Through an initiative of the treasurer of the European Renal Association (ERA), Professor Carrera, and Fresenius Medical Care (Professor Paßlick-Deetjen), joined by ZAO Fresenius SP Moscow (Mr Ronimi), a 2-day symposium had been organized in the hotel and business centre of Radison Slavjanskaya in Moscow. Janssen Cilag acted as a co-sponsor. It was the aim of the symposium to update Russian nephrologists about current problems in renal replacement therapy by bringing together experts from western Europe on the one hand and from Russia on the other hand. The meeting was attended by approximately 400 Russian colleagues, not only from the surroundings of Moscow, but also from all the regions of the Russian federation and other CIS-republics including the Russian far east. The difficulties of the language barrier had been overcome by providing a Russian version of the handouts for all presentations to the participants of the meeting, by simultaneous translation with the help of bilingual physicians (who did a superb job) and by double-projection of slides both in English and in Russian respectively. The joint faculty of Russian and western colleagues dealt with topics such as mechanisms of progression of chronic renal failure (Tomilina, Moscow), preparation of the patient with renal failure for renal replacement therapy (Ritz, Heidelberg), diagnosis and treatment of hyperlipoproteinaemia in the renal patient (Wanner, Würzburg),
erythropoietin treatment in CRF (Nikolajev, Moscow), arterial hypertension and Epo (Bach, Krefeld), selection of dialysis treatment modality (Gurevich, St Petersburg), vascular access (Konner, Köln), renal osteodystrophy (Drüeke, Paris), diabetic nephropathy (Ritz, Heidelberg), hypertension on dialysis (Laurent, Tassin), acute renal failure (Lameire, Gent), quality assurance in HD (Paßlick-Deetjen, Bad Homburg), convective methods of treatment (Strokov, Moscow), dialysis amyloidosis (Drüeke, Paris), peritoneal dialysis (Lameire, Gent), CAPD in children (Zerev, Moscow), immunosuppression after transplantation (Sacks, London), medical management of the transplanted patient (Frei, Berlin). The presentations of the joint Russian/western faculties were on a high level throughout and provoked lively and critical discussion. The timing of this event happened to be at the height of a political and economical crisis in Russia; it was particularly appreciated that all western speakers showed up despite an air of political uncertainty.

It was impressive to see how the academic level and knowledge of current literature have gone up in Russia in recent years. This makes it a rewarding goal to establish closer contacts on multiple levels between western European and Russian nephrology (which undoubtedly will have immense problems in these times of economic difficulties). The help of Fresenius Medical Care in making this possible on this occasion is gratefully acknowledged and the very professional and competent management of infrastructure and logistics deserves a word of praise. Not to the least, also the overwhelming warm hospitality of the local hosts will make this symposium an unforgettable event to the participants.

Professor Dr. Dr. h. c. mult. E. Ritz
Heidelberg