

REPORT ON THE 5TH CONGRESS OF EUROPEAN ORL–HEAD & NECK SURGERY, 30.06–3.07.2019, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

**Aleksandra Dabkowska¹, Ewa Tomanek¹,
Justyna Dabrowska-Bien¹, Piotr H. Skarzynski^{1,2,3}**

¹ Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing, World Hearing Center,
Warsaw/Kajetany

² Institute of Sensory Organs, Kajetany

³ Medical University of Warsaw, Second Faculty of Medicine, Department of Heart Failure
and Cardiac Rehabilitation, Warsaw

The 5th Congress of European ORL–Head and Neck Surgery was held from 30 June to 3 July 2019 in Brussels, Belgium. The international symposium focused on issues in the field of otorhinolaryngosurgery, audiology, and related sciences. The president of the conference was Marc Remacle, Director of the Voice and Swallowing Center, CHL Luxembourg and Academic Professor of the faculty of Medicine at the University of Louvain, Belgium. Elisabeth Sjögren, a specialist in Otolaryngology and Head Neck Surgery at the Leiden University Medical Center since 2005 and General Secretary of the European Laryngological Society, was responsible for the scientific side of the conference.

The Congress takes place every two years in a European city. This year, outstanding specialists from Europe, Asia, North and South America, Africa, and Australia attended. Poland was represented by staff of the Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing – Prof. Piotr H. Skarzynski, Dr Justyna Dabrowska-Bien, Dr Aleksandra Dabkowska, and Dr Ewa Tomanek. Attendees had the opportunity to participate in 16 simultaneous sessions: otology and neurootology, head and neck, rhinology, laryngology, pediatrics, sleep medicine, facial plastics, skull base, phoniatics, general, salivary gland, and basic ENT – the latter addressed to residents and young specialists. During the theme sessions researchers had the chance to present their achievements, while various aspects of diagnostic and therapeutic procedures were discussed at the round table sessions. There was time for questions and discussion after each thematic block.

The aim of the Congress was to create a venue for exchanging clinical and scientific experience. Discussions centred on new technologies as well as on clinical treatment and practice. The congress was a platform for widening knowledge, improving practical skills, and introducing new information into everyday practice.

The rhinological sessions focused on solutions and possibilities offered by new developments in endoscopes and otorhinolaryngological procedures, therapeutic dilemmas in chronic sinusitis, chronic and allergic rhinitis, and cancers of the nose and sinus. There were lively debates on conchoplasty, the diagnosis and treatment of inverted papilloma, and the use of drugs in the treatment of chronic sinusitis. Specialists presented new

approaches to cancer treatment, access to the frontal sinuses, the skull base, and management of complications in paranasal sinus surgery.

The otological sessions focused on surgery of the inner, middle, and outer ear, endoscopes and the use of robots in otosurgery, management of otosclerosis, cholesteatoma, balance disorders, and Ménière's disease. Inner and middle ear implants were a common topic of discussion. The discussion panels were at times tempestuous and many fundamentals were questioned.

A lecture by Prof. Piotr H. Skarzynski concerning complications in cochlear implantation received a lot of interest. He was also a moderator of a session on “What's new in CI devices” in which the matter was discussed with Professors T. Lenarz (Germany), J. Muller (Germany), and P. Van de Heyning (Belgium). The same topic was also a feature of the 32nd Politzer Society Meeting and the 2nd World Congress of Otology, which took place in Warsaw in May/June this year, so it is attracting much attention.

The Congress included a session for young scientists and otorhinolaryngologists focused on the basics of otorhinolaryngology and head and neck surgery. It allowed the fresher participants to present their research results and exchange experiences. On the third day of the congress there was an otorhinolaryngology competition for residents.

Prior to the Congress there were various workshops that gave participants the opportunity to develop practical skills. They were divided into two thematic blocks: the use of CO₂ lasers in otorhinolaryngology and office-based treatments in laryngology – with special attention to office-based augmentations, injections, biopsies, and laser surgery.

Dr Justyna Dabrowska-Bien from Poland was part of a round table discussion on the specialization and training of young doctors in otorhinolaryngology.

Dr Ewa Tomanek gave three lectures: “Electro-natural stimulation in partial deafness treatment – pediatric case series”; “Radiologic measurement of cochlea and hearing preservation rate using slim straight electrode (CI422) and

round window approach”; and “Relationship between tinnitus loudness measured by visual analogue scale and psychoacoustic matching of tinnitus loudness”. Dr Aleksandra Dabkowska presented three original works: “Skarzynski Tinnitus Scale: validation of a brief and robust tool for assessing tinnitus in a clinical population”; “Clinically important change in tinnitus sensation after stapedotomy”; and “Treatment in hearing impairment with cochlear implantation in Cogan’s Syndrome – the first case report in Poland”.

All presentations generated lively interest from the audience and sparked discussion.

The 5th Congress of European ORL–Head and Neck Surgery was a great success and demonstrated the richness and diversity of present research. The Symposium gave a broad platform for exchanging methods and technical solutions to problems which physicians meet in their everyday practice.