

REPORT OF THE 14TH WARSAW INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CONGRESS FOR YOUNG SCIENTISTS, 10–13.05.2018, WARSAW, POLAND

Joanna J. Rajchel^{1,2}, Alina Ratajczak^{1,2}, Maria Gocel^{1,2}, Joanna Marciniak¹, Karolina Bieńkowska¹, Klaudia Kunz¹, Katarzyna Nykiel¹, Kinga Włodarczyk¹, Kamila Renke^{1,3}, Piotr H. Skarżyński^{2,3,4}

¹ Local Student's Scientific Society at the Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing and Medical University of Warsaw, Warsaw/Kajetany, Poland

² World Hearing Center, Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing, Warsaw/Kajetany, Poland

³ Institute of Sensory Organs, Warsaw/Kajetany, Poland

⁴ Heart Failure and Cardiac Rehabilitation Department, Medical University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland

The 14th Warsaw International Medical Congress for Young Scientists, organized annually by the Students' Scientific Society of the Medical University of Warsaw (MUW), attracted great interest – as usual – from students and young scientists from Poland and abroad.

The three days of the conference included 23 thematic sessions taking in over 370 original and case studies. Of these sessions, 18 covered (in alphabetical order) basic and pre-clinical science, cardiology and cardiosurgery, dentistry, dermatology, endocrinology and diabetes, genetics and molecular biology, infectious diseases, internal medicine, laryngology, neurology, obstetrics, perinatology and gynecology, oncology and hematology, paediatrics, pharmacy, psychiatry and clinical psychology, public and global health,

radiology, and surgery. The three other sessions were devoted to internal diseases, surgery, and pediatrics, in which interesting medical cases were presented. A special aspect of the program was PhD sessions covering basic and pre-clinical science, clinical science, and other health science.

The opening ceremony on the 10th May included two lectures. In the first, Prof. Nandu Goswani alerted us to an intriguing relationship between space flight and aging. The second lecture by Prof. Oliver Wright explained how the brain copes with conditions of changed gravity. Over the next three days, participants had the opportunity to hear four interesting lectures: single cell sequencing in four dimensions to study development and regeneration (Prof. Nikolaus Rajewsky); the latest advances in



Speakers and conference participants from the Local Student's Scientific Society at the Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing and the Medical University of Warsaw, together with members of the jury. From left: Jakub Zygadło, Joanna Marciniak, Anna Krawczyńska, Joanna Rajchel, Karolina Bieńkowska, Maria Gocel, Alina Ratajczak, Kamila Renke, Klaudia Kunz, Katarzyna Nykiel, and Kinga Włodarczyk; on the right are jury members Prof. Lidia Zawadzka-Głós, Prof. Krzysztof Kochanek, and Prof. Piotr Skarżyński.

high-precision imaging radiotherapy (Prof. Esther Troost); seven transmembrane receptors (Prof. Robert Lefkowitz, Nobel laureate in chemistry); and the use of mouse genetics to better understand human Down syndrome (Prof. Victor Tybulewicz).

The knowledge acquired in the lectures was complemented with valuable workshops, whose diverse range was designed by the Students' Scientific Society. Social events enlivened the program, and included a gala dinner, Warsaw sightseeing at night, and a party at the Capitol club.

On the first day of the conference students from the Local Student's Scientific Society at the Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing (IPPH) and the Medical University of Warsaw presented the results of their scientific research in a special session devoted to otolaryngology. It was coordinated by Jakub Zygałło, a third-year medical student, and was attended by Prof. Henryk Skarżyński, honorary patron of the National Consultant in the field of Otolaryngology, as well as the Society of Polish Otorhinolaryngologists, Phoniatrists and Audiologists. The jury assessing the participants' performances comprised Prof. Henryk Skarżyński, Prof. Lidia Zawadzka-Głos, Prof. Krzysztof Kochanek, and Prof. Piotr H. Skarżyński.

Aneta Durmaj, a student of the medical faculty, presented research into the voice quality of patients with Reinke's edema and vocal fold polyps, comparing the results of people subjected to traditional cold instruments with those who had modern CO₂ laser microsurgery. The statistics showed that both methods brought about comparable improvements in voice quality.

Klaudia Kunz, a first year audiophonology student, presented work comparing parents' ratings of hearing problems in their school-age children with the results of hearing screening tests. The results showed that parental awareness that their children might have a hearing loss was quite low, which is another reason for conducting hearing screening tests not only on newborns but also on school children. Katarzyna Nykiel and Kinga Włodarczyk, also first year audiophonology students, showed that, based on hearing screening tests, there was no difference in the incidence of hearing loss among school-age boys and girls. One of the possible causes of hearing loss may be otitis media, which is relatively common in this age group.

Joanna Rajchel, a fifth year student in clinical and health psychology, presented the results of her research using the Tinnitus Handicap Inventory, validated at IPPH, which demonstrated how useful it is in assessing whether a patient should be referred to a psychologist.

Alina Ratajczak, a fourth year student of pedagogy with speech therapy, demonstrated in her work that in a group of otosclerotic patients who underwent stapedotomy, the improvement of hearing as measured by audiometric tests coincided with the subjective improvement in hearing judged by the patient and recorded on the self-report questionnaire Abbreviated Profile of Hearing Aid Benefit (APHAB). Stapedotomy was also the focus of Karolina Bienkowska, a fifth year student in the medical faculty, who showed that taste anomalies were

one possible complication of the operation, and were due to irritation of the chorda tympani nerve during surgery. In the vast majority of cases, however, these disorders are temporary.

Maria Gocel, a fourth year student of special education specializing in speech therapy, presented work on the auditory benefits of bone conduction hearing implants. Her study concluded that questionnaires measuring *specific aspects* of health-related quality of life (such as hearing in different acoustic situations, which is assessed with APHAB) are better suited to evaluating post-operative benefits than questionnaires measuring *the overall* health-related quality of life (such as The Assessment of Quality of Life questionnaire which measures quality of life in different health domains).

Joanna Marciniak, a fifth year medical student, outlined her work on treatment for sudden sensorineural hearing loss (SSHL) and co-occurring disease symptoms. The most common symptom coexisting with SSHL was tinnitus. In addition, although most SSHL patients reported more than one additional disease, there was no statistically significant difference in hearing improvement, based on pure-tone audiometry, compared to the non-coexisting group.

The subject of the presentation by Kamila Renke, a fourth year student of pedagogy with speech therapy, was assessment of the audiological benefits of a new bone conduction device called Adhear, comparing it with implantable and non-implantable bone-conduction devices. The results suggest that Adhear is a good alternative for patients who do not qualify for, or do not want to undergo, surgery.

Summing up the session, Prof. Piotr Skarżyński expressed appreciation for the high scientific standard of the work presented by all participants, and thanked them for keeping to schedule. He wished all the young scientists further success on their professional and scientific career path.

During the grand plenary session on the last day of the conference, awards were presented to the authors of the best works given at each session. The jury considered the best paper was the work of Michał Mielnik on the effect of 13-valent pneumococcal conjugate vaccine on *Streptococcus pneumoniae* colonisation in patients with chronic lymphocytic leukaemia. For the otolaryngology session, joint winners were Joanna Marciniak and Joanna Rajchel, with third place going to Alina Ratajczak.

The wins were a feather in the cap for the Local Student's Scientific Society at IPPH and MUW. The Society regularly participates in the Warsaw International Medical Congress for Young Scientists, and the wins were a continuation of last year's success, when members of the Local Student's Scientific Society were awarded the first two places in the laryngology session.

The 14th Warsaw International Medical Congress for Young Scientists was a great opportunity to broaden participants' knowledge, acquire new practical skills, and establish international contacts. The next conference is planned for 09–12.05.2019.