EDITORIAL

PancreaticFest 2015, annual EUS international workshop

Mariana Jinga, Vasile Balaban

Colonel MARIANA JINGA

Deputy Commander, Central Emergency Military Hospital, Bucharest
Associate Professor, Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Bucharest

Although neglected in the past, pancreatic pathology (comprising acute and chronic pancreatitis and the fearful pancreatic cancer) has been in the spotlight in the last decades both in gastroenterology and surgery. This growing interest for pancreatology has led to funding of innovative research, publishing of highly accessed papers, and development of tertiary centers, with solid teams of gastroenterologists, radiologists, pathologists and surgeons; this has also led to a need for better risk stratification and for improvement in both early diagnosis and treatment of pancreatic diseases.

While death rates for many other cancers are declining, mortality for pancreatic cancer is increasing. The incidence of acute pancreatitis is also on the rise, and the disabling symptoms of chronic pancreatitis can greatly alter quality of life and limit work.

Despite the fact that these pancreatic diseases carry significant burden for society and medical systems, there are still many unmet needs in managing patients suffering from these illnesses, especially in Romania – lack of awareness in primary care, few dedicated centers and difficult access to novel diagnostic and treatment methods, which are not reimbursed by policy-makers.

In this setting, the Internal Medicine and Gastroenterology Clinic at "Dr. Carol Davila" Central Military Emergency University Hospital has proved a special interest for the study and management of pancreatic pathology. Back in 1998, the hospital was the first in Romania to have a linear endoscopic ultrasound (EUS) system. A few years later, EUS guided fine needle aspiration was also performed in our clinic in national premiere. Since then, EUS has evolved into a therapeutic instrument, especially for the pancreas and biliary tree, and research to extend its indications is ongoing.

To promote the interest for pancreatology, our clinic has been hosting an annual EUS workshop, with a first edition in 1999, which has grown into a tradition in the fall of the last few years. Since 2013, the workshop is held together with the International Pancreatic Disease Course, coordinated by Professor Cristian Gheorghe. The "Pancreatic Fest" is organized by the Association for Pancreatic Pathology Romania (APPR), which is part of the European Pancreatic Club. Over the years, world renowned experts have lectured and performed live demonstrations at the combined pancreas meeting, setting high standards for Romanian doctors and motivating young gastroenterologists to get training in this field. This up-to-date meeting in pancreatology reunites more and more attendees each year, creating opportunities for exchange programs abroad, developing

multicenter research projects and promoting excellence care for patients.

This year's edition of the Pancreatic Fest, will take place on September 11-12th in Bucharest. The first day, dedicated to the EUS Workshop, will bring the participants complex cases, difficult techniques, tips and tricks, and cutting-edge EUS technology, all in HD live demo transmission from the Endoscopy Unit of the "Dr. Carol Davila" Central Military Emergency University Hospital. The second day will offer the participants a great educational programme, with state of the art lectures from international expert pancreatologists and interactive talks. We aim to bring together gastroenterologists, surgeons, pathologists, oncologists, radiologists, intensive care specialists and basic scientists, to create multidisciplinary teams with expertise in diagnosing and treating patients with pancreatic diseases. The message we are trying to convey is that partnering of specialties is the key to the successful management of these patients. We look forward to seeing you in Bucharest for a valuable scientific experience in the start of the fall!