

12th Asia-Oceania Otorhinolaryngology – Head & Neck Surgery Congress

Date: March 1st-4th, 2011. Venue: Aotea Centre, Auckland, New Zealand. Report by: Dr Nadia Ahsahk, Rhinology Fellow, ENT Department, Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Singapore.

The Asia Oceania meeting was very well attended by 720 medical delegates, 200 audiologists, 100 nurses and 240 sponsors and exhibitors. Most of the overseas delegates were from Indonesia followed by Korea, Malaysia, Japan, Philippines and India. The four day conference showcased all subspecialties of otolaryngology including daily updates and dedicated sessions in rhinology, otology, head and neck surgery, paediatric otolaryngology, skull base surgery, laryngology, sleep medicine, facial plastic surgery, speech disorders, and audiology. The first day started with various pre-congress symposia and workshops covering major advances in otolaryngology. I attended the transoral robotic surgery (TORS) with da Vinci surgical system by G Weinstein and the workshop on noise-induced hearing loss, both symposia were comprehensive and remarkable. The opening ceremony kicked off with an interesting Powhiri – a traditional Maori welcome, a welcome speech and the song Pokare ana by the Mayor of Auckland Mr Len Brown, and a notable speech by Helen Clark, the former prime minister of New Zealand and current administrator of the United Nations development programme.

This was a large ENT meeting where I learned many updates on my subspecialty rhinology and enjoyed many of the social events including a chance to meet the very well regarded and respected Prof Heinz Stammberger. There were over 180 international prominent speakers, 165 posters presented, nine ENT sub-specialties covered, 22 sponsors for the meeting distributed over 52 booths. I learned much from the debates on the differing opinions on to do surgery or not to do surgery from opinion leaders such as PJ Wormald and Prof Stammberger. One exciting panel discussion was about the choice between external versus endoscopic endonasal approach in the management of nasal and skull base tumours between rhinologists (A Stamm, PJ Wormald, P Castelnuovo) and head and neck surgeons (B Lyons, D Ffiss, and S Hao) moderated by Prof Iain Shah and Dr Richard Douglas. The well presented discussions left the audience appreciative of the efficacy of both methods and the proper indications for so.

Randall Morton and his Kiwi organising committee must be congratulated for this successful meeting.

The next Asia Oceania Meeting will be held in Taipei, Taiwan in 2015 under the enthusiastic leadership of Dr Sheng-Pao Hao.

Web: www.asia-oceania2011.org

Report by: Dr Imtiaz Ather Siddiqui, Jinnah, Postgraduate Medical Centre Karachi, Pakistan.

Randall Morton, the convener of 12th Asia Oceania ORL-HNS Congress had an outstanding team including icons such as Deputy Chairman Bren Dorman, Peter Stubbing, Jim Bartley, Zahoor Ahmad and many more. The scientific programme presented over 575 invited lectures, panel discussions, and free papers in all disciplines of ORL-HNS and audiology.

Auditory Brainstem Implants (ABI) were the topic for Prof Richard Ramsden (UK). ABI was developed from cochlear implant technology to address the problems of hearing restoration in patients with Neurofibromatosis type 2 (NF2). Because of vestibular schwannoma, or surgery to remove them, these patients are totally deaf, and have no possibility of benefiting from a cochlear implant. Prof Ramsden presented his series of 50 consecutive cases.

Balloon sinoplasty is a newer technique in Endoscopic Sinus Surgery. This currently popular surgical procedure was presented by Zahoor Ahmad (New Zealand). He has operated on 119 sinuses in 39 patients since November 2009. His study concluded with promising results.

Epidemiology and onco prevention was presented by Imtiaz Ather Siddiqui (Pakistan). Risk factors like betel nut chewing and tobacco chewing, Gutka, manpuri, and cigarettes were the main reasons for oral cancer. The incidence is higher every year due to these risk factors.

Fluorescent spectroscopy is a low cost portable diagnostic device which is used nowadays in early diagnosis of oral cancer. P Chaturvedi (India) presented his promising results.

The crowded jam packed scientific halls were the venue of lively discussion and were testament to the quality of this magnificent meeting, which will live long in the memory of the attendees.



Author, Dr Nadia Ahsahk with Prof PJ Stammberger, Dr Rakesh Chandra with Prof Iain Shah and Dr Henry Hsu looking on at Dr Richard Douglas' house party for the rhinologists on the sidelines of the conference.



The Asia Oceania ORL Executive Board 2011-2015 from left to right: JK Siew, Toshiaki Wai Kwang, Hyun Kim, Sachitra Prasanna, Nishin TH Ngoc Dung, President Randall Morton, General Secretary Bernard Lyon, President Elect Sheng-pao Hao.



Edgemoor players performed at the opening ceremony.



Invited Speaker Imtiaz Ather Siddiqui with Heinz Stammberger (Secretary General), Randall Morton (Convener), Sachitra Prasanna (past Convener), Sheng-Pao Hao (Convener elect) and Zahoor Ahmad (Deputy Chairman) during the congress banquet.

Natural Disasters in New Zealand and Japan

Due to the devastating earthquake and tsunami in Japan in March, the International Rhinological Society meeting has been postponed – see opposite.

This was of course preceded by the earthquake in Christchurch, New Zealand, which came just days before the Asia-Pacific ORL-HNS meeting in Auckland.

We would like to extend our sincerest sympathies to all those affected by these disasters. If you would like to donate to the relief funds for either of these crises, you may do so via the British Red Cross website.

Web: www.redcross.org.uk/Donate-Now