



12th Congress of the European Association for Palliative Care *Palliative Care - Reaching Out*



European Society for Medical Oncology

ESMO Supported Meeting

From May 18th to 21st Lisbon, Portugal welcomed Palliative care representatives from all over the world. All in all 2621 participants from 81 countries attended the 12th congress of the European Association for Palliative Care. Eighty percent of the participants came from Western European Countries, 8 percent from Eastern European countries and the remaining 12 percent (316 participants) from all over the world. The highest number of participants came from the UK (418) followed by Spain (230) and Germany (228). Only two Eastern European countries were found in the top 20 list of countries with the highest number of participants – Poland (52) and Czech Republic (40).

A large part of the scientific content was built on the abstracts by the participants themselves. All in all 1238 abstracts were submitted in the framework of the 12th EAPC congress. Following review by 149 independent experts 1107 abstracts were left which were discussed at the congress either as oral presentations or as posters.

	overall submitted	rejected by reviewers	withdrawn after acceptance	overall presented	oral presentation	poster discussion	poster presentation
End of life care & quality of death	193	16	12	165	12	3	150
Education	115	3	5	107	1	0	106
Organisation of services	115	7	4	104	5	2	97
Symptoms other than pain	98	5	2	91	4	2	85
Assessment & measurement tools	80	2	5	73	5	0	68
Audit & quality control	78	4	2	72	0	2	70
Family & care givers	80	5	4	71	7	0	64
Pain	77	1	5	71	7	2	62
Research methodology	49	2	4	43	5	0	38
Ethics	47	3	2	42	7	1	34
Psychology & communication	50	3	5	42	8	1	33
Non-cancer	44	3	2	39	2	0	37
Palliative care in elderly	48	4	6	38	2	2	34
Palliative care in children and adolescents	43	1	5	37	5	2	30
Policy	34	0	0	34	6	1	27
Epidemiology	28	2	0	26	1	0	25
Bereavement	24	1	2	21	2	0	19
Medical sociology	22	1	2	19	4	0	15
Basic science & translational research	13	0	1	12	0	0	12
	1238	63	68	1107	83	18	1006

Figure 1: Abstracts allocated by category

Due to the interdisciplinary nature of palliative care and the multi-professional background of the participants, the scientific programme was designed with a broad range of topics. The scientific content addressed clinicians and researchers from different disciplines and professions, providing information of ongoing research and discussing state-of-the-art palliative care.

The scientific programme covered symptom management (e.g. “Nausea and Vomiting”, “Pain” and “Breathlessness”), clinical patterns (e.g. oncology, dementia), patient groups (e.g. Palliative Care in Intellectual Disability and Children) and psychosocial and spiritual topics. The programme was linked to the congress motto “reaching out” in many places, and the congress created a platform on which delegates and speakers were able to reach out. The congress offered options to reach out towards other countries, to learn how palliative care is implemented elsewhere, but also to reach out towards patient groups other than cancer patients, towards care givers to consider their specific needs and the options for support, and to reach out between participants to set the foundation for future projects and developments.

Congress Programme

The scientific congress programme was constructed from the abstracts submitted as well as from the contribution of invited speakers and chairs. All in all 118 speakers and chairs from all around the world gave lectures and lead discussions in the different session types.

The programme consisted of

5 Plenary sessions, each with two plenary lectures and an EAPC News flash providing some specific information, for example on guidelines, networks, strategy.

27 Parallel Symposia on specific symptoms, patient groups or professional or cultural diversity.

14 Meet-the-expert sessions provided an interactive contact and communication with the speakers.

14 Free communication sessions and 2 Poster discussion sessions provided the opportunity for oral presentations of the best submitted abstracts.

4 Industry sponsored symposia gave insights in recent pharmacological developments and provided the participants with clinical information

1006 posters presented in two poster sets – one on Thursday and one on Friday.

Abstracts of the lectures, the submitted abstracts and many additional information are available at the EAPC website <http://www.eapcnet.eu/Corporate/Events/EAPCpastcongresses/tabid/215/Default.aspx>).

A congress report will also be published in the next edition of the European Journal of Palliative Care.

The Lisbon Challenge

The EAPC, in collaboration with the International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care (IAHPC) and the Human Rights Watch (HRW) has launched the Lisbon Challenge at the congress. The Lisbon Challenge gives name to an initiative pursuing the goal of the access to adequate palliative care as a human right.

In recent years palliative care and pain relief as a human right were subject to various activities and initiatives. Even though not all of these initiatives were successful, the awareness for the topic increased. Congress President and resigning EAPC President Lukas Radbruch explained that from these activities four major objectives have emerged which will be in the focus of the Lisbon Challenge:

Governments must...

- 1 Ensure access to essential medicines, including opioid medications, to all who need them.
- 2 Develop health policies that address the needs of patients with life-limiting or terminal illnesses.
- 3 Ensure that healthcare workers receive adequate training on palliative care and pain management at undergraduate levels.
- 4 Ensure, through the development of structures and processes, the implementation of palliative care.

The joint initiative challenges the national governments to check how well they perform with these objectives.

The Lisbon Challenge marks the begin of a two year plan for joint action, with the objective to obtain support for palliative care as a human rights issue from major international organisations. The Lisbon Challenge and the subsequent action plan aims for a resolution to be announced at the 13th Congress of EAPC, taking place in Prague on May 30 to June 2, 2013. This resolution shall include major international organisations as partners, and a commitment towards major goals such as the development of good palliative care and the acknowledgement of adequate access to palliative care as a human right.

For more information on the next EAPC main congress taking place in Prague in 2013 please see <http://www.eapc-2013.org/>

Furthermore, the 7th World Research Congress of the EAPC will be taking place in Trondheim, Norway, on June 7-9, 2011. This research congress will provide palliative care professionals with the opportunity to present new research results and discuss them with their international colleagues.

The EAPC would like to thank the Scientific Committee for their engagement as well as all the speakers, the abstract submitters, the reviewers and the advisory board, all colleagues in the Organizing Committee and all the others who have contribute with their enthusiasm and engagement to made this congress such a success. The Lisbon congress will stay in our mind as a warm memory.



(Image:EAPC/Ad Médic Lda)

Congress President and resigning EAPC President Prof. Lukas Radbruch is welcoming the delegates at the 12th EAPC congress in Lisbon