

24 April 2015

Dear colleagues

As the first European Stroke Organisation Conference has drawn to a close, I want to thank all faculty members and delegates for their intellectual and practical support to the preparation and delivery of what has I believe been an outstanding success.

When the overwhelming wish of our association was expressed just 11 months ago that we should establish a new conference, we barely dared to hope for 800-1,000 delegates in our first year. The reality was that 84 countries were represented in Glasgow, and that delegate numbers were close to 2,700. To accompany the presentations to a packed auditorium in our first plenary session alone there were two simultaneous online publications in the New England Journal of Medicine and one in Lancet, and we had new results presented from two additional fresh NEJM publications and an Annals of Neurology paper. In the afternoon, we heard the first multicentre, blinded RCT of an experimental approach in stroke, a stem cell RCT, the complete results of the desmoteplase programme and a further new thrombectomy trial. By the time we retired to the poster session and welcome reception, the exhibition hall was buzzing with excitement. The enthusiasm and cheerfulness were tangible, affecting everyone from the most junior researchers through to old hands. The sun shone on the entire conference, literally.

I attribute the success to a huge amount of good fortune, to the efforts of a vast team and to the enthusiasm of every delegate. It would be unfair to single out any one contribution but I am convinced that it was those numerous individual contributions, offered generously and constructively, that allowed us to take advantage of the good fortune. To be present at this inaugural conference was reward enough for anyone working in stroke, because it was a once in a career occasion that we will each remember with great fondness. It was rather like a birth, a christening and a wedding, all rolled into one. Certainly, we have shown what a large and happy family we are in stroke medicine, and that Europe stands not alone but with societies and individuals all across the world. We will build on this success, we will maintain the spirit and principles that informed ESOC 2015, and I promise that by 10-12 May 2016 in Barcelona we will have another outstanding programme. For now, I express my sincere thanks to everyone for their support and hope that each of you left Glasgow with enthusiasm, new friendships and shared optimism for the future, for our patients and our specialty.

Best wishes



Kennedy Lees

President, European Stroke Organisation

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