



# AMD CONGRESS

International meeting provides update on retinal disease therapy

by Roibeard O' hEineachain in Dublin

The 13th International AMD and Retina Congress organised by European School for Advanced Studies in Ophthalmology (ESASO) took place in Dublin in October 2013. With around 1,200 international eye doctors and surgeons from 45 countries in attendance, the meeting highlighted the rapidly changing nature of the treatment of retinal disease.

"This is the fifth year that the congress has been conducted under the umbrella of the ESASO school and we are introducing some new educational modalities. We have master classes and clinical cases and we're trying to make this meeting a bit more interactive than before," said Francesco Bandello MD, FEBO, chairman of the ESASO Scientific Committee, at the Opening Ceremony of the congress.

Also speaking at the Opening Ceremony, Dr Marie Hickey Dwyer, president of The Irish College of Ophthalmologists and member of the meeting's Scientific Board said the meeting had been organised by collaborating with people from five continents of the world.

Borja Corcostegui MD, a member of the meeting's organising committee, said highlights of the meeting included discussions about the use of anti-VEGF agents in an ever-broadening range of indications, and the insights gained from clinical experience in terms of their appropriate dosage and regimens and safety. Also under discussion was the place of enzymatic vitreolysis in vitreoretinal surgery.

"AMD is a very important disease. It affects a huge number of patients all over the world and we need to determine the optimum regimen for anti-VEGF injections to keep their visual acuity at a good level. We are also focusing on the treatment of diabetic macular oedema which is becoming an increasingly important cause of loss of vision because the incidence of diabetes is increasing around the world. With regard to enzymatic vitreolysis we need to find out which patients are likely to benefit from this kind of treatment," said Dr Corcostegui, who is medical director of IMO Institut Microcirurgia Ocular, Barcelona, Spain.

Other topics included the latest research into practical application of once purely futuristic concepts including artificial vision, stem cell implantation and gene



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therapy, as they make their way from the laboratory to the clinic.

Anat Lowenstein MD, Tel Aviv Medical Centre, Israel, noted that the ESASO congresses represent one of three important aspects of the organisation's educational activities. The society's primary efforts are concentrated at their school based within the Campus of the Università della Svizzera Italiana (USI), Lugano, Switzerland. There, young ophthalmologists can take intensive courses in all fields of ophthalmology from some of the world's greatest experts, she told *EuroTimes*.

"The courses require dedication from those taking part and each of the teachers gives a whole morning to a specific subject. For example, somebody may talk about retinal vein occlusion or diabetes, starting with the pathogenesis and then it goes into the various treatment options for surgery and case presentations, and the doctor comes out with very extensive knowledge," she said.

ESASO also organises courses in different parts of the world where advanced ophthalmic training is non-existent and physicians are unable to travel to the Lugano centre. The ESASO congresses provide another way of disseminating expert knowledge throughout the global community, she noted.

"This meeting is becoming one of the most important meetings of retinal disease in the world and covers all areas of the topic in a very good manner," she added.

## contacts

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14th ESASO  
Retina Academy  
2014

14 – 15 November 2014  
Istanbul/Turkey

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