THE FIRST REGIONAL INTERNATIONAL AACE CHAPTERS' MEETING

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The American Association of Clinical Endocrinologist (AACE) is one of the leading voices in endocrinology, particularly in the field of clinical practice and interaction with policy makers. Founded in the United States in 1991, from the very beginning it showed a special interest in international collaboration and networking. After 25 years, with considerable international expansion, AACE has over 7,500 members in the United States and 90 other countries.

AACE involvement at the local level, both in the US and abroad, required strong international, regional and state chapter programs. These chapters provide AACE members with professional networking opportunities, continuing medical education (CME) programs, and a vehicle for launching advocacy activities related to local, state and federal governmental policy and third party payer issues.

Currently, there are 11 states, 12 regional and 13 international AACE chapters. The Romanian AACE Chapter is one of the most active ones with national annual meetings and regular participation at the AACE Annual Congresses.

Between 2-3 October 2015, the Romanian Chapter hosted the First Regional International AACE Chapters' Meeting. Held in downtown Bucharest, the meeting was organized in collaboration with the Italian AACE Chapter, and was a highly successful endocrine gathering with more than 150 endocrinologists from 8 countries attending. Italian, Jordanian, Lebanese, Gulf States Chapters' were represented by their presidents, Dr. Franco Grimaldi, Dr. Mohamad Omar Abu-Hijleh, Dr. Selim Jambart and Dr. Ali AlZahrani, respectively. Professor Hossein Gharib, AACE Past President, represented AACE-USA.

There were 25 AACE member speakers, including 15 from Romania. Meeting language was English and sessions included plenary talks, interactive meet-the-expert sessions, and oral communications symposia.

An important emphasis was put on osteoporosis and its treatment. In a clinical symposium update, chaired by Professor Catalina Poiana and Fabio Vescini, talks included by renowned physicians in the field such as Professor Didier Hans, Daniel Grigorie and Dina Zaqq. There was also a symposium on osteoporosis and sarcopenia.

Neuroendocrine tumors' management was also discussed in a very interesting and interactive workshop, based on extensive clinical experience, held by Nicola Fazio and Catalina Poiana.

Thyroid pathology and thyroid neoplasia were extensively reviewed in different formats, including plenary lectures, oral communications and debates. Dr. Andrea Frasoldati from Arcispedale Santa Maria Nuova, Reggio Emilia, Italy, discussed thyroid ultrasound and ultrasound-guided procedures as well as radioiodine ablation in thyroid cancer in a debate with Professor Corin Badiu, showing the current guidelines and the less clear areas. Professor Hossein Gharib, from United States, and Professor Voichita Mogos, from Romania, each provided updates on thyroid cancer.

Additionally, there was a very interesting oral communication session on the management of common and classic endocrine disorders like hypothyroidism, hyperparathyroidism, osteoporosis and acromegaly with pregnancy.

The program also included an attractive debate on the optimal management of acromegaly, covered by Professor Mihail Coculescu and Dr. Roberto Attanasio, and again interesting discussions were held among participants.

Social activities included a traditional dinner plus tours of the picturesque Romanian countryside, accompanied a great scientific programme, allowing attending members much time for networking and collegiality. It was a successful event promoting friendship and collaboration between people of different countries.

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Figure 1. AACE chapter meeting, 2-3 October 2015.

As the Italian AACE Chapter was much involved with the success of this and previous meetings organized by the Romanian Chapter, the participants agreed that the next International Chapters' Meeting should be held in Rome in October 2016.

We wish to thank all the speakers and chairpersons for their excellent lectures and cooperation, and all the participants for their contributions and efforts in making this meeting a huge success.

Figure 2. Hossein Gharib received the award from Diana Paun, elect president of Romanian AACE chapter.

Indeed, this was a remarkable achievement that brought together expert endocrinologists from Europe and Middle East; its success should be used as a model for future such events. It also underscored the mission of AACE International Chapters: to improve global endocrine collaboration and expertise, advancing service to endocrine patients and community.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest concerning this article.