EUROSPINE 2015

The annual general meeting of the Spine Society of Europe took place in September 2015 at the Bella Center in Copenhagen.

EUROSPINE 2015 brought together spine specialists from all over the world: 2,237 delegates and 1,383 industry representatives from 81 countries participated at the leading platform for exchanging the latest research results and innovations in the treatment of spinal disorders.

Scientific programme and awards

The congress outline included 94 scientific presentations, 74 quick-fire presentations, two debates, one keynote lecture, six EUROSPINE lunch symposia, 22 industry lunch workshops and two pre-meeting courses. As part of EUROSPINE’s Way Forward strategy – and to ensure the annual general meeting remains the foremost scientific gathering in Europe for spine specialists – new abstract submission categories, rigorous quality management standards and prestigious awards had yielded a record number of abstracts (an increase of over 70 per cent compared to EUROSPINE 2014) – and the strongest scientific programme to date.

The integration of basic science presentations into clinical sessions – which proved to be highly successful – will continue in the future. Furthermore, the introduction of a new scientific category, ‘New techniques and patient safety’, prompted the submission of more than 200 abstracts for this topic alone. The topics addressed were valuable to members, meeting participants, and stakeholders, but – most importantly – to patients.

This year, the Full Paper Award was given to Ahmad Omair (Oslo, Norway) and his team for their paper illustrating that age and pro-inflammatory gene influences polymorphisms on adjacent segment disc degeneration more than fusion does in patients treated for chronic low back pain.

Ane Simony and colleagues from Middelfart in Denmark were awarded with the Best Podium Presentation for ‘Health-related quality-of-life in adolescent idiopathic scoliosis patients – 25
years after treatment.’

The newly introduced Best of Outside-Europe Award serves to illustrate the fact that interest in EUROSPINE’s annual meeting extends far beyond the borders of Europe. The award went to Naresh Kumar and his team from Singapore for their presentation on ‘Flow cytometric evaluation of intraoperative salvaged blood filtered with leucocyte depletion filter in metastatic spine tumour surgery’.

The Best Podium Presentation as well as the Best of Outside-Europe Award were a result of the audience’s support and rating via the conference app, enabling delegates to capture the full experience of the meeting.

Collaboration among spine societies in Europe

The European Spine Societies Board (EuSSAB) took the opportunity to meet for the third time since the inaugural meeting in Lyon last October to discuss the alignment of educational standards and the creation of a standardised pan-European spine diploma. This common umbrella and communication platform unites national spine societies from across Europe and was set up with the purpose of establishing strategic partnerships. Once a society becomes an institutional member of EuSSAB, all of its members automatically become associate members of EUROSPINE at no extra cost. Within the past 12 months, 20 national societies, representing approximately 6,000 spine specialists from across Europe, have already joined.

In order to support, co-ordinate and prioritise stakeholder-related matters, EUROSPINE has set up a new dedicated Stakeholder Management Council. The council’s mandate is to take a targeted approach in addressing the individual needs of determined stakeholder groups. During EUROSPINE 2015 the dialogue was intensified with stakeholders and MedTechs to strengthen the relationship, with a view to establish mutually beneficial partnerships and ensure on-going financial support for today and for the future.

Themes of future EUROSPINE meetings

To address the interests of all spine specialists, EUROSPINE will be varying the themes of the annual and Spring specialty meetings. EUROSPINE 2015 focused on adult thoraco-lumbar degenerative conditions and deformity, growing spine, cervical spine and on basic science.

Next year in Berlin more scientific presentations on the topic of ‘New techniques and patient safety’ will most likely be included. Preparations for the 3rd EUROSPINE Spring Specialty Meeting in Kraków, Poland (12–13 May 2016) are underway, where trauma and emergency spine surgery will be the key topics.