



# Austin, Texas, USA: CHEST 2014 – a Different Kind of Pneumology Congress

Florin Mihălțan<sup>1</sup>, Paraschiva Postolache<sup>2</sup>

1. "Marius Nasta" Pneumology Institute of Bucharest; 2. "Grigore T. Popa" University of Medicine and Pharmacy - Iași

As every year, the second half of October has been allocated to the CHEST Congress, which was organized by the CHEST / American College of Chest Physicians (ACCP) from 23-30 October 2014, for the first time in Austin, Texas, USA. A total of about 6,000 participants from the US, Canada and 100 other countries attended the annual congress CHEST 2014.

Apparently, this Congress may seem very long in duration, but it always respects the tradition that makes it unique in the landscape of the international events in Pneumology. It is unrivaled by other events as the meeting is comprised of forming separate note

of other international pulmonologist meetings. It's hard to be matched by other events because it has in its composition the meetings that make a difference in comparison with other international meetings of pulmonology. The first two days were and remained, as usual, allocated to balances and structuring strategies CHEST / ACCP, with meetings of the Board of Regents, Governors and heads of the country and also of the CHEST Foundation of this professional organization. On this occasion, **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Paraschiva Postolache**, from the "Grigore T. Popa" University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Iasi, received from the President

*CHEST / ACCP Board of Regents - two awards: one for her three years of work (2011-2014) in the CHEST / ACCP Board of Regents and one for the one year work (2013-2014) as Chair of the CHEST / ACCP Council of Global Governors and two years (201 -2013) as Vice-Chair of the CHEST / ACCP of the Council of Global Governors.*

As already traditional, the CHEST Congress began with an “update” in different areas such as the somnology, pulmonary imaging, oncologic therapy lung transplantation, sarcoidosis, altitude diseases, and with a review of the scientific literature of 2014. There were some new elements that have however, “shattered” the tradition of this congress. So, this year all sessions had a marked character of interactivity. In each room there were devices that allow active participation of those present at deciphering clinical cases. This was a proof of the American’s pragmatism that we don’t find too often in Europe and is not visible even at large events with significant foreign participation.

Each session, even if it was a symposium that aimed at addressing practitioners or a symposium for clarification on general themes, started from a clinical case with its diagnostic and therapeutic meanders that were clarified together with the audience by direct vote.

Subjects were many, always with original approaches such as: anti-inflammatory therapy in community-acquired pneumonia and its benefits, adherence to CPAP in patients with obstructive sleep apnea, tachyarrhythmias therapy options, placement of drainage tubes in pleurisy, integration of palliative care, percutaneous tracheostomy, exacerbations of COPD - what to choose in practice?, thromboembolic pulmonary hypertension etc.

Also, we have not missed the so called “state of art” related to interstitial diffuse pneumopathies, eosinophilic lung, microbiome of asthma, structural heart disease etc.

The difficult clinical cases of sleep’s pathology, refractory asthma, therapeutic customizations from Alpha 1-antitrypsin deficiency etc. always filled the rooms. I noticed in the same personal touch of the congress, many intensive care topics, some of them, well known in the Romanian pneumology such as hypothermia therapy, intensive care management of difficult cases etc. The sessions of interventional bronchology, small surgery (e.g. thermoplasty, percutaneous tracheostomy etc.) alternating them with new therapies related to vocal cord dysfunctions or gastroesophageal reflux could not be missed.

In parallel, and this has made it difficult for the doctors to make their choice, there were sessions of the “Canadian Society of Pneumology” where we noted the special focus on promoting personal guidelines and on lung cancer screening.

Note that “hot” topics were not avoided. In this congress constructive debates were created on current topics such as Ebola and medical staff training and electronic cigarette - (“divide and conquer”) who should recommend them etc.

Simulations sessions entered into everyday practice, CHEST / ACCP being the first medical association that has received accreditation from the Society for Simulation in HealthCare, a leader in providing cutting edge education; clinical case demonstrations where a clinician, a radiologist and a pathologist met and commented in team, and residents and young specialists sessions have proven to be equally important.

Another unique aspect of this congress is connected to the “sunrise sessions” where usually there are clarified various hot topics from literature from lung cancer to thromboembolic disease.

Another interesting chapter of this congress was the organizers desire to attract doctors to learn continuously throughout the whole period of the event. Thus in the halls of the building, where the congress was held (Austin Convention Center), a few special places equipped with laptops, topics such as: Alpha 1-antitrypsin deficiency, lung cancer etc. were organized where you could cover teaching slides, test on tablets of questionnaires based on specific clinical cases in the somnology or even games, and win prizes in the American spirit (so called “CHEST Bingo to win the prize”). A “puzzle” of such cases was present every day.

The typical American footprint, clearly printed in symposiums, was noticed by those present, if we consider the sessions of asthma associated with obesity, atopic rhinitis, gastroesophageal reflux and sleep apnea syndrome or cost evaluation sessions and improvement in quality of life for various chronic diseases.

The last day of the congress, as is customary, was allocated to special topics such as diagnostic methods for lung nodule, diagnostic dilemmas in diffuse interstitial pneumopathies, diagnostic algorithms in cystic fibrosis, tracheal tumors, survival guides for sepsis etc.

The presence of a small Romanian delegation was extremely important and appreciated. From Romania eight specialists attended, who presented:

- 2 oral papers (original investigations): Assist. Dr. Ștefan Dumitrache-Rujinski (Bucharest), revealed as “Featured speaker, best oral presentation” and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Paraschiva Postolache (Iași);
- 11 posters (5 posters of the team of Prof. Dr. Florin Mihălțan, Bucharest, 5 posters from several areas of the country having as presenter Assoc. Prof. Dr. Paraschiva Postolache, Iași, and one poster belonging to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Oana Arghir); also Assoc. Prof. Dr. Paraschiva Postolache and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Oana Arghir were moderators to the sessions “Global Case Reports” and members of the evaluation committees for abstracts of CHEST 2014.

Congress was a useful meeting and appreciated by all present, putting on and revealing important professional aspects, less visible at the competitive congresses of the American Thoracic Society and the European Respiratory Society, the CHEST / ACCP clinical education program being internationally recognized and accredited. ■