

“Old Lady” has made a great comeback

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May 26 to 28, 2016, marked a new Conference in Timisoara, the third one from the tuberculosis department of the Romanian Society of Pneumology. Suggestively entitled: “Old Lady in a new suit - an integrated approach, new solutions”, this conference gathered more than 250 doctors and nurses specialised in the field of pneumology, who, for 2 days, discussed older and newer issues related to the same eternal topic, tuberculosis - a disease that wears many clothes and masks lately.

The conference started, as expected, with an assessment of the evolution of tuberculosis epidemic in Europe and worldwide, presented by the team led by Prof. C. Marica. The assessment shown that the initial optimism from 10 years ago was too exaggerated and that the current challenges are multiple, from the XDR and MDR forms to current waves of immigrants that can take by surprise even countries with a well-developed network of exposure and treatment controls.

The overview on the epidemic was supplemented by another review of the epidemic trend in Romania during 2010-2015, conducted by the team led by Dr Gilda Popescu. The latter highlighted the successes in deflecting the prevalence of the disease and also the role that an update to the electronic system for collecting TB data has in eliminating errors and omissions in recording, monitoring and evaluating the disease (team led by Dr Domnica Chiotan). Just as important were the presentations related to the sustainability of externally financed TB control projects, an update of their status (Mihaela STEFAN) and some legal limitations on market drugs that unfortunately impact therapy in chemo-resistant forms (Dr Cristian Popa and his team). Two other key sessions followed, grouping just as interesting subjects. The first one, called TB diagnostic and therapeutic challenges started with: challenges in the diagnosis and treatment of extrapulmonary tuberculosis (Dr. Adriana Socaci), from the many facets of diagnostic imaging in pulmonary tuberculosis (Dr. Diana Manolescu) leading to diagnostic algorithms and DR-TB treatment (Victor Spânu) or to the way malpractice influences medical practice (Prof. Asoc. Ruxandra Ulmeanu). Lab specialists brought their full contribution by indexing new diagnostic methods (Dr. Daniela Homorodean) and by identifying the contextual accessibility

of molecular methods and prevalence of some genotypes in patients with multiple medications (from the Republic of Moldova, Dr. Valeriu Crudu, as a guest).

The second session did not overlook the interference between comorbidities and tuberculosis, with presentations focusing on: Clostridium difficile - TB association (prof. Fl. Mihaltan), specific aspects of tuberculosis in HIV infected patients (Dr. Elena Dantes), tuberculosis in pregnant women (team lead by Prof. Doina Todea), bronchial tuberculosis (Prof. Asoc. Emilia Crisan), lung cancer evolution (Dr. Adriana Petronela Fildan), and the association with collagenosis (Dr Nicoleta Bertici)

Day two presentations were equally interesting, with a different approach though. During the “TB between being and not being” session, a variety of cases with diagnostic difficulties were presented: with aspergillosis (conf. Ovidiu Fira Mladinescu), with sarcoidosis (Dr Adriana Socaci), with

negative bacteriological testing (Dr Sergiu Danut Ioan), with the risk for medical staff (Dr Mara Balteanu) etc. These were welcomed additions in terms of imaging, biopsy confirmation of the pleurisy, group 5 medication, patient adherence etc. As was expected of a respectable RSP conference, the nursing department was active during the event with presentations and a marking study of the nurse’s role in TB control (with lecturers being experienced physicians in the field). Teams from all over the country were also present, from the more traditional to the younger ones, with a series of oral presentations and posters. The presentations of different companies were focused on new means of diagnosis (Haim Lifescience GmbH, Sanimed) as well as on antibiotic therapy, targeted therapies for obstructive diseases (Krka, GSK, Astra Zeneca, Novartis).

This conference underlined the department’s commitment, as outlined upon its creation by Prof. C. Marica, to provide the scientific basis of the national program, whereas the participants produced the best evidence through the high level of their presentations and the way in which the current progress in the field was identified. The excellence of the organising committee, led by Dr Adriana Socaci, was rewarded with the massive presence of our country’s experienced practitioners and with the scientific approach of the presentations. ■

