



Report on the national US-ISOPP congress

as a contribution to the ISOPP Newsletter

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From March 18th to March 21th, 1999 the fourth Annual Conference of Oncology Pharmacy took place in Orlando, Florida. Similar as in other states such as Canada, Australia and Germany the United States ISOPP-members organize annually a national congress.

"Optimizing Pharmacotherapy of the Oncology Patient" as title of this symposium marked the target of the pharmacists, specialized in oncology pharmacy. With the additional appeal "Making a Difference" all participants of the symposium were encouraged to realize new concepts in cancer care, in supportive care, in sensible using new drugs and in taking care of the medical and pharmaceutical staff to achieve the best clinical outcome for the oncology patient.

Steve Huber, Cortex Communications, and Larry Broadfield as elected ISOPP-president welcomed 178 registered participants from the United States, 26 from Canada, 6 from France one from Singapore, one from Germany and layed particular emphasis on the importance of national and international cooperation, supported by the every time updated ISOPP-homepage (<http://www.ISOPP.org>).-

As to the congress' contents the program enclosed not only updates of medical subjects such as cancer-updates of several malignancies, immuntherapies, haematologies, new drugs like oral fluorinated pyrimidines, schedules of taxanes, low-molecular weight heparin or strategies to maintain chemotherapy dose intensity and others, but also options for pharmacists as important members of the health-care-team, developing therapeutic standards. With lectures like " Pharmacoeconomic opportunities", " Benefits of guidelines" and others the participants were trained to yield in economic aspects to the health-care-team by developing therapeutic guidelines. Of particular interest for pharmacists is the developing of guidelines in supportive care, such as antiemetic guidelines, anticoagulation guidelines, guidelines of pain-management, fatigue-management, bowel management, electrolyt management and much more, which were discussed in several workshops.

Several Point-Counterpoint- Discussions concerning the pros and cons of expensive cytotoxic drugs belonged to the congress' pharmaceutical highlights. Independently of their own opinion the pro- and contra-advocates had to representative the respective points of view.-

Thus during four long days, that begun early in the morning at 6:00 or 6:30 am with Exhibitors' Breakfast Symposias and ended in the evening after Dinner Symposias at 9:00 pm, the participants were able to learn and study many subjects, to pick up news by interchanging ideas with other participants at the work-shops and to complement everyone's own knowledge.

In spite of very nice weather in Florida, a warm swimming-pool outside and the attractions of the Magic Kingdom nearby, the congress was well attended all the time. On the one hand this was due to excellent scientific program, but showed also the new modus of pharmaceutical certification in the United States: Since 1996 oncology pharmacy is a new speciality beside four others in the field of pharmacy. To acquire that certification a number of improvement-lessons are required annually.

The frame of mind of all participants was excellent, the motivation could hardly be better and surely one will see each other next year at the fifth national meeting in the United States or in Prague at the 7th ISOPP and nobody will forget the message of this congress:

" The Future is not what it used to be."