

EDITORIAL

We are pleased to inform dear Readers and Contributors that the Annual Review Meeting concerning our Journal's performance in 2011 took place at the seat of the Nofer Institute of Occupational Medicine in Łódź on 20 April 2012. The meeting was held as part of the Versita/Springer Publishing Program and was attended by Mr. Jacek Ciesielski from Versita, Mr. Wolfgang Boettner from de Gruyter, as well as some members of the Journal's Editorial Board.

The presentation by made by the Editor-in-Chief devoted to our Journal editing strategy and organization was followed by a discussion on bilateral cooperation in 2011 with special focus on production and marketing aspects. After this fruitful discussion, an ambitious Journal Development Plan was accepted for 2012 and the following years in terms of increasing the number of issues, articles, pages as well as quality i.e. growth concerning the impact factor, rejection rate, internationality (e.g. greater contribution of authors and reviewers from countries other than the journal home country).

The present issue begins with a review paper by K. Kwiecień et al. which reviews Polish and foreign literature on workload and the measurement tools used to evaluate the workload indicators among intensive care nursing staff.

The first article placed in the section of original papers was written by our Jordanian colleagues, namely by E.S. Alsatari et al. They investigated the genotoxicity of waterpipe smoking in the lymphocytes of 50 smokers vs. 18 non-smokers using the chromosomal aberrations assay and found that waterpipe smoking, similarly to cigarette smoking, causes DNA damage to lymphocytes, which increases with more waterpipe use.

The next two original papers concern the phoniatics problems.

S. Marszałek et al. assessed the effect of osteopathic myofascial techniques on normalization of the vocal tract functions in patients with occupational dysphonia. The applied interdisciplinary treatment including osteopathic and vocal therapy in 40 teachers suffering from occupational voice disorders helped significantly to improve the vocal function.

In turn, H. Zielińska-Bliźniewska et al. compared the parameters of vocal acoustic and vocal efficiency analyses with the use of the IRIS and the Diagno-Scope Specialist software in 40 students and academic teachers. The study evidenced the compatibility between both measurement software programs that may be useful in the diagnostics of occupational dysphonias.

The metal-induced asthma and chest X-ray changes in welders are presented by T. Wittczak et al. The authors examined 50 welders occupationally exposed to metals and suspected of metal-induced asthma, 100 welders exposed to metals without the symptoms of asthma vs. healthy controls and controls with atopic asthma. Specific inhalation challenge tests with metals proved to play the key role in the diagnostics of metal-induced asthma in welders. Pulmonary changes in X-ray were found in a significant percentage of the examined welders.

B. Kręcisz et al. studied local tolerance to nickel implants during 9-month observation in 20 guinea pigs sensitized to nickel before implantation and non-sensitized ones vs. 10 controls. The experiment showed that nickel implants may cause primary sensitization to nickel and the percentage score of eosinophils in blood may be useful in assessing the allergenic activity of metal alloys containing nickel.

The incidence of low back pain in military helicopter pilots was evaluated by A. Truszczyńska et al. As much as 70%

of 112 pilots reported pain complaints. Uncomfortable body posture during prolonged flights resulting from the lack of lumbar support exerted the highest effect on pain provocation.

The study by O. Nowotny-Czupryna et al. was focused on the assessment of ergonomic threats concerning occupational activities performed by midwives affecting the musculoskeletal system due to the body position when attending childbirth. Among 95 midwives aged 21–50 years, spinal pain was reported by 67.3% of the examinees.

Another original article by I.K. Liyanage et al., the authors from Sri Lanka, reports sharps injuries related to medical training among 168 4th-year medical students. The injuries were experienced by 95% of the subjects and occurred mainly during suturing, venipuncture and while assisting deliveries, indicating the need for protection and more emphasis on improving the knowledge on sharp injuries.

The paper by K. Bródka et al. discusses the variability of bacterial aerosols in poultry houses. The quantitative and qualitative analyses of microorganisms in 2 hatcheries and 3 hen houses showed for example that the concentrations of airborne mesophilic bacteria inside the poultry breeding houses ranged from 4.74×10^4 cfu/m³ to 1.89×10^8 cfu/m³ and some pathogenic microorganisms detrimental to human health (e.g. *Escherichia coli*) were found, which may cause a direct health risk to employees who should use personal measures to protect their respiratory tract.

The next paper is also connected with microbiology. B. Dera-Tomaszewska from the National Salmonella

Centre reports that a few *Salmonella* serovars isolated for the first time are noted in Poland almost each year. The conclusion is that, for practical purposes, we have to accept that *Salmonella* will not be eliminated (as the feature of humans, animals and general environment), but efforts should be focused on its monitoring and controlling.

Two cases of acute mountain sickness are presented by H.M. Karinen and H.O. Tikkanen in the case reports section. The authors summarize the clinical findings and treatment as well as current recommendations for the prevention of acute mountain sickness (AMS).

The last component of the present issue is the letter to the editor by A.K. Nersesyan concerning the paper by C. Cassini et al. entitled “Occupational risk assessment of oxidative stress and genotoxicity in workers exposed to paints during a working week” published in our Journal (2011;24(3):308–19). The letter “The best sampling time in buccal micronucleus cytome assay” criticizes some parts of the methodology and conclusions contained in the paper by Cassini et al. The reply by Cassini et al. to the letter, also published in this issue, has not closed the polemic and further letters submitted lately will be presented in the oncoming issue.

We hope that the Readers of this issue will find at least some reports and conclusions worthy of their attention.

Have nice summer vacations!

*Prof. Wiesław J. Sułkowski
on behalf of the Editorial Board*