

President of WASPaLM
Marilene Melo
Brazil

BULLETIN OF THE WORLD
ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES
OF PATHOLOGY AND
LABORATORY MEDICINE



The World Association exists to promote pathology, pathologists and its Constituent Societies for the benefit of patients and the improved understanding of disease throughout the world.



President's Message



WASPALM is concerned with all aspects of Pathology/Laboratory Medicine practice stressing the high level of medicine offered to our patients. At the beginning of the third Millennium a new opportunity opens up for an increase of our laboratorial practice assisting elderly patients properly since we have now more and more ageing people.

In 1995 it was estimated that 371 million people (6% of the world's population) were over the age of 65. This proportion is much higher in Europe (14%) and North America (13%) than in Latin America and Asia (5%) and Africa (3%). Popular literature has frequently been publishing articles on "how to live better and longer" or "how to reach 100 years well and happy." Geriatrics Medicine has grown fast in the last three decades. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the 21st century, the health-care of older persons is at a crossroads. Despite the substantial progress that Geriatrics Medicine has made, much more remains to be done to meet the healthcare of our ageing population needs.

Laboratories need to adapt themselves to assist the elderly conveniently and appropriately. For this, we should remember the Geriatrics Limitations. The Geriatrics problems are better defined by 7(D's) as follows:

- Decrease of Intellectuality
- Decrease of Vision and Hearing
- Digestive Insufficiency
- Decrease of nutrition

Continued on page 3

The Future of WASPALM in the 21st Century

Henry Travers, M.D., President Elect



The Bureau of WASPALM was recently confronted with a delicate problem: one of the founding societies of WASPALM, the **Societe Francaise de Biologie Clinique**, was asked to rejoin WASPALM after a 10 year absence. After the offer was made and accepted, the Bureau found that the membership of the Societe Francaise de Biologie Clinique did not meet the requirements of the Bylaws of WASPALM. Specifically, the majority of members of Societe Francaise de Biologie Clinique were not physicians.

Many professional societies around the world and in Europe particularly, representing pathology and laboratory medicine have significant numbers of non-physicians (doctoral level clinical scientists, technologists and so on) and, in many cases, these members outnumber physician members. Since the purpose of WASPALM, as set forth in its Bylaws, transcends the membership categories of individual societies, the Bureau is faced with a dilemma and a challenge to relevance, influence and importance of WASPALM for international pathology.

WASPALM facilitates *four* important services for societies of pathology and laboratory medicine. WASPALM coordinates—through the sponsorship of constituent societies—a biannual **World Congress of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine**. WASPALM connects its member societies to the **ISO standards development** process (through its *Council on World Standards*) and to the **decision making forums of the World Health Organization** (through its official status as a non-governmental organization). Finally, through **WASPALM's web site**, WASPALM provides member societies with a wealth of information about its overall structure, organization and activities.

Related to WASPALM, but organizationally separate, the **World Pathology Foundation** provides *Gordon Signy Fellowships* to pathologists from countries in need so that they may study in other nations and return their knowledge in the service of patients in their own countries.

In spite of the value of these services, there are some harsh realities that challenge WASPALM's future. I will describe these in the same order as the four services listed above. While **World Congresses** are designed to bring pathologists and laboratorians together to exchange scientific information as well as practical wisdom regarding pathology, Congresses seldom stand alone and—by themselves—do not attract sufficient attendance to financially support them. Meetings of other organizations (the *IFCC*, for example) are perceived by pathologists and laboratory scientists are more worthwhile than World Congresses. With limited travel and educational funds,

(continued on page 3)



President's Message (continued)

- Decrease of earnings
- Depression
- Decrease of equilibrium

What can we do to help?

So it is necessary to supply more light in the attendance area, as well as identify clearly all the signs with capital letters, avoid slipping floors, build handrail in restrooms and in the waiting rooms. As they usually need many exams at a time it would be convenient to propose whenever possible special prices

Reference Laboratory Values in Geriatrics

There is a strict pattern to define the sample reference values in medical literature. This concept for its accuracy to describe the sample gives us reliability to the reference values. It is advisable to select "normal" elderly people in each country through careful physical examination, to determine charts of reference values for adults between 65-90 years and above 90 according to ordinary units. It is necessary caution and consideration to interpret laboratorial values at this age range. We must be well prepared to assist the centenary persons.

It is our duty to look for new opportunities to offer better results of exams remembering that 70% of all medical decisions are based on results of laboratory medicine worldwide.

Let's keep in touch

SOCIETY SPOTLIGHT: The Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (Dr. David Davies)

In 2006 the College will be celebrating 50 years since incorporation. Some of the activities already planned include an exhibition at Sydney's Powerhouse Museum aimed at schools and families to inform in a user-friendly way about pathology. The dynamic, interactive Exhibition will then tour major cities and regional areas of Australia. Also in honour of the Jubilee year the College is producing a book on the history of the last 25 years to complement a volume which was completed for the 'Silver Anniversary'.

Both the Exhibition and the Book will be launched during Pathology Week from 6-12 March 2006 and in conjunction with the annual scientific meeting of the College known as 'Pathology Update', an event which attracts 1,000 people each year to the Sydney Convention Centre, Darling Harbour, in the beautiful harbour city of Sydney.

Pathology week will also see the release of the Autumn 2006 issue of PathWay magazine, a highly successful initiative of the College. A 'glossy' lifestyle publication it aims to inform and enhance our profession to the student, medical/health professions and the general public. With topical articles of interest about aspects of pathology and pathologists it provides a vehicle to highlight issues of concern in a controlled media format. Feedback has been very positive and the College concerns with regard to workforce, which continues to be the most serious issue we are facing, have been clearly and consistently relayed via PathWay as well as any other avenue that presents itself. You can get a flavour of the magazine via the College website at www.rcpa.edu.au as well as access to other College information.

(Future of WASPaLM: Continued from Page 2)

pathologists become careful and prudent about where those funds are spent. It is only when World Congresses are held in conjunction with local or other international meetings is the Congress successful.

While WASPaLM maintains close connections with WHO and ISO, WASPaLM must fund WHO meeting attendance. The College of American Pathologists funds the attendance of the Administrator of the *Council on World Standards* at ISO meetings. While the costs keep WASPaLM "at the table" in these important forums, our member organizations have not made any use of these contacts. We hear nothing from our member societies about important developing ISO standards (e.g. 15189).

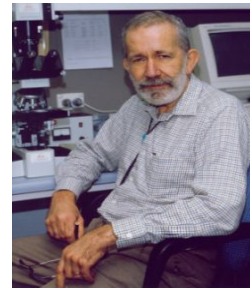
(continued on page 4)



Robin Warren Awarded Nobel Prize

The Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA), a Constituent Society of the World Association of Societies of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, is delighted and excited to advise that in 2005 a Fellow of the College, **Robin Warren**, was awarded (with a co-researcher) a Nobel Prize for the discovery that *Helicobacter pylori* plays a role in gastritis and peptic ulcers.

In 1995 the College recognised Robin's work with the coveted 'Distinguished Fellow Award'. Previous to this the last Australian to win a Nobel Prize was Peter Doherty (an Honorary Fellow of the College) for Medicine in 1996.



Professor Robin Warren



WASPALM Progress in Pathology: Educational Program in Bangalore, India

Dr. Robbie Bacchus, United Kingdom

The third WASPALM sponsored educational event will take place at the St John's Medical College Campus – Bangalore India from 1st – 3rd February 2006. The theme of this meeting will be “**Progress in Pathology – An International Update**”

Patient-centred Histopathology.
Advances in Molecular Pathology
Renal Biopsy Interpretation.
Pathology Laboratory Output and Error. Avoidance in Hisopathology.
Endoscopic Biopsy Interpretation in Inflammatory Bowl Disease.
Gastrointestinal Stromal Tumours.
Non Small Cell Lung Carcinoma
DCIS – Current Concepts
Problematic Melanocytic Lesions
Skin Adnexal Tumars
Paediatric Soft Tissue Tumours
Liver Disease in Infancy and Childhood
Quality Control in Cervical Screening
Problems in Prostatic Needle Biopsy Interpretation

There will also be slide seminars on salivary gland tumours, non neoplastic lung disease and vesiculobullous lesions of the skin. Further details can be obtained from Robby Bacchus at kathryn.morris@rcpath.org or professorisihagarg@hotmail.com.

(Future of WASPALM: Continued from Page 3)

Finally, while considerable attention has been given to enhancing the web site, it does not appear to be used by member societies as either a forum for exchange of ideas or as a source of information. We, thus, have WASPALM expending considerable funds annually for what appears to be little benefit either for WASPALM itself or its member societies.

Society dues are too small (US\$400 annually for constituent societies) to sustain WASPALM. Contributions, primarily from Japanese laboratory corporations, have sustained WASPALM for several years, but with incorporation, increased international participation by WASPALM, and expansion of the web site,

(continued on page 6)



The International Health Care Ethics Colloquium

Georgetown University, Washington D.C.

October 2005

William Zeiler, M.D., Past President, WASPaLM

The International Health Care Ethics Colloquium was held at Georgetown University, Washington D.C. especially honoring **Edmund Pellegrino, M.D.**, Professor Emeritus of Medicine and Ethics, Senior Research Scholar, Kennedy Institute of Ethics, and Professor of Philosophy, Georgetown University.

There was a preponderance of the seventy-one attendees from Georgetown University and Medical Center, including many clerics, although many countries were represented. The meeting included a wide range of related topics beginning with a methodological review of bioethics presented by **Roberto Dell'Oro, Ph.D.** of Loyola University, Los Angeles. Dr. Dell'Oro analyzed the history of bioethics and offered three shifts in paradigms: classical, modern and post-modern. He discussed developing relationships in religion, morality, and health care. A discussion of "The Embryo Question, Justice and Nascent Human Life" given by **Robert George, Ph.D.** of Princeton University, was largely a moral discussion on the humanity of the embryo.

The second day a variety of topics were presented, in a symposium on Culture and Bioethics beginning with **Nuela Kenny, M.D.** of Canada, who discussed Canadian medical ethics relationships with the U.S.A. **Wolfgang Renner, M.D., DMSc.** discussed the problem of HIV in Africa, successful interventions and ethics "what works and what does not". Next, **John Harvey, M.D.** presented a round table discussion of geographic perspectives with speakers representing Germany, Argentina, Australia, Japan, and the U.S.A. The afternoon began with a review of religious considerations in bioethics by **Kevin T. Fitzgerald, SJ, Ph. D.** with a panel discussion of Hindu and Christian views. Next, **Carol Taylor, CSFN, Ph. D.**, conducted an open discussion concerning the above two panels with questions and comments from the participants. **Solomon Banatur, MBChB**, of Capetown, South Africa discussed global health in an interdependent world. He emphasized the great economic differences in Africa and the rest of the world and its effect on health care.

On the third day, **F. Daniel Davis, Ph.D.** presented "Moral Pedagogy" a review of a talk he has given to many medical student groups, and one, which I feel, should be heard by every medical student. He reminds students that they must be continually introspective to equip themselves morally and ethically to relate to patients. Dr. Pellegrino then further discussed clinical ethics and how it may be used practically to improve and validate medical care. He emphasized the importance of medical ethics committees.

Carol Taylor, CSFN, Ph.D., Ann Neall, Ph.D. and Laura Bishop, Ph.D. separately discussed additional ethical topics, one of which can be found at bishop@georgetown.edu. On the final day, **Kathleen Neill, DNSc**, presented "Research Ethics", the current research landscape, foundational ethics for research and current research issues, and regulatory and compliance environment and new initiatives.

Dr. Taylor then presented an open discussion of an institutional case of a leukemic child from South America without insurance or other funds, brought to Georgetown Hospital, with the family insisting on a bone marrow transplant, the exorbitant cost of which would seriously deplete the hospital's finances for a procedure of doubtful outcome. An administrator estimated that eighteen hospital employees would have to be released to fund this unreimbursed procedure. This caused much discussion with the final information that the hospital did allow the procedure.

Dr. Taylor then gave a summation of the colloquium which was well received with universal approval and applause by the participants.



WASPALM SPONSORSHIP OF LATIN AMERICAN MEETINGS

FIRST INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON ACCREDITATION IN CLINICAL LABORATORIES



From the left to right you can see: Jose Luiz León Vega (ALAPAC President), Luisane Vieira (the lecturer), Mário Flávio, Wilson Scholnik, Blanca Steffano (WASPALM Representative), Raquel Balleste (SUPAC - Sociedade Uruguaya de Patologia Clinca President).

The First International Workshop on Accreditation was held in Montevideo, Uruguay, on October 28th /29th, 2005.

Sponsored by WASPALM this workshop was locally organized by the Sociedad Uruguaya de Patología Clínica, and had the support from the Brazilian Society of Clinical Pathology. Dr. Wilson Scholnik, WASPALM member of the Commission of World Standards and Accreditation Secretariat, was the workshop coordinator. There were 80 attendees to the workshop including important members of Uruguayan Society; directors of private and public laboratories, professors of the Medical School at the University of Montevideo and government officials.

A Forum was organized at the end of the classes, which has decided on the steps towards establishing an Accreditation System in Uruguay. Dr. Jose Luis Leon Vega, president of the Latin American Association of Clinical Pathology / Laboratory Medicine – ALAPAC, did attend to this meeting and he is very likely to make the necessary arrangements so that this same course can take place in Peru

and in Ecuador in the year to come. During this workshop, Dr. Mario Flavio Alcantara represented WASPALM.

THE BRAZILIAN CONGRESS OF CLINICAL PATHOLOGY AND LABORATORY MEDICINE

The Brazilian Congress of Clinical Pathology and Laboratory Medicine was held in the city of Sao Paulo, October 19-22, 2005. In order to comply with the WASPALM solicitation, organizers of the Brazilian Congress have agreed to offer free registration to pathologists from Latin American countries. Thank to this gesture, there were attendees from Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Cuba and Mexico.

This event is the largest meeting on Laboratory Medicine in Latin America. There were 4 grand lectures, 24 workshops, 120 classes/conferences, 110 expositors and a total of 5.500 participants.

WASPALM was represented by our president, Dr. Marilene Melo, who has delivered a lecture on Ethics in the Clinical Laboratory, and by our director at large Dr. Mario Flavio Alcantara, who has been praised as President of Honor of the Congress.

(Future of WASPALM: Continued from Page 4)

WASPALM finds itself with dwindling resources. It is estimated that WASPALM operations can be funded for another 4-5 years, but within that time we must develop an ongoing funding scheme. That will be one of the central topics of discussion for the Bureau at its meeting in July 2006.

Over the last 4 years WASPALM has grown into a mature international organization with a clearly defined purpose and the necessary legitimacy among professional societies, governmental organizations and NGOs to speak persuasively for pathology worldwide. For all of that progress, WASPALM appears yet to be perceived as an organization of significant value to societies and even individual pathologists internationally. Thus, in the next 4-5 years, WASPALM must find secure and ongoing funding, promote an image internationally of an organization capable of assisting national and international organizations, and establish closer ties to organizations that include substantial numbers of non-physician laboratorians.