

ESONT Annual Meeting Preview

This year's annual meeting of ESONT, held in conjunction with the Annual meeting of the ESCRS in Lisbon, will provide a valuable update on the increasingly varied role of nurses and technicians in the modern ophthalmic practice. In addition to free paper sessions, posters and videos, the meeting will offer a range of wetlabs and courses providing instruction on biometry, phacoemulsification, refractive surgery diagnostic procedures, retinal fundus imaging and angiography, and the use of the slit-lamp.

Refractive Surgery

The meeting's first free paper session, chaired by Nikos Astyrakakis, Greece, Pedro Melo, Portugal and Helen Pointer, UK, will examine the role of the nurse and technician in refractive surgery.

Beginning the session will be Therese Keber, Sweden, who will describe the tasks of the ophthalmic nurse in the laser surgery department, following a patient's progress from the first visit, through wave-front examinations, and on to the actual laser surgery and postoperative follow-up examinations.

Wendy Rossi, USA, will follow with a review of the history of refractive surgery in the US Navy. She will discuss the creation of the US Navy's refractive surgery program and the results of their current studies involving the treatment of high myopia with a variety of lasers, microkeratomes and phakic IOLs.

Anita Robertson, Sweden, will then describe the various ways contact lenses are used in connection with and refractive surgery. She will present examples with some case-reports where contact-lenses have been required before and/or after refractive surgery, or as an alternative to refractive surgery in patients who are unsuitable for such procedures.

Mikaela Taube, Sweden, will present the two year results of a prospective clinical study involving patients implanted with the PRL (Phakic Refractive Lens), including her own observations regarding postoperative evaluation of eyes with the new lenses.

Concluding the session will be Gert Princen, Belgium, who will set out to prove that it is possible to implement ISO (International Organisation of Standardisation) 9001:2000 standards and requirements in an ophthalmic practice. He will also seek to demonstrate that adopting the ISO standards adds value to an ophthalmic practice, not only for the doctors, but also for their co-workers and the patients.

The Ophthalmic Nurse

The second session of the meeting, chaired by Helen Pointer, UK, Stephen Selindh, Sweden, and Heather Waterman, UK, will turn its focus towards the role of the ophthalmic nurse in improving the efficiency and quality of care at ophthalmic centres.

Kirsten Falsig, Denmark, will commence the session with an assessment of cataract patient satisfaction at her centre after the introduction of new routines in the preoperative information, nurse-preformed examinations, and care on the day of surgery.

Maija-Kaarina Blixt, Finland, will provide some tips for nurses who are helping and supporting the child and the family with examinations of the child. She will show how the use of toys, pictures and music can amuse and distract the child prior to and during a variety of ocular examinations.

Ana Veiga, Portugal, will suggest how measures can be taken to promote personalised support for patients and their families in a perioperative setting. Continuing on the same theme, Juliat

Burns, UK, will suggest ways of streamlining a patients' journey through the health system by reducing the number of referrals a patient requires before they present at a nurse-led medical pre-operative assessment clinic.

Päivi Heinola, Finland, will describe a project of Helsinki University Eye Hospital designed to increase nurses' knowledge about the pain management of ophthalmic outpatients and improve the quality of nursing care.

Afterwards, there will follow several presentations regarding the role of the ophthalmic nurse in specific clinical situations.

Helena Kaasalainen, Finland, will discuss the nursing process of the patient with eye perforation, Irene Bartha Johansson, Sweden, will describe postoperative measures taken by ophthalmic nurses after cataract procedures, and Katie Pedwell, UK, will provide further insight into the postoperative management of phacoemulsification cataract surgery by the ophthalmic nurse practitioner.

Emphasising the patient-centred approach, Bente Due, Denmark, will illustrate how quality of care may be improved through special dialogue meetings with hospital staff and patients who have gone through cataract surgery.

Kazue Okuyama, Japan, will show how a specially designed hospital rotation system can be used to measure a patient's IOP throughout the day. Jaana Lunnela, Finland, will present results of a survey into patients' compliance with glaucoma medications.

Highlighting the advantages of modern computer technology, Åsa Dahlin, Sweden, will discuss RetiNet, a locally developed nurse-led programme for the screening, diagnostic evaluation, and post-laser follow up of patients with diabetic retinopathy.

The final session of the Meeting, chaired by Nikos Astyrakakis, Greece, Pedro Melo Portugal, and Stephen Selindh, Sweden, will focus on the expanding role of the ophthalmic nurse in diagnostics, in emergency wards and in the surgical theatre.

Pilar Collado, Spain, will describe how an ophthalmic clinic might provide a more sensitive means of determining a patient's fitness to drive. Margarita Acebal, Spain, will discuss immersion biometry as an alternative to optical and contact biometry. Helen Pointer, UK, will discuss the many "minor" procedures that an ophthalmic nurse practitioner will currently carry out in UK hospitals.

Turning to the role of the surgical nurse, Mina Ward, UK, will explore the several ways in which the ophthalmic unit were able to increase their surgical volume by developing the skills of surgical nurses. Leonie van Dijk-Kool, The Netherlands, will describe how to create a cataract centre that makes it possible to perform surgery on as many patients as possible, and at the same time reduce patients' fears and anxieties.

The session concludes with a presentation from Carol Ruehl, USA, who will provide an update on the aetiology, prevention and treatment of TASS (Toxic Anterior Segment Syndrome) after cataract and refractive surgery.

Video Competition

This year for the first time there will be an ESONT Video Competition at the Lisbon Meeting. Prize winners will be announced during the Opening & Awards Ceremony of the ESCRS Congress on Sunday at 18.30. The video submissions will be available for viewing in the Video Library, Pavilion 3.