

# From the Editors

**Paul Rosen, FRCS, FRCOphth**



Congratulations to everyone who participated in Lisbon 2005: another record attendance with nearly 4,600 delegates. Despite the attractions of Lisbon and Portugal the auditoria were full particularly for the symposia, live surgery and the Ridley Medal Lecture, "Exploding Refractive Myths delivered brilliantly by Paddy Condon of Ireland. We would like to thank those who made presentations, the chairmen of the

symposia, Mary D'Ardis and the team from the ESCRS office in Dublin, and our commercial partners, without whom the Congress would be a much less significant event.

The ESCRS launched the Refractive Surgery Outcomes Information System which will be online from January 1st, 2006. There will be training sessions and demonstrations at the Winter Refractive Meeting in Monte Carlo in February. This system will provide audit data for surgeons, on an individual and confidential basis, on their refractive practice and by combining all the data, will allow us to produce a "point of reference" for Europe. Such a system will become essential as the prospect of regulation appears and participation in it demonstrates to prospective patients a high level of responsibility of the surgeon and clinic.

In the UK regulation is proceeding with the Parliament due to debate the issue at the end of October. There is likely to be a training curriculum and exam set by the College of Ophthalmologists: grandfather rights will be given but everyone performing refractive surgery will have to take this examination

regardless of experience or reputation. Such regulation could enhance patient confidence and benefit everyone. However it is not clear how much this exercise will cost and more worrying will be the requirement to pay a "bond" to cover treatment of complications in the NHS / Government Healthcare system. This could act as a disincentive to refer patients with problems and sets a very significant and dangerous precedent. We would appreciate your views on this.

The ESCRS can contribute to the educational part of this process and could offer a training package including the Refractive Surgery Didactic Course, the DVD and two wet labs using the candidates chosen laser and microkeratome platforms. The setting of standards and assessment is solely the remit of the Royal College of Ophthalmologists.

The Lisbon Congress hosted the first meeting of the European Council. This initiative of the ESCRS saw the first ever meeting of the Presidents of European National Ophthalmology and Cataract and Refractive Societies. The meeting was very well attended and the group was very enthusiastic about the prospect of

greater communication and cooperation between members of the European Ophthalmology Community.

The Winter Refractive Meeting in Monte Carlo introduces a new initiative with a pre-congress Cornea Day on Friday, February 9th, 2006. The programme for this day will concentrate on medical management of corneal disease as well as surgery and is a very much welcomed addition to the meeting. Similarly, ESCRS has assumed the administration of the European Society of Retina Specialists (EURETINA). The synergy created by this association will further advance the educational possibilities. Finally, the Society has issued Endophthalmitis guidelines which give a very comprehensive review and we look forward to the publication of the results of the ESCRS Endophthalmitis Clinical Trial next year.

There are a lot of exciting projects coming to fruition for our Society: in education, training and research which is good news for all our members and for the wider world of ophthalmology.