

Progress of International Scientific Summer School in Turkey from 2007 to 2010: on the eve of 2014 event

The need for research training is well recognised and acknowledged by academic faculty members and their students, residents and fellows (1-3). Though there are dedicated fellowship programs, which provide the research training to fellows through mentoring or involvement in clinical research programs, the broader audience of physicians and residents in training are lacking such experience (4-6). As medicine has become “evidence-based”, it is crucial for physicians to understand and follow the constantly renewing knowledge presented in published literature, specifically clinical trials and meta-analysis, systematic reviews, which form the basis for guidelines for clinical practice (7-10). Clinical societies that provide certification in their specialties have included the requirement of scholarly activity for certification in parallel with development of different courses and types of research training (11-15). The studies demonstrated high satisfaction of graduates of specialty programs, even they did not pursue research carrier (6). Having the experience of work as an editor of cardiology journal, faculty of the International Scientific Summer School (ISSS) and exchanging opinions with editors of international journals, the main observation is that many young researchers who author articles in scientific biomedical journals lack knowledge on formulating the research question of their study, and accordingly have difficulty of designing, analysing and using proper language in presenting and discussing their data.

From this perspective, the ISSS provides a unique opportunity of interactive training on how to design the research project, conduct it, and present it in an article in a biomedical peer-review journal.

The ISSS initiative has been started in 2006 by the Journal Electrocardiology (JECG) and the Croatian Journal of Medicine and then joined by the Anatolian Journal of Cardiology (AKD) in 2007 (16-19). The curricula and methods of research training are published elsewhere (6). In 2007 the summer school was organised by the Anatolian Journal of Cardiology in Silivri, Istanbul, Turkey with faculty members represented by JECG (Ljuba Bacharova, Galen Wagner), Croatian Medical Journal (Sasa Misak and Ana Ivanis) AKD (Bilgin Timu-

ralp and Gulmira Kudaiberdieva) and participants from Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey. The next summer school in Turkey was distinguished by broader geographic representation of participants - Albania, Austria, Egypt, Hong Kong, Slovakia, Turkey and USA, as well as Faculty. In 2010 the ISSS in Turkey took place in Gebze, training facility of TUBITAK in Istanbul Turkey, the faculty included editors of JECG - Galen Wagner and Ljuba Bacharova and AKD - Bilgin Timuralp and Gulmira Kudaiberdieva, and Balkan Medical Journal - Mustafa Inan and faculty members: Samuel Bell - USA, Oben Baysan - Gulhane Military Medical Academy, Ankara, Turkey, Nina Hakacova - Children's Hospital, Lund, Sweden, Temel Kerem and Ugur Mert - Osmangazi University, Eskisehir, Turkey.

Participants' of both summer schools included residents in training, and junior faculty members in different subspecialties in medicine, biology, biomedical and computer engineering. Overall, overwhelming progress has been made by participants of both summer schools in Turkey in their scholarly activity - the number of participants who have published articles increased by 32% (before ISSS 56% had published research and after ISSS - 78% has earned publication) and number of publications in peer-reviewed journals increased more than 100%. The detailed analysis on outcome of overall ISSS training is on the way, the number of articles published by participants of both summer schools in Turkey is 203, and the number of citations increased up to 464, which shows that published research has received scientific acknowledgement. The participants not only improved their scholarly activity but also acquired teaching experience serving as Faculty member and facilitators in summer schools - 2008-2013 and extended their experience in international collaboration, working in teams and English language skills, and have acquired the directions for further self-study and development. Though we have not performed a survey study of participants of summer schools, the feedback we continue receiving is their willingness to participate for the second time in ISSS, designed for further advanced research training, which means the method of teaching has been embraced by most. We believe the par-

Address for Correspondence: Gulmira Kudaiberdieva MD FESC, Guzelyali Distr 81211 Str Ozcan Apt 1/1 Adana Turkey
Phone: +90 322 248 77 35 e-mail: gk2009@usa.net

Correspondence for Journal of Electrocardiology: Dr. Galen Wagner, MD - galen.wagner@duke.edu, Ljuba Bacharova, MD - Bacharova@ilc.sk

Correspondence for the Anatolian Journal of Cardiology: Dr. Bilgin Timuralp, MD, EFESC - bilgintimuralp@yahoo.com, btimur@ogu.edu.tr

Correspondence for Balkan Medical Journal: Dr. Mustafa Inan, Department of Pediatric Surgery, Trakya University Faculty of Medicine, Edirne, Turkey
Phone: +90 505 527 13 89 e-mail: mustafainan@trakya.edu.tr

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ticipants who are already enrolled in fellowship training received deeper insight in research in addition to training they have been already receiving at their departments and provided by their supervisors as well, and those who selected clinical practice can use the knowledge they acquired for their self-education and following and understanding medical literature and implementing the best clinical practice recommendation provided in guidelines.

In addition, the ISSS provides platform for Faculty from different countries for exchange and sharing knowledge and forming basis for further collaboration.

This year ISSS will be held in Enez, Edirne and will be hosted by Balkan Medical Journal (joined by JECG and AKD) and faculty of ISSS and participants look forward for new exciting experience.

Gulmira Kudaiberdieva, MD, FESC
Faculty of ISSS,
Former Editor of the Anatolian Journal of Cardiology

Galen Wagner, MD
Editor-in-Chief
Journal of Electrocardiology

Ljuba Bacharova, MD, DSc
Editor
Journal of Electrocardiology

Bilgin Timuralp, MD, EFESC
Editor-in-Chief
The Anatolian Journal of Cardiology

Mustafa İnan, MD
Section Editor
Balkan Medical Journal

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