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EUROSON 2019 welcomes world of ultrasound

Initiatives to expand the meeting globally

Prof. Sidhu, talks to Healthmanagement.org about EUROSON 2019 and EFSUMB initiatives in the pipeline.



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EFSUMB and FESUMB welcome the imaging and ultrasound community to Granada for EUROSON 2019. This year EUROSON will be held simultaneously with the XXX Annual Meeting of AEED (Asociación Española de Ecografía Digestiva) and the 35th International Course of SEUS (Sociedad Española de Ultrasonidos). What highlights can physicians look forward to?

The congress will be held in Granada this year, which is a splendid city with a magnificent history. The conference centre is well designed to accommodate a large manufacturing industry exhibition. The conference halls are nicely arranged around the congress centre itself to allow delegates easy access. There are many different sites to visit in Granada, but hopefully the programme that we have arranged for the EUROSON congress will keep all delegates within the congress hall at all times.

The conference centre is excellent with good facilities, and we have up to six parallel sessions each day at the conference, over three days.

At the EUROSON 2019 congress we will launch the newly published, non-liver elastography guidelines, which go through all the various areas for which elastography can be used outside of the liver. This will be one of the highlights of the meeting. These guidelines are very comprehensive and we are confident that once again EFSUMB has produced a world-leading set of guidelines on the use of this new technique. In addition, we will also publicise the most recent publication of the gastrointestinal ultrasound guidelines which are due to be released very shortly in *Ultraschall in der Medizin* and this is a part of a series of components dealing with gastrointestinal ultrasound again hopefully will be well received.

There will be discussions on all aspects concerning ultrasound, from gynaecology, liver, small parts,

physics, safety right through to the newest advances in contrast-enhanced ultrasound (CEUS). Breakthroughs from new scientific evidence will be presented in the scientific sessions. In addition, we will have a Young Investigators section where the cream of the young investigator participants of the European societies will battle it out for the chance to win a substantial prize awarded to the best investigator. This is a very popular section of the meeting.

This year we have arranged between European Society of Radiology and EFSUMB that we repeat certain sessions presented during the ECR 2019. Essentially the topics are unchanged, and we are introducing these topics to a different audience on this occasion.

At EUROSON 2019 you will be chairing the session: "Ultrasound simulation models in training and ultrasound: where are we going?" Which technical procedures do you see applied in a radiology curriculum?

There's a lot of simulation-based scanning at the moment, and it's really the abdominal and pelvic imaging that's becoming quite popular, including intracavity ultrasound, transvaginal and transvaginal procedures that can be usefully applied using these stimulation models as a basis to teach people. The country that's doing most of this work, at the moment, is Denmark. It's quite exciting because the studies have shown that simulators work just as well when applied in training as do live models and of course the benefit is that this is not live patient-dependent and it's uniform, so it's a good aspect for education particularly early in the learning process.

You have dedicated sessions and lectures on safety presenting a line-up of 'hot topics' such

as “10 tips of safety” and “which interactions could occur.” Which aspects of safety assurance do you consider most important?

Certainly safety is a very important issue with the use of ultrasound. Many practitioners pick up the ultrasound transducer and start using it without giving much attention to the fact that even though ultrasound is a very safe technique there are issues surrounding safety, particularly with the newer more sophisticated aspects of ultrasound, such as Contrast Enhanced Ultrasound and the more recent use of Elastography.

If you put a push pulse of elastography into a structure like the liver, you can raise the temperature, momentarily in that tissue. It is very important to have an understanding of the limitations of your use of ultrasound, and one of the abstracts dealing with nerve block is an area where some of the safety issues surrounding ultrasound use are very important with delicate structures such as nerves.

Another substantial session you are introducing this year is “Professionalism professional standards in ultrasound.” What will be the focus of these presentations?

I hope this session is going to generate a lot of debate. There’s been a lot of discussion in Europe, over a number of years, about who should be performing ultrasound. There are two viewpoints here, one viewpoint that is held by many European countries and a number of other countries across the world, that it should only be a physician-led tool. But countries such as United Kingdom, Canada, The United States of America, Australia and New Zealand and some South East Asian countries, non-physicians perform ultrasound.

These are highly trained technicians who perform ultrasound all the time to produce images for either physicians to report, or these technicians produce a report themselves. A lot of physicians, in countries such as Germany and Italy, feel that it should be a

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physician-led and interpreted service and it's an extension of the clinical examination. This subject was brought to a head, a couple of years ago, with an editorial in *Ultraschall in der Medizin*, which outlined the practice across the world of different countries; some using non-physician sonographers or technicians to perform the ultrasound and other countries relying solely on physicians to perform ultrasound. So, this session will open up, hopefully, a debate.

I will be presenting the United Kingdom viewpoint where sonographers or technicians have been doing ultrasound for over 40 years and they are a great asset to the National Health Service, where we are almost overwhelmed with the number of examinations that need to be performed. We will present other viewpoints where ultrasound is seen as a valuable extension of the clinical examination and a very important clinical tool in the right hands. It is going to be an interesting debate and I'm sure there are going to be many opinions from the different ends of the spectrum regarding this aspect of the practice of ultrasound.

What are the new initiatives you are working on with EFSUMB?

In this meeting in EUROSON, the Board of Delegates will be presented with constitutional changes to enact the previous points we discussed regarding opening up the membership and changing the infrastructure of the society. This is an important meeting to take this initiative forward and hopefully if this is voted and approved, we will see a different society emerging over the next couple of years.

We are also launching a number of new initiatives. In particular, we are working on many new guidelines including specific ones for point-of-care-ultrasound (POCUS), musculoskeletal guidelines and continuing with the renowned gastrointestinal guidelines. Assessment of the gastrointestinal tract will be the fifth and sixth set of new guidelines. This compliments the recently published statement on the use of handheld ultrasound devices.

Looking to the future, we are working on restructuring the society itself, hopefully opening up to more membership, not just in Europe, but across the world and making it a very attractive organisation in ultrasound education throughout the world. In addition, we are looking at the EUROSON Congress trying to upgrade it and update it to make it more attractive worldwide to physicians and people interested in ultrasound.

Exciting times! With even more improvement

planned for the future, we are very excited about the potential to opening up the society in general, helping to spread good practice, information and sharing expertise.

What role does ultrasound play in precision medicine and personalised care?

The areas of personalised care and precision medicine are with our ultrasound community at the moment. We are working with precision targeting- with targeting microbubbles for prostate cancer, or targeting it to thrombus, but this is very much in the early stages and is not really a clinical tool as yet.

Ultrasound contrast in children is now becoming more established. There'll be some sessions on paediatrics and this will incorporate contrast-enhanced ultrasound. We are working, at EFSUMB, towards increasing the use of contrast in children, this is a slow process but hopefully we will progress at this meeting.

This year at EUROSON 2019, you are introducing: "EFSUMB meets China" for the first time.

One of the things I do want to highlight at this meeting of EUROSON 2019 is that we inaugurate "EFSUMB meets China," which is an important initiative for EFSUMB. China is the most populous country in the world. In China the practitioners of ultrasound perform all aspects of ultrasound and only ultrasound. They are highly skilled and bring extensive knowledge to the ultrasound community. Furthermore, they are very interested in the educational opportunities offered by EFSUMB, not just only for providing the guidelines but also in attending the EUROSON meeting. This year, for the first time, we have invited three very eminent Chinese doctors who will deliver presentations in combination with EFSUMB. Hopefully we will see more collaboration.

In addition, EFSUMB has started conducting EUROSON schools in China; last year we were involved with a EUROSON school in Hong Kong, which was very successful. Later on this year, or hopefully next year, we will have a second EUROSON school, possibly in Beijing or Shanghai- which will have a combination of Chinese and European speakers, and take this aspect forward in a manner of collaboration. The transfer of knowledge is both ways.

EUROSON 2019 will be a big meeting for us constitutional wise so hopefully we will be successful in altering some of the structure. We are very pleased in the direction we're going to head. ■