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Report from the Third Conference in Zielona Góra: palliative medicine, supportive care, and pain management

The Third Conference in Zielona Góra: palliative medicine, supportive care, and pain management was held in Zielona Góra, Poland, on 6th–7th September 2024 and organized by Professor Jacek Łuczak, Polish Association for Palliative Care and Chair of Palliative Medicine, Institute of Medical Sciences, Collegium Medicum, and University of Zielona Góra. The logistic organizer was SympoMed limited liability company. The Honorary Patronage for the Conference was from Lubuskie Voivodeship Marshal Marcin Jabłoński, His Magnificence Rector of the University of Zielona Góra Professor Wojciech Strzyżewski, and Karol Marcinkowski University Hospital in Zielona Góra limited liability company. The Media Patronage for the Conference was from “Puls of Medicine” and “World of Medicine and Pharmacy”.

At 9 am on the 6th of September 2024, prof. Wojciech Leppert, Head of the Chair of Palliative Medicine at Institute of Medical Sciences, Collegium Medicum, University of Zielona Góra, opened the Conference and welcomed all participants and guests. On behalf of His Magnificence Rector of the University Zielona Góra Professor Wojciech Strzyżewski, Her Magnificence Vice-Rector of the University of Zielona Góra for Science and International Cooperation prof. dr hab. engineering sciences Justyna Patalas-Maliszewska welcomed all lecturers and participants. Then an Inaugural Lecture was presented by prof. dr med. Christoph Ostgathe,

Head of the Department of Palliative Medicine Friedrich-Alexander-University in Erlangen in Germany entitled “Assisted dying — an international perspective”.

The first plenary session was chaired by dr hab. med. Renata Zajączkowska prof. of the University of Rzeszów and entitled “**Treatment of cancer patients with pain**”. The first speaker in this session was prof. dr hab. med. Jerzy Wordliczek from the Pain Clinic at University Hospital in Kraków who presented a lecture entitled “Why patients after completion of anti-cancer treatment experience pain”. The Lecturer submitted epidemiology and the most frequent mechanisms of pain in cancer survivors after successful anticancer treatment. Persistent pain after surgery and consequences of anticancer treatment are the most frequent reasons for referrals of this patient population treatment to pain clinics. The next speaker was dr hab. med. Renata Zajączkowska, prof. University of Rzeszów from a Department of Rescue Medicine and Intensive Care of the University of Rzeszów and Collegium Medicum Jagiellonian University in Kraków. She presented the topic “Opioid-induced hyperalgesia”. We have heard the definition, pathophysiology, and possibilities of correction of pain after appropriate diagnosis of hyperalgesia. The next topic in this session was “The role of interventional techniques in the treatment of cancer patients with pain”. This lecture was presented by dr hab. med. Małgorzata Malec-Milewska,

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Palliative Medicine in Practice 2024; 18, 3: 181–183

Copyright © 2024 Via Medica, ISSN 2545-0425, e-ISSN 2545-1359

DOI: 10.5603/pmp.102558

Received: 12.09.2024 Accepted: 26.09.2024

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prof. Postgraduate Medical Education Center in Warszawa from Pain Clinic and Department of Anesthesiology and Intensive Therapy, Postgraduate Medical Education Center in Warszawa.

After a short break, this session was continued and in this part, we also heard three lectures. The first two were presented by prof. Wojciech Leppert Head of the Chair of Department of Palliative Medicine, Institute of Medical Sciences, Collegium Medicum, University of Zielona Góra. The first topic was "The role of PAMORA in the treatment of opioid-induced bowel dysfunction", and the second was "How to provide optimal treatment of cancer patients with breakthrough pain". The last speaker in this session was dr med. Magdalena Kocot-Kępska from the Department of Study and Treatment of Pain, Chair of Anesthesiology and Intensive Therapy, Collegium Medicum, Jagiellonian University in Kraków, she submitted a topic "Safety and efficacy of combining opioid: an example of oxycodone and sublingual fentanyl — a case report". After lectures, participants could ask questions to all speakers.

After a short discussion next session was started entitled "**Vessel complications in cancer patients**". This session was chaired by prof. dr hab. med. Łukasz Dzieciuchowicz, Head of Chair of Surgery and Vessel Diseases, Institute of Medical Sciences, Collegium Medicum, University of Zielona Góra, who also was the first speaker in this session presenting a lecture entitled "The treatment of cancer patients with venous thromboembolism disease". Afterwards, we have heard an electronic video presentation by prof. dr hab. med. Andrzej Szuba entitled "Lymphoedema in cancer patients — pathophysiology and management". This session was completed with the lecture of dr hab. ph. cult. sci. Katarzyna Ochałek, prof. Physical Education Academy in Kraków "A comparison of multilayer bandaging with innovative compression therapy among women after treatment of breast cancer". After lectures, the possibility of asking questions was provided to participants.

After a lunch break, a session entitled "**Integration of supportive care with oncology**" was started, which was chaired by dr med. Izabela Łasińska from the Department of Nursing, Institute of Health Sciences, Collegium Medicum, University of Zielona Góra and from the Department of Clinical and Experimental Oncology, Institute of Oncology of Medical University in Poznań. The first speaker was dr hab. med. Leszek Gottwald, prof. of the Medical University of Łódź, who submitted a topic "The role of radiotherapy in the treatment of patients with oligometastatic disease". Afterwards dr hab. med. Marek Szwiec from the Chair of Surgery and Oncology, Institute of Medical Sciences, Collegium Medicum, University of Zielona

Góra presented the lecture "Progress in the hormonal therapy of cancer patients". The Chair of this session dr med. Izabela Łasińska submitted the topic "Adverse events of systemic anticancer treatment with palliative intent". The last lecture in this session was presented by prof. Wojciech Leppert „Integration of supportive care with oncology — PAL-CYCLES Project". Topics of this session induced much interest among the audience who posed many questions. A practical approach to topics allowed the possibility of confronting knowledge with clinical practice.

The last session of the first day of the Conference was held with the title "**Pediatric palliative care**". This session was chaired by dr hab. med. Maciej Niedźwiedzki from the Chair and Department of Pediatrics, Hematology and Oncology for Children of the Medical University of Gdańsk. In the first lecture, the Chair of this session submitted a topic "Specifics of pediatric palliative care". The next speaker was Father dr Filip Buczyński OFM from A Little Prince Lubelskie Hospice for Children. He presented a lecture "Palliative care in a prenatal hospice". The last topic submitted by dr med. Aleksandra Korzeniewska-Eksterowicz from the Laboratory of Pediatric Palliative Care of the Department of Pediatrics, Oncology, and Hematology for Children of the Medical University in Łódź was "An impact of the experience of the perinatal loss on a woman's life".

After completion of four sessions of lectures, three workshops have been held concurrently. The first workshop "**Analgesics interactions**" was led by dr hab. med. Jarosław Woron. A second workshop was led by the team of dr hab. med. Dariusz Bazaliński, prof. University of Rzeszów who submitted interactively the topic "**Prophylaxis and treatment of pressure sores**", whereas dr hab. ph. cult. sci. Katarzyna Ochałek, prof. Physical Education Academy in Kraków led the workshop "**The treatment of lymphoedema**". All workshops induced much interest from participants. The practical approach to topics and the large experience of leaders caused the completion of the first day of the Conference late in the evening.

On early Saturday morning, started the next day of the Third Conference in Zielona Góra. The first session on that day was chaired by prof. Wojciech Leppert. During this session, four **presentations accepted by the Scientific Committee of the Conference** have been submitted. MSc in psychology Katarzyna Gacek from the Department of Therapy of Neurosis in Leszno submitted a review of "Factors of development of complicated bereavement after the death of cancer patients". Prof. dr hab. of social sciences Jerzy Kochanowicz from the

Academy of WSB in Dąbrowa Górnicza submitted the European Project “The importance of international and interdisciplinary cooperation in improving quality of palliative care education — presentation of the Project Cost Action 22127: COLlaboratively DEVELOped culturally APPropriate and inclusive ASsessment tool for Palliative Care EDUCation”. The third presentation was entitled: “Virtual reality as a form of support patients after anticancer treatment — analysis of a pilot study using NlightninVR system”. This study was presented by dr med. Janusz Wojtacki from Hospice Foundation and from Eugeniusz Dutkiewicz Hospice in Gdańsk. The last presentation was submitted by dr Grzegorz Lorocho. He discussed the Project “Quality of life assessment in palliative care cancer patients in the home, stationary, and ambulatory setting”.

The next session of the second day of proceedings was chaired by prof. dr hab. med. Jakub Pawlikowski from the Department of Humanities and Social Medicine of the Medical University of Lublin. The topic of this session was “**Spiritual care for patients and their families support**”. In the first lecture entitled “Elements of spiritual care in clinical recommendations regarding resigning from persistent therapy,” the Chair of the session submitted the spiritual dimension of the care for patients and sources of recommendations for therapeutic teams contained in a document prepared by scientific medical associations. Dr soc. sci. Małgorzata Fopka-Kowalczyk from the Institute of Pedagogical Sciences, Faculty of Philosophy and social Sciences of the Nicolaus Copernicus University of Toruń presented topic “Diagnosis of patients’ spiritual suffering”. The next speaker dr hab. health sciences Beata Dobrowolska, prof. of the Medical University of Lublin presented the topic “From diagnosis to assuagement of patients’ spiritual needs”. The last topic of this session was “Respite care for patients’ families”. This topic was presented by dr social sciences Anna Janowicz from University WSB Merito Gdańsk and aroused much emotion. The session was completed with a talk with lecturers during which participants shared their own experiences from the care for patients.

Dr hab. leg. sci. Małgorzata Serwach, prof. of the University of Łódź and the Medical University of Łódź chaired the session “**Legal aspects of palliative care**”. As the first speaker dr hab. leg. sci. Beata Janiszewska submitted the topic “Palliative care provided for patients unable to express informed consent”. The Chair of the session submitted the topic “Informing close persons about the health status of a patient alive and after death”. The last presentation in this session was submitted by dr med. Leszek Pawłowski from the Department of Palliative Medicine of the Medical Univer-

sity of Gdańsk. The topic of this lecture was “The range of information provided by the physician to a patient with advanced disease”. Issues from the borderline of law and medicine always inclined to a discussion. This was also the case in this session. Lecturers replied to many questions from the audience.

After the break eight session was held “**Progress in pharmacotherapy of chronic pain**” chaired by prof. dr hab. med. Katarzyna Starowicz-Bubak from the Department of Neurochemistry of Maj Institute of Pharmacology, Polish Academy of Sciences in Kraków. The Chair of this session presented a lecture entitled “The role of cannabinoids in the treatment of chronic pain”. Next speaker dr med. Magdalena Kocot-Kępska presented two topics: “The use of cannabinoids in the clinical practice of treatment of patients with chronic pain” and “Do we have new analgesics in pain medicine?”. The session was completed with a lively discussion with lecturers’ participation.

The last two sessions of the conference were held in the form of dialogue between two specialists.

The ninth session: “**Therapeutic management of patients with anxiety, depression, and insomnia — a discussion panel**” was led by dr hab. med. Marcin Siwek, prof. Jagiellonian University in Kraków and dr hab. med. Jarosław Woroń. Problems associated with the appropriate treatment of patients and possible solutions have been daringly submitted by both lecturers. The interactive form of lecturers was also applied in the last session of the conference. Dialog of dr hab. med. Małgorzata Malec-Milewska, prof. CMKP in Warszawa with dr hab. med. Jarosław Woroń, prof. UJ on the topic “**Treatment of patients with chronic pain — studying clinical cases**” traditionally induced large interest. Submission of patients’ medical history and an analysis of methods of treatment with commentaries of these two specialists in pain management gave participants a huge opportunity to gain or strengthen their practical knowledge on this important topic.

The Third Conference in Zielona Góra: palliative medicine, supportive care, and pain management was closed by prof. Wojciech Leppert. He thanked all guests, all participants, sponsors, and patrons of this event and invited all of them to the 2025 Conference in Zielona Góra planned on 26th–27th September 2025.

Article information and declarations

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Funding

None.