

5th World Congress of the International Federation of Head and Neck Oncologic Societies (IFHNOS) and Annual Meeting of the American Head and Neck Society (AHNS)

Date: 26-30 July 2014. **Venue:** New York, USA. **Report by:** George Garas MRCS (Eng), ENT SpR, Nottingham University Hospitals & Honorary Clinical Lecturer, Imperial College London, UK.



(L-R) Professor Christopher Nutting (Royal Marsden), Mr Nigel Beasley (Nottingham University Hospitals), our reporter Dr George Garas, Professor Ashok Shaha (Memorial Sloan Kettering), and Professor Christopher Holsinger (Stanford).



Our reporter Dr George Garas (right) with congress chairman Professor Jatin Shah (Memorial Sloan Kettering).

The 5th World Congress of IFHNOS and Annual Meeting of the AHNS apart from being the largest head and neck congress in history, was also undoubtedly the greatest! More than 3,000 participants attended from around the world.

Keynote speakers included international authorities in Head & Neck Surgical Oncology such as Professors Jatin Shah (USA) who chaired the congress, Ashok Shaha (USA), Christopher Holsinger (USA), Ralph Gilbert (Canada), Patrick Bradley (UK), George Lawson (Belgium), Paolo Miccoli (Italy) and William Wei (Hong Kong), only to mention a few.

The congress covered all aspects of head and neck cancer, including molecular biology, pathology, imaging, surgery, oncology, history, ethics, and nursing. The scientific programme was carefully designed and balanced consisting of keynote addresses, panel discussions, debates, instruction courses, video panels, oral, and e-poster presentations.

In the opening ceremony, the world famous American actor Michael Douglas gave an outstanding speech on his perspective of being a head and neck cancer patient.

Professor Ashok Shaha delivered a series of excellent lectures on thyroid cancer followed by debates on what constitutes "appropriate treatment" and what can be classified as "overtreatment" for differentiated thyroid cancer based on case studies presented followed by multidisciplinary panel discussions.

Another session that generated great interest was "Cost vs

Effectiveness of Novel Surgical Treatments" chaired by Mr. Nigel Beasley from Nottingham University Hospitals. The highlight of the session was the debate between Professor Gregory Weinstein (University of Pennsylvania) arguing for transoral robotic surgery (TORS) and Professor Rene Leemans (VU University Medical Center, Amsterdam) arguing against.

Finally, Professor Christopher Holsinger, as part of the "Robotic Surgery around the World" panel, gave an exceptional presentation on the multi-centre randomised control trials he is leading at Stanford comparing TORS with existing surgical and non-surgical treatment modalities for oropharyngeal cancer. As part of the same panel, Professor George Lawson gave an impressive video presentation on transoral robotic laryngectomy and described the use of a novel robotic system with a flexible camera (Medrobotics®) that overcomes the line-of-sight limitations of existing robotic technology thus providing access to previously inaccessible sites of the upper aerodigestive tract.

The congress saw unprecedented success which, combined with the venue being in Manhattan, made the experience unforgettable!

Web: www.ahns2014.org
Next meeting will be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina from September 1-5, 2018.

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