

**5th Conference of the European Opiate Addiction
Treatment Association.
Maintenance Therapy**

**Evidence-based Practice & Integrated Treatment Approaches
Oslo, Norway, May 14th to 16th, 2002**

The conference, held at the Rica Sjølyst congress centre in the fine city of Oslo, was attended by around 500 international delegates. All countries of Europe were represented and, as usual, we were delighted to welcome colleagues from other parts of the world including USA, Australia, New Zealand and Iran.

The conference was divided into three sections:

- * Maintenance treatment in Europe
- * Evidence-based practice
- * Integrated treatment approaches

Following an introductory lecture on the neurobiological basis for opiate addiction from Mary Jane Kreek of Rockefeller University, USA the first afternoon was devoted to the examination of different national systems in Europe with papers from Scandinavia, The Netherlands, France and central Europe followed by an overview of the differences in European systems presented by Michael Farrell of the Addiction Research Centre, UK.

The second day featured the principles and practice of evidence based maintenance treatment and included recent study results of trials with methadone, buprenorphine, heroin, morphine sulphate, codeine and naltrexone.

Day three considered integrated treatment approaches examining the evidence for the use of psychosocial methods and ways of integrating maintenance and different therapeutic programs. Papers included: "Twelve steps programme and methadone treatment", "Low threshold MMT-evidence for goal attainment" and "Evidence for superior efficacy for an integrated high-threshold programme"

In total 91 papers were presented by delegates from 25 different countries.

The EUROPAD Awards 2002 “Chimera Award”

“Dedicated to all those who dream of a better world for drug addicts”

Chimera was a monster in the Greek mythology: it had a lion head, a goat body and a dragon tail: being a monster, it can well represent drug addiction as a monster that must be defeated.

But, in the poetical language, the term “Chimera” means unrealizable dreams, impossible imaginations: and in this sense, it still well represents the attempt made by doctors of realizing their dream of helping drug addicts.

In both senses, therefore, we can say that some kind of physicians, those who try to treat drug addiction, run after “chimeras”, both to kill the monster, and to realize their dream of helping drug addicts.

Presented by Icro Maremmani and Marc Reisinger

The awards ceremony took place after the conference dinner on May 15.

The winners were:
Marc Auriacombe
Lubomir Okhrulica
Mercedes Lovrecic

Marc Auriacombe is working at the University Victor Segalen of Bordeaux, where he is the coordinator of the Drug Dependence Research Group in the Laboratory of Psychiatry. He is an expert for French National Agencies, WHO (World Health Organization) workgroups, EMCDDA (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction) expert groups. His main areas of interest in drug abuse research are methadone and buprenorphine treatments for maintenance of abstinence, quality of life impact and outcome research issue. Marc Auriacombe works in Bordeaux, in a group that started using buprenorphine for the treatment of heroin dependent individuals in 1986, with Dr. Daulouede and Prod. Tignol. This group is among those that have the largest clinical experience with buprenorphine in France.

Lubomir Okhrulica is director of the Institute and the Centre for Treatment of Drug Dependencies in Bratislava, Slovak Republic, since 1996. At present, he is also Chief Expert for Drug Dependencies at the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic, where he is working on the implementation of new health programmes on national level, especially in the field of risk reduction. The focus of his studies is the pharmacokinetics of opiates and especially of methadone, but also the evaluation of the programmes, the epidemiology of drugs, dual diagnosis associated with dependence, and even prevention.

Mercedes Lovrecic is a psychiatrist, who is working in Slovenia to promote access to the treatment for heroin addicts with psychiatric comorbidity. In 2002 she was a psychiatrist at the Health Centre of Izla, co-founding member and head of Psychiatry and Addiction Medicine Center. After being Director of the Health Center of Izola, Slovenia, where one of the first European Centres for Double Diagnosed Patients treated with methadone is active, at present she is “focal point” of the Institute of Public Health of the Slovenian Republic.

EUROPAD wish to thank The Norwegian Directorate for Health and Social Welfare, Alcohol and Drug Addiction Service/ City of Oslo and the University of Oslo for their valuable financial support and Schering-Plough, Reckitt Benckiser and Meda A/S for sponsoring some of the speakers.

Our particular thanks go to the local Programme Committee, Helge Waal, Olof Blix, Olav Espergren, Reidar Hole, Aud L Krook Gabrielle Welle-Strand and members of the Norwegian National Scientific committee and the International Scientific committee for their expertise and hard work which ensured that the conference was produced to the highest professional standards.

Finally, congratulations to Egil Haga and his administrative team from MARIO for arranging such a successful conference and the people of Oslo for providing such a friendly and efficient setting for our conference.

