Fourth World Heart Failure Congress 2014

Under the patronage of H. H. Sheikh Fatma Bint Mubarak, (Umm Al Amarat) President of Women General Union, Supreme Chancellor of the Family Development Foundation, President of the High Council for Motherhood and Childhood the Fourth World Heart Failure Congress was held on the 11th -13th December at the Danat Resort Hotel, Al-Ain, United Arab Emirates. The Congress was organized by the World Heart Failure Society in association with the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Tawam Hospital and United Arab Emirates University.

During the opening ceremony session, the president of the society expressed gratitude and appreciation to H. H. Sheikh Fatma Bint Mubarak, (Umm Al Amarat) for her patronage and support of the congress. H. E. Dr Matha Al-shamsi, state minister and personal representative of H. H. Sheikh Fatma Bint Mubarak honored the congress opening ceremony.

The congress was a great success having brought together more than 400 participants from 22 countries and organised a total of 57 presentations, including lectures from international experts and locals. It was a unique opportunity for scientific exchange of knowledge and expertise in the field of heart failure. Also, a special emphasis was given to the discussion sessions where people from different background, scientists and clinicians, interacted. Furthermore, the congress opened an avenue for nurses to take part in the discussion and to express their views on the best means for heart failure management.

The congress covered all aspects of heart failure e.g. national and international epidemiology global burden, specific regional issues in patients stratification including data from the Gulf region, Middle East, India, Korea, China and Latin America (Brazil), Europe and USA. This was followed by a detailed discussion and debate on heart failure in Africa, in particular, South Africa, Nigeria, Sudan, Mozambique, and an emphasis was given to the role of hypertension and infection and their association with the syndrome of cardiomyopathy. Another important issue discussed was ‘heart failure registers’ and the importance of their development worldwide as accurate foundation for disease profiling and epidemiological studies. Registers from Africa (THESUS Registry), Japan (OACIS Registry), South Korea (KORAHF Registry) and Gulf countries (HF-Registry) were presented and discussed.

In addition to epidemiology of heart failure other aspects of the disease were also presented and discussed. Pathological Cardiac Remodeling “Gateway to HF/EF morbidity and mortality” in the setting of ischemic ventricular disease, contributing cellular events and therapeutic target, anti‐remodeling drug therapies, clinical benefits of neurohormonal control, cardiac resynchronization therapy and left ventricular assist devices and stem cell therapy for heart failure were examples of the hot topics that attracted the participants interest.

Furthermore, an update on heart failure co‐morbidities e.g. chronic kidney disease, sleep apnea, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cardiac cachexia, depression, anemia, obesity, air pollution and cancer were examples of the related topics discussed in the congress. This was followed by a number of fruitful sessions on treatment of HF/EF with results from novel therapeutic measures presented e.g. heart rate modulation, positive inotropic agents and device treatment. The closing ceremony ended by a special lecture on diastolic heart failure pathophysiology, diagnostic and therapeutic aspects.

The feedback from the audience was overwhelmingly positive. Cardiologists, primary care physicians, residents nurses confirmed gaining new perspectives and a deeper understanding of the challenges they face when dealing with heart failure patients. They left Al-Ain carrying a clearer comprehension of the syndrome of heart failure in an integrated fashion, scientific, clinical as well a strategic. The practical solution for their outstanding questions and queries was at the forefront of their feedback, having requested regular meetings and updates on the subject using integrated telecommunication facilities currently available in universities and hospitals. Another highlight of the congress was the fundamental role of clinical nurses in the management of heart failure patients. Indeed, this role was supported by the unanimous voting for the election of the first nurse to join the executive board of the heart failure society. It can not be ignored to mention the impressive attendance of a number of senior medical students from UAE and the its surrounding region and the role the WHFS played in facilitating their registration and participation which gave them a taste of the magnitude of the syndrome of heart failure they will face in the future.

To spread the context of congress at wide spectrum World Heart Failure Society has decided to place the power point presentations and videos on the society website so interested groups from different backgrounds can access the material and gain a sound update on the subject. Also, For the first time in the history of the society’s biannual congresses two prizes were awarded for the two best abstracts, the first prize (Professor W. J. Remme Prize) went to professor Khalil from Sudan for his paper entitled “Clinical and Echocardiographic Patterns of Endomyocardial Fibrosis” and the second prize (World Heart Failure Society Prize) to Dr. A. Makubi from Tanzania for his paper entitled “Contemporary Etiology, Clinical Characteristic and Prognosis of Adult with Heart Failure Observed in a Tertiary Hospital in Tanzania: The Prospective Tanzania Heart Failure (TAHEF) Study”.

Finally, we would like to thank the organizing committee who paid a great effort in carrying out such responsibility and delivering a comprehensive scientific and clinical update program which met with abundance a large audience’s expectation and satisfied their learning eagerness.

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President of the World Heart Failure Society and the 4th World Heart Failure Congress

Letters to the Editor

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