Working to expand therapeutic apheresis opportunities for patients around the world

Dear Colleagues,

It is with great pleasure that we bring you a new issue of the WAA Newsletter.

I want to thank all of you for your support of the World Apheresis Association, and hope that you enjoy the contents of this newsletter, describing the activities of our member societies and some interesting topics about apheresis treatment.

XVth International ASFA/WAA Congress

You have probably already received the announcement of the XVth WAA Congress to be held in conjunction with the American Association for Apheresis (ASFA) Annual Meeting in San Francisco, April 2—5, 2014.

I truly appreciate the tremendous effort of Dr. Marisa Marques, ASFA President-elect, and the ASFA and WAA staff teams who have been working to organize the congress. Also thank you to each member-society for your cooperation. I am very much looking forward to seeing you all soon in San Francisco.

Planning for successful future events

We, the WAA Board members, have started the discussion about the location of the XVIth WAA Congress. Two candidates in Europe, one is Krems in Austria and the other is Paris, France (as a joint congress with the ESFA), are currently nominated. The Board will carefully make a choice. Please look for our announcement of the XVIth Congress after the next board meeting in San Francisco.

Our goal for the WAA is to organize the international societies working in Therapeutic Apheresis and to expand the opportunity of this unique therapeutic technology for patients around the world. The support of each member society is highly appreciated at all times.

With warmest regards,

Yours truly,

Hiroshi Tsuda,
President, World Apheresis Association
Our sixteen member-organizations of the WAA (alphabetically) are:

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The WAA Board representative of each association, is listed on the left side of the front cover.
**Message from the WAA President-elect: 2014 - 2016**

**Vision to face funding challenges with coordinated strategy**

**Dear Colleagues and Friends,**

It’s an honour for me to chair our active society.

**As the incoming WAA president for the period 2014 -2016, first of all I would like to thank the previous whole WAA board and namely president Prof Hiroshi Tsuda and past-president Dr. Robert Weinstein for their valuable work.**

**Paolo Perseghin, MD  
President-Elect  
World Apheresis Association**

We all are all indebted to Prof Gail Rock for her extraordinary commitment as Editor-in-chief of the WAA official journal, *Transfusion and Apheresis Science.*

**Funding shortage challenges**

In these last years many countries even within the most industrialised and developed world had to face a progressive shortage of funding from National Health Systems, due to the worldwide diffuse economic impairment.

He has received grants from Italian Health Authorities to support his research in donor and therapeutic apheresis and in the field of cellular therapies and regenerative medicine. He has teaching appointments in post-graduate specialization schools at the University of Milano-Bicocca School of Medicine, and since 2009, at the II level master in “Stem cell transplantation and cellular therapies” at the University of Florence School of Medicine.

Since 2009 he has also been a member of the ad-hoc committee (CNS/CNT) for the upgrading of the National Law in Transfusion Medicine.

From 2007 to 2013 he served as the general secretary of the Italian Society of Apheresis and Cell Manipulation (SIDEM). Since 1997 he has been the head of the Therapeutic Apheresis Unit and Cryobiology Lab at San Gerardo Hospital in Monza, Italy, a JACIE accredited facility for both adult and pediatric autologous and allogeneic hematopoietic stem cell transplantation, and a staff member within the GMP cell factory “S. Verri” at the same institution.

**WAA president 2014-2016**

His main scientific interests in recent years have been to ascertain the effectiveness (and biologic effects) of extracorporeal photochemotherapy in patients with acute and chronic GvHD, the use of platelet lysate in regenerative medicine, and the introduction of new devices in both donor and therapeutic apheresis.

He has authored or co-authored more than 80 papers published in peer-reviewed journals and he has served as a speaker or chairman in national and international congresses and symposia.

**With my warmest regards,  
Paolo Perseghin, MD  
President-Elect,  
World Apheresis Association**

Thus, our common endpoint for the forthcoming years should be appropriateness and cost-effectiveness. These terms should be applied in our everyday practice, in order to ensure the best available treatment to our patients and to avoid any waste or misuse of financial resources. Therefore, our efforts should be aimed to assess the usefulness of recently introduced apheresis treatments/procedures (i.e. rheopheresis, plasma-treatments, advanced cell therapies, etc) for many of which, very little clinical evidence is available.

Only well designed and well conducted randomised multicenter trials may provide sound scientific evidence and therefore allow for a wide application in the field and a subsequent reimbursement from public authorities or health insurance companies.

**Coordinated efforts required**

Furthermore, each one of our national scientific societies should be challenged by the above and WAA should coordinate these common efforts. Moreover, new actors have entered the stage from developing countries, where hundreds of millions of people are in need of advanced apheretic therapies and products, including products from the donor apheresis setting. In this context, financial support from companies operating in the field of apheresis instruments and disposable products will be welcome, mainly to help local scientific societies and possibly, the WAA, in designing onsite educational programs for apheresis professionals (doctors, nurses, and lab technicians).

**SIdEM-ESFH: May joint congress**

As a member of the Italian Society of Apheresis and Cell Manipulation (SIdEM) I am proud to announce the forthcoming joint congress SIdEM-ESFH that will be held in Florence, Italy on May 19-22. All of you will be welcome in the magnificent Florence! (See poster, pages 10 & 11.)

**New WAA board elections**

Finally, the new board will soon decide the venue for the 2016 XVI WAA congress. To date, applications from France and Austria have been submitted to the board.

I would like to conclude by inviting you to cast your vote for the election of a new slate of WAA officers. I expected to work interactively with all the members of the WAA board, to obtain outstanding results both from a scientific and educational point of view.

**With my warmest regards,**

**Paolo Perseghin, MD  
President-Elect,  
World Apheresis Association**

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**Biography Paolo Perseghin, MD**

Paolo Perseghin received his medical degree from the University of Pavia Medical School, where he completed his clinical training in Clinical and Laboratory Haematology in 1985 and in Infectious Diseases in 1991.

During the same period, he received training in both donor and therapeutic apheresis at The Blood Transfusion Center at IRCCS San Matteo in Pavia.

He is a member of several scientific societies in the field of transfusion medicine, apheresis and cell therapies and serves as a reviewer for several high-ranked journals.

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Paolo Perseghin, MD - President-Elect - World Apheresis Association
Dear WAA Members,

ASFA is looking forward to the exciting ASFA/WAA Joint Conference 2014!

ASFA and the World Apheresis Association (WAA) will hold an ASFA and WAA Joint Conference on April 2-5, 2014 in San Francisco, California. This is the premier educational, scientific, and networking conference for professionals in the field of apheresis medicine worldwide.

We look forward to seeing you there!

This is a very exciting time for ASFA, with many new activities, including the following:

- ASFA hosted a very successful 2013 Annual Meeting in May 2013 in Denver, Colorado, with over 490 attendees. The meeting was a very successful showcase of the work of numerous experts in the field of apheresis medicine.
- ASFA published the Journal of Clinical Apheresis (JCA) 2013 Special Review Issue in June 2013. Every 3 years, ASFA publishes evidence-based guidelines on the use of therapeutic apheresis in clinical practice in a Special Issue of the Journal of Clinical Apheresis. The 2013 Special Review Issue includes a review and categorization of indications for therapeutic apheresis. The ASFA Special Issue Committee has conducted a systematic review and evidence-based approach in the grading and categorization of indications. This publication serves as the key resource for information on medical conditions treated by therapeutic apheresis.
- ASFA hosted a very successful Regional Meeting on November 15, 2013 at the University of Pennsylvania Biomedical Research Building, Philadelphia, PA, with over 100 attendees. The ASFA Regional Meeting was created by the ASFA Board of Directors to fulfill a clear need for a small and intimate apheresis educational meeting. The aim of this meeting was to provide improved topic-specific learning and increased regional networking opportunities.
- ASFA is partnering with the University of California San Diego School of Medicine, Continuing Medical Education to co-sponsor the UC San Diego Essentials and Advances in Apheresis Therapies, to be held February 27 - March 1, 2014 in San Diego, California.
- ASFA partnered with the University of Virginia School of Medicine, Office of Continuing Medical Education to co-sponsor the University of Virginia Therapeutic Apheresis Academy. The 6th Annual program occurred September 19-21, 2013 in Virginia and the 2014 dates will be posted soon.
- ASFA is working on many more exciting activities – so please visit our website, attend our educational programs, or contact us to learn more. We hope to see you at the ASFA and WAA Joint Conference on April 2-5, 2014 in San Francisco!

Visit www.apheresis.org for more information.

Best regards,

Nicholas Bandarenko, MD
Advancing science and establishing ties world-wide

The ESAO was founded in 1974 in Geneva, Switzerland. It is a worldwide society open to members from all countries. The ESAO encourages and publishes progress made in the field of artificial organs and allied spheres. It serves over 400 members worldwide.

The aims of the ESAO are to coordinate and develop research in Europe on artificial organs and to represent the research in this field with the scientific institutions concerned. We also promote exchanges and establish ties with associations having similar aims and a registered address outside Europe.

The ESAO promotes and coordinates activities of similar associations, to create ties and organize exchanges among them. A part of our role is also to promote scientific projects in the field of artificial organs and thereby, to promote young scientists. This includes establishing working groups that at the moment include a working group for Heart Support, Liver Support, Uremic Toxins, Tissue Engineering and Apheresis.

Apheresis scientific sessions are part of the ESAO’s annual congresses. Since apheresis is performed as a therapeutic measure in many different fields of medicine this activity fits well into the ESAO.

WAA Registry Evolution

The Apheresis working group was established in 2002 and focused to develop more knowledge about various therapeutic aspects of apheresis.

As the chairman of the ESAO apheresis working group, Bernd Stegmayr, together with colleagues from other registries, developed an internet based registry for therapeutic apheresis.

The registry was based on experience from the previously established national registries in Canada (Main person: Gail Rock), France (Main person: Jean Michel Korach) and Sweden (Main persons: Rut Norda and Bernd Stegmayr) and Wolfgang Ramlow.

The support by the WAA president Peter Ivanovic, at that time, and the WAA board, resulted in the fact that the registry was also established as the World Apheresis Association Registry (www.worldapheresis.org).

Registry Participation Invited

We invite all centres to participate in the WAA registry (www.waaregistry.org) by gaining their own access code. You will thereby also be part of the ESAO apheresis working group.

Participating by actively entering data on therapeutic apheresis enables the apheresis world more knowledge about this field.

Note that centres that do not treat patients with apheresis may also enter data of their treatment outcome for diagnoses that alternatively can be treated by means other than apheresis.

If you know of such centres we would appreciate it if you would encourage them to participate.
The Asociación Mexicana de Medicina Transfusional A.C. (AMMTAC) is multidisciplinary. Therefore, we have among our associates, physicians, medical technicians, social workers, nurses, etc. and our academic work includes most transfusion medicine topics.

We work, not only in blood donation promotion (see our “Hoy por Todos” video on our web page www.ammtac.org) but also in quality management, immunohematology, pre-transfusion testing, TTI screening, blood components collection and therapeutic apheresis, and other areas.

Our nursing committee has done a lot of interesting work such as training and advisory in different medical centers that practice therapeutic apheresis procedures and blood component collection from healthy donors. At the last annual meeting in June 2013, we organized different symposia with the participation of international (WAA) experts on apheresis. We are still working on a program, the first of its kind in our country, “Apheresis Continuous Education Course”, in order to help in train professionals in the field. It will start in 2014.

The aim of the next annual meeting of the AMMTAC in September 2014, is to do a workshop with new evidence in Therapeutic Apheresis from different medical centers around the country, and to discuss clinical cases in order to enrich and enhance the participants’ experience. The meeting will also feature a symposium with the newest apheresis topics.

We invite all the interested people to follow our association’s activities by consulting our web page www.ammtac.org and our facebook ammtransfusional and twitter @AMMTAC1 contact.

PRESIDENTE
QFB. CLOTILDE ESTRADA CARSOLIO
cotyecarsolio@cablevision.net.mx
cotyecarsolio@gmail.com

VICEPRESIDENTE
DR. ANGEL GUERRA MARQUEZ
angel.guerra@imss.gob.mx
angelraton@terra.com.mx

SECRETARIA
DR. MA. ANTONIETA VELEZ RUELAS
romvel@prodigy.net.mx
manvelro@gmail.com

Tesorera
QFB. MYRIAM VILLANUEVA MENDEZ
myrvim@yahoo.com.mx

Vocales de Actividades Admisión
QFB. SILVIA LAURA NAJERA SANCHEZ
lauranajera_01710@hotmail.com

Apoyo
DRA. GEMMA MALDONADO GARCIA
cetsedomex07@yahoo.com.mx

Académicas y Editoriales
M EN C. ISABEL CASTRO PEREZ
ICASTRO75@hotmail.com

Apoyo
DRA. ARACELI MALAGON MARTINEZ
araceli-malagon@hotmail.com

Comunicación y Científicas
QFB. JAVIER BAUTISTA JUAREZ
jjuvena@abchospital.com
Javier_bautista_juarez@hotmail.com

Comités
Enfermería y Apheresis
LEO. LUCIA ZAMUDIO GODINEZ
lucyzago@msn.com

Trabajo Social
LTS. MA. DE JESUS PICHARDO MARTINEZ
marychuets@yahoo.com.mx

Comunicación ISBT
DRA. AMALIA BRAVO LINDORO
Tel. 0184-0911
amaliabl@yahoo.com.mx

XII Congress
Asociación Mexicana de Medicina Transfusional A.C. (AMMTAC)
Veracruz, Mexico
September 10—13, 2014
The Indian Society for Apheresis (ISA) was established in 1987.

The ISA is a group of physicians, scientists, nurses, technicians, corporate bodies and other responsible citizens of the country who are interested or active in the field of apheresis.

In 2014, the ISA continues to progress steadily with a current membership of 249.

Apheresis services and R & D growth
Presently, we are actively involved in expansion of apheresis services and research and development in the field of therapeutic apheresis in India. New Research Centers for Therapeutic Apheresis & Donor Apheresis are being established in more cities this year.

A library was set up for professionals and the public. An internet center has been already established for the benefit of students, medical fraternity and patients.

Research centre attracts patients
Development of the ISA Apheresis & Medical Research Center is a constant process with ever increasing scientific developments in the field.

This center is already attracting a large number of national and international patients because of its efficiency, economics and quality.

Currently, controlled trials are underway for the treatment of scleroderma, ulcerative colitis, bronchial asthma and ankylosing spondylitis to study the efficacy of apheresis in these and other routine indications.

The ISA is also on the way to conduct and monitor clinical trials for new medical devices and in the treatment of HIV, HCV, Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever and other oncology-related disorders and complications.

The ISA has served as a consultant to the Indian government on issues related to policy planning and implementation of apheresis.

Public education and awareness
Active socio-medical work involving the organization of public lectures, seminars, video shows and free medical camps is also being done. Field workers and health educators of ISA are participating in a community health education program.

Presently, our priority programs are fundraising and resource mobilization to permit us to achieve our scientific and humanitarian goals.

The ISA is currently coordinating a program that will provide training courses in apheresis with the help of I.A.A. hospitals in a northern Indian state as a new state chapter.

An apheresis scientist exchange program is already active. The Indian Journal of Apheresis, a twice-yearly publication, is already in circulation.

Next year’s annual scientific meeting will be held in August at Ghaziabad (U.P.).

This meeting will have a wide variety of presentations by eminent and invited speakers from the country and overseas.

Rakesh Srivastava, President
Indian Society for Apheresis (ISA)
The collaboration of researchers from a wide range of disciplines, including Infectious Diseases, Nephrology, Critical Care Medicine, Organ Transplantation, and Biomedical Engineering, to name a few, has been rapidly expanding our understanding of the diverse effects that apheresis has on patients as well as the potential use of apheresis in patient populations and disease processes not previously treated with apheresis.

Results of such collaborative efforts were highlighted at the 9th Congress of the International Society for Apheresis that was held May 9-12th, 2013 in Hangzhou, China.

Over 1,000 physicians and research scientists from around the world presented their latest research, which covered a variety of medical and scientific specialties and interests. Dr. Lanjuan Li, the Congress president from Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China, welcomed several scientists from around the world, to name a few, has been the best at doing this — he who might be the best doctor. Together, we can work toward fulfilling the vision of medicine established by Hippocrates in the 5th century B.C.

We hope to both continue and expand collaboration with physicians and research scientists around the world who are studying apheresis.

Over 1,000 physicians and research scientists from around the world presented their latest research, which covered a variety of medical and scientific specialties and interests. Dr. Lanjuan Li, the Congress president from Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China, presented an extensive update on her research involving the use of artificial livers in patients with liver failure.

The emergence of such a large body of new and exciting research is shining light on the possibilities of both enhancing the
CHINESE SOCIETY OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

CSID promotes research collaboration, clinical applications and education

The Chinese Society of Infectious Diseases (CSID) was established in 1980.

After over 30 years of development the CSID has grown into an organization with seven sub-committees.

Since it was established, the CSID has continuously promoted scientific research collaboration, clinical applications and education in the field of infectious diseases, both within China and abroad.

The CSID regularly organizes international conferences and holds academic seminars to encourage exchange of information relating to the diagnosis and treatment of infectious diseases.

Main Activities 2012-2013

The CSID was one of the main organizers of the successful 13th Asia-Pacific Congress of Clinical Microbiology and Infection (13th APCCMI) which was held October 25-28, 2012 in Beijing. The congress theme was “Collaborating in the management of infections: Right ideas, right actions, right now”.

Academic programs in this congress covered infectious diseases, clinical microbiology, antimicrobial chemotherapy, hepatitis, and others. It is estimated that about 4000 practitioners and investigators from more than 57 countries were in attendance.

The CSID also participated as a joint sponsor in the 9th Congress of the International Society for Apheresis (ISFA) which was held May 9–12, 2013 in Hangzhou, China, marking the first time that the ISFA Congress was held in mainland China.

The well-attended meeting drew over 1000 participants from Asia, Europe and the America. The presentations in this congress were of great scientific and educational value.

Coming Activities

CSID plans to have its annual meeting in Guangzhou, China, June 12-15, 2014, and now is working with Asian Pacific Association for the Study of the Liver (APASL) in preparing the 4th HBV Conference of APASL STC (Single Topic Conference), which will be held on December 12-14, 2014 in Guangzhou, China.

The theme of this conference is “Individualized Treatment of Chronic Hepatitis B”. The program will be oriented to “translational medicine” and “clinical practice”. The interesting scientific program with dedicated speakers will make your attendance worthwhile.
Successful apheresis nursing courses to expand in 2014

The last months of 2012 and whole 2013 were for the European Society for Haemapheresis and Haemotherapy (ESFH) years of development of an education for apheresis nurses.

Initiated by the ESFH, an international group of nurses and physicians originating from various Europe countries and the USA suggested the basic knowledge needed for the apheresis nurse/operator.

Based on this, a modular course for apheresis nurses was built and the first courses were successfully given in Malaysia and Indonesia. More than 150 nurses and physicians participated. Based on this concept, new courses are planned in 2014 in various countries.

Joint Congress plans
After a successful meeting in 2012 in The Hague in the Netherlands, the ESFH is planning to have their next bi-annual international meeting in cooperation with SIDEM (Societa’ Italiana di Emaferesi) in the beautiful Florence in Tuscany, Italy (19-22 May 2014).

Besides an interesting scientific program, modules from the apheresis course for nurses/ operators will be given. Respected international speakers are invited, guaranteeing an interesting meeting for nurses and physicians.

To offer best scientific support, ESFH has renewed the website www.esfh.eu with information on European aspects of apheresis.

In 2013 the ESFH board consisted of Hans Vrielink (president), Rainer Moog (past-president and treasurer), Miguel Lozano (president elect), and Paul Hoecker (secretary).

The board members were very sad to hear that in the autumn of 2013

Professor Helmut Borberg,

one of our honorary members and former board member of the ESFH passed away.

Hans Vrielink, MD, PhD
President ESFH
High efficiency standards allow for available quality therapeutic apheresis

SIdEM President, Giustina De Silvestro, is Director of the Immunotransfusional Unit of the University of Padua Hospital.

The Unit is ISO 9001 certified, and it is divided into different activities Fig 1.

In 2013, 7766 patients were transfused with 50,000 units, of which 35,000 units of Red Blood Cells, 4,000 of units of Platelets and 11,000 units of Fresh Frozen Plasma (PlasmaSafe).

The Therapeutic Apheresis Unit functions at a high level of efficiency and effectiveness, and continues to be considered one of the main structures of national reference for the quality and availability of service.

Over 1,700 of procedures on more than 220 patients, were carried out in 2013. These include: plasma exchange, eritro exchange, granulocytapheresis, extracorporeal photochemotherapy, LDL apheresis, immunoadsorption, and peripheral blood stem cell (PBSC) collection from patients and donors.

The HLA Laboratory: is reference for Bone Marrow Transplantation Institute of Pediatric Oncology, for Cord Blood Bank and for Therapeutic Apheresis Unit (that collects PBSCs).

In addition to the accreditation for bone marrow transplantation and stem cells, the laboratory also obtained accreditation for the typing of patients candidates for kidney transplant. 6500 tests were performed for 2200 patients / donors.

2014 SIdEM Objectives:
- Implementation of National Registry of Therapeutic Apheresis in collaboration with the Italian Society of Nephrology
- Recognition of a nationwide rate tables for procedures of therapeutic apheresis
- Implementation of Therapeutic Apheresis Standard
The Turkish Society of Apheresis (TSA) was established in 2000, and by the end of 2012, had over 100 members. The society’s most recent general assembly and board elections were held in October 2012. The new board members are listed in the left margin of this page.

The main purpose of the TSA is to support and promote scientific research within this field and to facilitate communication between the different scientific fields which involve apheresis, such as hematology, oncology, dermatology, neurology, immunology, rheumatology, endocrinology, gastroenterology, nephrology, intensive care, cardiology, and others.

We inform our members of the most recent developments in apheresis, and we aim to advance knowledge and inspire continued professional development in this discipline.

TSA Scientific Activities
The scientific activities of the TSA include:
- translation of the apheresis textbook into Turkish,
- scholarships for hematology fellows,
- financial support for both clinical trials and theses for hematology fellows, and
- apheresis certification courses.

The TSA organized the 8th National Apheresis Congress, September 5—8, 2013, in the Kaya Artemis Congress Center in Bafra, in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. The Congress president and general secretary were Fevzi Altuntas and Ismail Sari, respectively.

The Congress in Numbers
The congress had:
- 25 scientific sessions
- 17 sessions for physicians
- 8 sessions for technicians
- 600 total participants (approximately) from different cities of Turkey
- 222 submitted abstracts
- 112 local speakers and chairs
- 2 satellite symposia
- 5 special sessions were supported by 6 companies
- 52 different pharmaceutical corporate sponsors
- 15 point CME credits, approved by European Hematology Association

Evolution of Apheresis in Turkey
We previously reported on apheresis practice in Turkey [1,2].

In 1998
... a total of 30,136 apheresis procedures were performed at 31 different apheresis centers.

At 10 centers 145 peripheral blood stem cell (PBSC) apheresis were performed on 82 patients in an allogeneic setting and at 17 centers, 981 PBSC apheresis were performed on 271 patients in autologous setting. Additionally, 869 therapeutic plasma exchange procedures were performed on 172 patients, most commonly for neurological disorders and thrombotic thrombocytopenic
purpura (TTP)/hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS).

Therapeutic cytapheresis procedures like leukapheresis, plateletpheresis and erythrocyte apheresis were performed especially for cytoreduction in myeloproliferative disorders. A total of 204 cytapheresis procedures (66% leukapheresis, 33% plateletpheresis and 1% erythrocytapheresis) were performed on 134 patients in 15 centers. Donor plateletpheresis was the most used apheresis procedure, reaching a total of 28,016 [1].

In 2011

... there were 53 apheresis units in 31 different cities in Turkey. Approximately 12,000 therapeutic apheresis procedures were performed in 2011.

Leukapheresis and erythrocyte apheresis were the most common therapeutic cytapheresis procedures. In total, 720 cytapheresis procedures were performed at 28 centers. While 1747 peripheral blood stem cell (PBSC) apheresis procedures were performed in the autologous setting, 547 PBSC apheresis procedures were performed in the allogeneic setting in 2011 [2].

Today

... there are 61 apheresis units in Turkey all approved by the Turkish Ministry of Health.

Approximately 16,000 therapeutic apheresis procedures were performed in 2012. These procedures consist of plasmapheresis, lipid apheresis, extracorporeal photopheresis, cascade filtration apheresis, immunoadsorption and cytapheresis.

Leukapheresis and erythrocyte apheresis were the most common therapeutic cytapheresis procedures. In total, around 1500 cytapheresis procedures were performed. Approximately 2500 and 1000 peripheral blood stem cell (PBSC) apheresis procedures were performed in the autologous and allogeneic setting, respectively.

Apheresis standards have been developed rapidly by:

- publishing of Therapeutic Apheresis Regulations,
- preparation of National Therapeutic Apheresis Guide,
- registration of therapeutic apheresis centers, and
- registration of therapeutic apheresis training centers by the Ministry of Health in our country.

Therapeutic Apheresis Regulations, which maintain the standardization of centers, were published by the Ministry of Health in 2010.

These regulations enabled the centers' physical device set up, personnel standardization which maintained monitoring and structuring of compliance with international quality norms for the health services provided.

After regulation the Ministry of Health registered therapeutic apheresis centers. Both apheresis and stem cell transplantation are increasing in number each year. Additionally, according to regulation, apheresis training centers are being established where certification courses are conducted.

In these centers theoretical and practical training is given on basic and clinical apheresis. Those who successfully complete the training course are certified to work in apheresis centers.

Over 300 technical personnel and physicians have completed this certification program. In this way, we are increasing our qualified number of personnel and centers.

In addition, the Turkish Ministry of Health Therapeutic Apheresis and Science Commission has prepared a National Therapeutic Apheresis Guide.

This guide serves as a referral to maintain clinical standards of therapeutic apheresis. It is planned to be updated on annual basis in accordance with scientific progress.

References

The Korean Society for Apheresis (KSFA) was established in 1999, and each year, we hold the annual symposium in February.

The Society consists of about 200 members including physicians and nurses. The purposes of the KSFA are to foster collaborative research regarding collection, modification, removal, transfusion, transplantation, and cellular therapy of blood constituents. The Society serves as an organization for education and exchange of information and ideas concerning apheresis among its members.

The KSFA is a member of the AAA (Asian Academy of Apheresis) which is mainly organized by Dr. Motoki Yonekawa in Sapporo Hokuyu Hospital, to share information among neighbouring countries.

The President of KSFA is the Professor Dae-Won Kim M.D. (dwsmc.kim@samsung.com) of Samsung Medical Center, Sungkyunkwan University School of Medicine. The Executive of General Affairs is the Professor Kyou-Sup Han M.D. (kshanmd@snu.ac.kr) of Seoul National University Hospital and Seoul National University College of Medicine.

In 2013, our annual symposium, the 15th Symposium of The Korean Society for Apheresis, was held on February 20 in Seoul.

The agenda was as follows:

1st Session:
- Status of apheresis in Korea (2012)
- The trend of therapeutic apheresis,
- Evaluation of overnight storage conditions for autologous peripheral blood stem cell products.
- Cobe Spectra vs. Spectra Optia in therapeutic plasma exchange;

2nd Session:
- Up to date on the Com.Tec cell separator: focused on granulocyte collection,
- Safety of transfusion practice in a teaching hospital of the United States,
- Safety management of blood donors.

Our next annual symposium, the 16th Symposium of The Korean Society for Apheresis, will be held in February, 2014 in Seoul.

APHERESIS ACTIVITIES
According to the presentation by Professor Kyou-Sup Han M.D. at the 15th Symposium of KSFA:
- We performed 554,285 apheresis procedures in 2012.
- The majority (97.8%) of the procedures were done at the Blood Centers to collect plasma (72.9%) and platelets (24.9%).
- Multi-component collections such as platelet-plasma collection and double-unit plateletpheresis are being introduced.
- Plasma exchange (5,817 procedures), hematopoietic stem cell collection (4,170 procedures) and donor granulocyte collection (1,001 procedures) were performed mainly in Korean hospitals.
- The number of plasma exchange procedures employing filtration technology is gradually increasing.
The Japanese society for plasmapheresis was founded in 1981 as scientific research group inspired by an international symposium of plasma exchange treatment in Cologne, Germany in 1980.

Thirty-year History of JSFA
Our society has a history of more than 30 years in the therapeutic apheresis field.

We have influenced clinical findings, scientific research, education and the healthcare system in Japan.

The JSFA has over 1,600 active members, and our numbers are still increasing.

Our next Annual Meeting will be held in the beautiful Japanese city of Tokyo, September 26—28, 2014. It will be conducted by Dr. Mineshima at Tokyo Women’s Medical University. (http://www.jsfa35.org/) Additionally, we have several regional meetings to support local members.

Focus on the Future
One recent important initiative of the JSFA is the Educational Meeting for Plasmapheresis, which we started in 2013. This meeting is directed toward physicians and other medical practitioners, technicians, engineers and younger scientists, to help extend their understanding of plasmapheresis treatment in theory and in practice.

These meetings focus on the future of therapeutic apheresis technology.
Our goal is to expand and promote knowledge of apheresis technology in the therapeutic field, not only in Japan but also within the international community.

Asian Academy for Apheresis
One of our recent activities involving the international field is the establishment of the Asian Academy for Apheresis which was organized in 2011. The organization has an international board including members:

- Prof. Han in Korea,
- Prof. Chu in Taiwan,
- Prof. Lumlertgul in Thailand
- 4 members from JSFA board

The Asian Academy for Apheresis holds an international symposium within the annual meeting of JSFA, to offer an opportunity to present activities of clinical research in Asia. At the 2013 annual meeting, we had total of seven presentations, from China, Thailand and Taiwan.

More information about the JSFA’s activities is available in our official journal, the Japanese Journal of Apheresis (ISSN Print: 1340-5888) or in our website, http://www.apheresis-jp.org/modules/english/index.php.
New focus on "permanent education"

In 2013 the French Society for Hemapheresis (SFH) had a year very rich in events.

The board of SFH was renewed. Actually, according to the SFH bylaws, each board member is elected for four years and every two and a half years, half of the board members are renewed. The current board is detailed in the right margin on this page.

The SFH Registry includes information from all member centers and contributes to fully inform about clinical trials set-up.

SFH organized an educational autumn meeting on November 14, 2013 in Cochin hospital for nurses and doctors. More than 300 attendees were registered. One of the sessions was devoted to "permanent education".

In January 2013, France adopted a new system to dispense and evaluate permanent education for all health care participants; the new system for physicians began in 2013 and oversight is provided by a federation of Medical Societies, by specialty/subspecialty.

The SFH has thus organized, during its autumn meeting, such as "cognitive" session, to be followed by a practice evaluation. The selected topics for this first initiative concerned the “wrong attribution of a labile blood product”—for instance fresh frozen plasma—and the "causal root analysis".

The educational session consisted of the presentation of selected clinical cases and was followed by a series of questions ("true/false") with answers recorded electronically by the audience. Answers were then commented on by a panel of specialists and a discussion with the audience followed. Physicians who had registered for the complete program have since been invited to attend subsequent practical sessions to validate the CME program.

Our next national congress will be held at the ‘Maison Internationale’ (photo ABOVE) in Paris, from December 10 to 12, 2014.

During this three-day congress, the first day will be educational and dedicated to the nurses.

There will be also a "permanent education" session. This part will be organized with the support and collaboration of “INTS” (French National Institute of Blood Transfusion).

Colleagues from francophone countries such as Belgium, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia are expected. English sessions are also programmed for non-francophone attendees.

For more information, please contact our website: www.hemapherese.fr

National Congress
French Society for Hemapheresis
Paris, France
December 10—12, 2014
2013 was an interesting year with completion of some projects and the initiation of several others.

Our annual meeting was held on April 12 – 14, with joint sessions with the Canadian Blood and Marrow Transplant Group.

Dr. Han-Mou Tsai was a guest speaker and he participated in our discussions on next steps in the investigation of the TMAs. This year our meeting will be held in Halifax in June, again, with overlapping joint sessions on stem cells with the CBMTG.

We have had a national database since the 1970s. Now, thanks to the skills and hard work of our staff, we have converted the database to a real-time electronic system.

By having the online data system that facilitates data entry at the centres, we can provide each centre with a record of their annual activities, and can also analyze any reports of unusual reactions in real time.

OUR TTP STUDIES

The pilot study on Rituximab ended this year with entry of 40 patients, 20 in each group of refractory or relapsing patients. Six centers participated in this study: McMaster University, Hamilton; Princess Margaret Hospital, Toronto; Health Sciences Centre, London; Vancouver General Hospital, Vancouver; Royal University Hospital, Saskatoon; and Hôpital de l’Enfants-Jésus, Quebec.

While the data is being analyzed by a statistician, one thing is clear at this point and that is that the mortality rate is lower than we have generally seen in this group of patients with only three of the forty patients dying in the first year. This is very encouraging.

The paper we published this year in Thrombosis Research [1] on data obtained from our previous study showed that over 40 percent of the patients had normal ADAMTS 13 at the time of entry into the study and that the presence or absence of antibody did not correlate with response to therapy. Therefore, it will be very interesting to see what the effects of Rituximab, a B-cell inhibitor, were on our more difficult patients. We hope to have this information soon.

AND TO OUR FUTURE

We received basic funding to allow us to develop an electronic database to collect epidemiological data on TTP patients as they present for treatment at our centres. We are currently seeking funding to permit long term (2-3 year) follow up of these patients.

UPCOMING AGM

- Westin Nova Scotian Hotel
- Halifax, Nova Scotia
- Friday, June 13 to Sunday, June 15, 2014

Registration and other details are available on the CAG website at www.apheresis.ca

Reference:
When the World Apheresis Association last met at the 14th International Congress in Istanbul, Turkey, in September, 2012 we marked the 25th anniversary of the First International Congress, which was held in Japan in 1986. That first congress has been followed by 14 other International Congress gatherings (Table 1).

The WAA umbrella organization was conceived in Dijon, France, in 1984, and held its first formal meeting, the First International Congress, in Tokyo, Japan May 20-23, 1986.

Recognizing a need for better communication, in 1984 these seven societies held a founding meeting in Dijon, France:

- ASFA: American Society for Apheresis
- ESFH: European Society for Haemapheresis
- SFEP: Société Francaise d’Échanges Plasmatiques
- GLHEMA: Group Latino American of Hemapheresis
- ISAO: International Society for Artificial Organs
- JSTP: Japan Society of Therapeutic Plasmapheresis
- CASG: Canadian Apheresis Study Group

Today, sixteen organizations comprise the WAA membership, giving a comprehensive view of apheresis activities throughout the world. The present-day Executive and Board members are listed on the front cover of this newsletter.

The WAA is a vital and growing organization. The two most recent organizations to join (in 2010) were the Asociación Mexicana de Medicina Transfusional A.C., and the Korean Society for Apheresis.

Recently, the WAA also added the new, permanent Board position of Allied Health Liaison, thereby establishing a commitment to extend programming to allied health professionals who contribute so prominently to apheresis.
WAA (continued, from page 18)

medicine. A recent initiative of the WAA Board, was the first major revision of the bylaws since its establishment.

The goals and purposes of the WAA are:
1. To provide an organization through which all professional societies dedicated to research and/or clinical practice in apheresis can communicate and collaborate;
2. To foster global collaboration in scientific investigation, research, clinical applications, education, and exchange of information relating to apheresis and allied fields in clinical and laboratory medicine;
3. To facilitate the availability of safe and effective apheresis techniques for the collection of donor cells and plasma as well as the removal or modification of blood constituents in disease;
4. To encourage and advance high standards of administrative and technical performance in the field of apheresis;
5. To manage a worldwide registry of patients treated by therapeutic apheresis.

One of the ways in which the World Apheresis Association carries out these goals, is through the exchange of scientific information through its official journal, Transfusion Science and Apheresis.

This newsletter also outlines important developments in apheresis and news from member Societies, announcements of new member societies, upcoming meetings etc. to promote the exchange of information between apheresis physicians and practitioners.

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15th WAA Congress at the
ASFA 2014 Annual Meeting

SAN FRANCISCO
HYATT REGENCY SAN FRANCISCO APRIL 2-5, 2014

an international educational and networking forum
for professionals in the field of apheresis medicine

www.apheresis.org