

WORKSHOP G:

STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

Examples of an epidemiological study, a clinical drug trial, or a study of quality assurance

Chairman: Prof. V. Janousek (Czechoslovakia)

Our group and workshop on students' participation in research discussed very thoroughly these problems and we think that there are two indispensable factors in medical education:

A) The teacher and B) the student and the relationship or better said the interaction between them, determines to a great extent the outcome, that is, whether young physicians, young graduates are well prepared for their future tasks, whether they are prepared for self-development, for postgraduate training and eventually for life-long learning. There is no doubt that scientific thinking is one of the very important aspects in medical education and in a medical profession itself. Physicians must in their daily practice use scientific thinking and must analyse the problem. They must formulate the problem and propose a solution. They must act.

From the main aspect of our task the fundamental question was: What makes a student participate in research? We have come to the conclusion that there are two kinds of students. One, in the minority, is really motivated in doing research and spends hours in the laboratory. The other, in the majority, is not interested in doing research and after graduation, aims to go into the health service.

We dealt a little bit with the first group and came to the conclusion that even the very motivated students interested in doing research can be divided into two groups. One group contains students who participate in research because they expect a higher evaluation and because they feel that participating in research gives them better standing. After all, the German experience shows that there is a difference between *Arzt* and *Doctor of Medicine*.

And then of course there is the second subgroup: those students who are genuinely interested in research. This group is an especially important one, because besides other things it is a very important valuable source of teaching in basic sciences, in basic subjects. It is something which could be called a self-renewal of a teaching staff in basic sciences.

We discussed several models which might solve the problem of giving possibilities to those students. We feel that we have to offer the students the possibility to participate in research and that we have to expose the students to scientific thinking. In the first group, the American Model was referred to, as it was described in the recent journal of the National Cancer Institute, and then the European experience was described. It referred to a combined German experience from both the Federal Republic and the GDR, and to the Czechoslovakian experience.

Besides other questions, the organizing of the so-called scientific conferences of medical students was discussed to some extent. There are some countries such as Czechoslovakia, Hungary, the GDR and Poland, where students themselves organize scientific conferences once a year on a faculty basis. The best papers are delivered on a national or state basis, and even participants from other countries are present. In Czechoslovakia the students go practically every year to Hungary. Quite recently, as you might know, the European Scientific Conference was held in Istanbul.

All students, that is, the "normal students", must be exposed to scientific thinking. We appreciate the Dutch contribution with evaluating the scientific projects, which every student in the fourth year has to deliver.

There were some interesting conclusions in this study group. We came to the conclusion that there are great differences in Europe regarding the opportunity for students to participate in research, but there are similarities. We would like to suggest to the Executive Committee of AMEE to give room or more space for the continuation of this workshop, because we feel that it is a very important aspect of AMEE activities, especially if we consider the main topic of the Budapest meeting. Perhaps one of the themes should be the students participation in research.