

GUEST EDITORIAL



It is my privilege to edit this congress edition of *Current Allergy & Clinical Immunology*. The Kidz 'n All 2004 Conference is the first combined congress of the South African Paediatric Association, the South African Association of Paediatric Surgeons and the Allergy Society of South Africa, and follows on the brilliantly successful 'Dare to Care' combined congress of 2003. A

great deal of common ground exists between allergy, immunology and paediatrics, and the congress promises to offer state of the art presentations as well as original research. Worrying for those of us who work in the allergy field is that there are so few original papers and that, with one exception, all originate from one university. Until this situation changes, allergology as a speciality in South Africa will remain a pipe dream.

The allergy programme of the congress runs over two and a half days, and we are very privileged to have Associate Professor Susan Prescott from Perth as our invited international guest speaker. The main research focus of her group is the developing immune system during fetal and early postnatal life. Her keynote address concerns possible reasons for the rise in allergy and autoimmunity, and her excellent overview of the relationship between the microbial burden in early life and allergic disease constitutes the main article of this edition of the journal.

We are extremely privileged to have been awarded a GLORIA symposium by the World Allergy Organisation, which has sponsored Professor Ronald Dahl from Denmark to present the immunotherapy module at our congress. He will also train selected members of ALLSA to present this module in other centres in South Africa.

Dr Mike Levin has written a review of the evidence for recommending reduction of house dust mite (HDM)

exposure in allergic disease. He demonstrates that there is a role for limiting exposure to HDM, especially in children, and provides practical guidelines. Dr Allan Puterman reports back on the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology meeting in San Francisco. The paper on Childhood Immunization as a Modulator of the Atopic March provoked his interest and he will address this topic in the combined ALLSA/SAIS session at Kidz 'n All 2004.

My co-authors and I review the subject of asthma and growth, which is of concern to parents as well as to doctors treating asthma in children. In essence, provided the lowest effective doses are used, inhaled steroids are safe even if used long term in children. I have also developed an intense interest in ethics, and have combined this with my long-standing love of allergy in the article on Ethics and Allergy. I have no doubt that ethics will play an increasingly important role in our practices and research activities, and in our relationship with our patients and with the industry. Also in this issue are an excellent overview of allergic rhinitis by Dr Adrian Morris, and an approach to latex allergy in the workplace, ably discussed by Drs Jim teWaterNaudé and Mohamed Jeebhay.

Thank you to the ALLSA Excom for being brave enough to sanction another combined congress, to the Kidz 'n All 2004 congress organising and scientific committees, to the speakers and researchers, and to the pharmaceutical and other companies who have supported us. Thank you to Heather and Eugene for the privilege of guest editing this journal, to the contributors, and to Anne Hahn for her assistance and meticulous editing.

Thank you to you, the reader, and to delegates to this congress. Welcome to Cape Town! I wish you all a very enjoyable and stimulating congress together with our paediatric and surgical colleagues!

Sharon Kling

ATTENTION ALLSA MEMBERS

This is to inform you that the 2004 ALLSA Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held at the International Convention Centre, Cape Town during the ALLSA Congress.

Details of the AGM are listed below:

TIME: 13h30 - 14h00

DATE: Sunday 15th August 2004

VENUE: The International Convention Centre, Cape Town

AGENDA

1. Minutes of previous meeting
2. Matters arising
3. Chairman's report
4. Secretary's report
5. Treasurer's report
6. Proposed amendments to Constitution (for PBO purposes)
7. General

Prof Cas Motala
Dr Sharon Kling
Dr Adrian Morris
Prof Cas Motala