

Foreword

Some weeks ago the World Health Organization (WHO) expert group International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) published updated statistics on the development on cancer. According to these data the number of cancer deaths is expected to rise by more than 50% in the next 20 years. The expert committee estimates that approximately 8.2 million people died from cancer worldwide in 2012, and this number is predicted to increase to around 13 million by 2034. The number one cause of cancer deaths is lung cancer, followed by breast and stomach cancer.

This marked increase in cancer burden seems to be related to increases in life expectancy and population growth. However, other factors mentioned include some that clinical environmental medicine had recognized as risk factors years ago. According to the IARC's scientific advisors poor nutrition and air pollution play an important part. Although it is officially held that individual lifestyle factors and the failure to adopt protective measures against exposure to toxic agents carry a higher risk potential than the exposure to ubiquitous environmental contaminants, this concept implicitly concedes that anthropogenic causes do play an increasingly important role in the pathogenesis of cancer diseases. It is particularly in the context of individual susceptibility where even minute concentrations of toxic agents become critical for the development of tumors.

EUROPAEM has demonstrated its commitment for environmental issues for many years on a national and, importantly, international level. Risk factors such as electromagnetic and radioactive radiation, hormonally active substances, heavy metals, pesticides, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and many more have been discussed as tumor causes in environmental medicine and other disciplines. In his recently published article *"Rethinking the war on cancer"* (Lancet 2014) Douglas Hanahan states that the strategy of treating tumors based on their specific mechanisms has reached its limits and he calls for integrative, holistic concepts. Such concepts can only be developed integrating more knowledge and insights gained in environmental medicine. This year's Congress will focus on cancer diagnosis and treatment from the perspective of clinical environmental medicine with special emphasis on pathogenesis and individual susceptibility. The importance of electromagnetic radiation and its tumor-associated potential will be given particular consideration.

On behalf of the EUROPAEM Board I kindly invite you to attend our International Congress in Würzburg, Germany, on 10th to 12th October 2014. Beside established German experts we are proud to announce renowned international speakers and, for the first time, the president of the American Academy for Environmental Medicine (AAEM) as our guests.

I am looking forward to meeting you in Würzburg!

Best regards on behalf of the EUROPAEM Board

Dr. Kurt E. Müller