



Dr. Donna Seger

International collaboration between societies broadens each society, offers benefits to members, and furthers the science in a manner that could not be done by either society alone. It is important for members of both societies to recognize the opportunities that this collaboration brings. Therefore, Jan Meulenbelt and I have coauthored an overview of the collaboration between the AACT and EAPCCT.



Dr. Jan Meulenbelt

The importance of the AACT— EAPCCT Collaboration

Editor
Elizabeth Scharman, PharmD

Over the last 35 years, The European Association of Poisons Centres and Clinical Toxicologists (EAPCCT) and the American Academy of Clinical Toxicology (AACT) have followed similar paths. As both societies approach their 40th birthdays, their futures may be more closely linked than ever before. The advances in electronic communication have brought these two organizations closer together. As both societies have such similar scientific aims and objectives, the ties run ever deeper.

Both societies started life in the swinging 60s, the EAPCCT in 1964 and the AACT in 1968. Each was founded by a group of physicians and scientists with the general aim of advancing the knowledge and understanding of all forms of poisoning, in order to develop a safe and effective approach to the poisoned patient. The necessity of establishing systems to prevent poisoning incidents was also recognized. In essence, the goals of both societies remain the same today.

The multidisciplinary aspect of the science of toxicology was immediately recognized. It is to the credit of both organizations that they continue to attract memberships from a wide range of backgrounds—clinical and research toxicologists, physicians, pharmacists, nurses, poison information specialists, public health physicians, industrial hygienists and toxicologists, clinical biochemists and analytical chemists, veterinarians, and many others. Both organizations also realized the importance of dissemination of the results of collaborative research into the wider medical and scientific communities. Poison centers continue to be central in this endeavor.

Both societies continue to encourage and promote the high professional and scientific standards in the activities of their memberships, and recognize that the career development of future generations will ensure these standards are both maintained

and improved. Widespread and ongoing collaboration has been and continues to be the key.

The AACT and EAPCCT collaboration has developed close and mutually beneficial ties. This is most noticeable at the scientific congresses. The AACT now participates actively in the annual International Congress of the EAPCCT, as the co-sponsoring society. Reciprocally, the EAPCCT is one of the participating societies in the North American Congress of Clinical Toxicology (NACCT), along with the American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC), the American College of Medical Toxicology (ACMT) and the Canadian Association of Poison Control Centres (CAPCC). Each year the EAPCCT is invited to host a symposium within the NACCT, and individuals who are active within the AACT participate as speakers or moderators at the EAPCCT meetings. Both societies have representatives on the organizing and scientific committees for each other's meetings, and the members of each society can register for either congress at the membership rates. The AACT also accredits both meetings for continuing education credits for physicians and pharmacists according to the criteria of the American Council of Continuing Medical Education and the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education. A tangible benefit of these arrangements is that international attendance at these events has increased markedly over the past few years. Delegates meet to broaden horizons and realize similarities and differences in approach elsewhere in the world, as well as the practical and political difficulties. Most importantly they experience the unique and distinctive flavor of each of the meetings—both scientifically and socially!

The societies also share sponsorship of an official journal, the *Journal of Toxicology—Clinical Toxicology*, published by

Inside...

*North American
Congress of Clinical
Toxicology's Annual
Meeting*

*In Memoriam:
Patrick McKinney*

In Memoriam:



Patrick McKinney was a friend and colleague. His accomplishments have been recognized. But I know that I, along with others, will remember his kindness, his integrity, his inquisitive mind, his half smile, his short staccato laugh, his love of teaching, the fact that he drank warm yogurt from the carton, the fact that he had taught Sam the scientific nomenclature for plants by the age of two, and the fact that he saw a person in each patient. A person lives on in the lives that he has touched. Pat touched all of our lives. We will not forget him.

A trust fund has been established for his sons' education. Memorials can be made out to: Pat McKinney Memorial Trust, PO Box 10663, Albuquerque, NM 87184.

Donna Seger

The Importance of AACT

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Marcel Dekker, Inc. This shared venue minimizes duplication of effort and expense and ensures that quality research and science in the field of Clinical Toxicology continues to be published regularly. Subscription to this journal is offered as a benefit of membership for both societies. The editors for the journal are chosen by both societies in collaboration with the publisher, and members of each organization are represented on the editorial boards.

And what of the science? In addition to the regular sharing of cases and experience at congresses, one of the most obvious results of the close ties between the two societies has been the drafting and publication of Position Statements. The Position Statements on GI decontamination have helped to change clinical practice. It is time to address more issues in a similar fashion.

The AACT and EAPCCT executive committees and Boards have agreed on a methodology for an ongoing series of Position Papers. The Position Papers will be comprehensive, evidence-based scientific reviews incorporating a systematic literature review and detailed recommendations graded according to the strength of the supporting evidence and will be referenced fully. It is agreed that, when practicable, these documents will be presented at the NACCT and the EAPCCT congresses for purposes of consultation and approval, and to encourage the widest possible circulation. They will also be available on the web site of the societies (www.clintox.org and www.eapcct.org) and considered for publication in the Journal of Toxicology—Clinical Toxicology. They will also be subject to an agreed regular review process to ensure their currency.

Members of the Position Paper committees are appointed by the respective presidents and are comprised of three members of the AACT and three members of the EAPCCT. There is agreement that collaboration will occur to write Position Papers on chemical warfare agents. Currently committees are working on a Position Paper dealing with vesicants. The Presidents are in the process of appointing another committee to work on other chemical warfare agents. Additionally, a separate committee is working on updating the GI Decontamination Position Statements.

Collaborative ventures between the EAPCCT and the AACT will be of great benefit to their members and influence individual and joint credibility. Collaboration will also influence activities of other national and international organizations such as professional bodies, local governments, and the World Health Organization. Collaboration ensures a widening and continued recognition of clinical toxicology as a scientific and medical specialty of great importance.

Donna Seger, AACT President

Jan Meulenbelt, EAPCCT President

North American Congress of Clinical Toxicology Annual Meeting September 4th through 9th, 2003 Chicago, Illinois

Join your colleagues in celebrating 50 years of poison center services in the United States! A review of the history of poison centers will be featured at a Keynote Luncheon on Sunday, September 7th. A celebrity roast of our AAPCC past-presidents at the President's Reception the following evening also promises to be entertaining and informative. As always, the educational opportunities during the meeting are numerous and varied. Consider attending this year's AACT Pre-Meeting Symposium is *From Cradle to Grave: Recent Developments in Clinical Toxicology*. The AACT Acute and Intensive Care Symposium and the AACT Occupational and Environmental Symposium on Saturday morning are followed by a panel discussion of Controversies in Carbon Monoxide Management that afternoon. The EAPCCT symposium, Controversies in Antidotal Therapies, takes place on Monday the 8th. A tentative schedule for the Annual Meeting, and the number of continuing education credits available, can be found on the AACT Website at <http://www.clintox.org>. You can also use the website to complete online registration.

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