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"Partnerships for the Future: Science & Health"

Selected Highlights of the Tenth International Congress on Circumpolar Health

Anchorage, May 19-24, 1996

Egan Convention Center

Diabetes in the North: Facts and Interventions

Interventions for prevention and treatment of non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus relevant to isolated northern communities and indigenous populations will be discussed. Featured speakers include T.Kue Young, Anne McCauley, J.P. Dooley, Elizabeth Robinson, Roland Dyck from Canada; Evgeniy Shubnikov from Russia; and Anna Angaiak from the U.S.

Diet and Heart

The relationship of omega-3 fatty acids to coronary lesions, and differences in lesions and fatty acids among Greenland Eskimos, Alaska Natives, and non-Natives will be presented by distinguished colleagues from Greenland, Canada, Russia, and the U.S.A. Other presentations will feature changes in disease patterns, the latest information on the risk factors for heart disease in the North and the potential benefits afforded by traditional subsistence foods.

Environmental Health

A review and update of the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP) will be provided with guest presenters from each of the member countries. In another session methylmercury dietary intake standards and health implications of methylmercury in fish and marine mammals will be discussed. Guest speakers include: P. Weihe of the Faroe Islands, C. Cox and colleagues, University of Rochester, and G. Becking, World Health Organization. The overall risks and benefits of subsistence foods will also be discussed by panel presenters including Elders representing Indigenous People's of the North and representatives of public health and research institutions.

Health Services Delivery

Issues related to the recruitment and retention of health care providers in the North and the development and utilization of local expertise in remote regions will be featured. The Congress will provide a forum for the presentations and discussions of new or existing models of health service delivery from throughout the circumpolar region. A primary goal is the discussion of universal issues related to barriers affecting access to health care by circumpolar peoples and proposed or demonstrated solutions to these challenges.

Hepatitis A to E and Beyond

Six internationally renowned speakers will present on the biology, epidemiology, treatment and prevention of viral hepatitis with an emphasis on hepatitis in the Arctic. Speakers include: Drs. B. Hollinger, H. Margolis, B. McMahon, D. Gretch, and H. Alter from the U.S.; and M. Favorov from Russia.

Indigenous People's Program

The Indigenous People's Program will present keynote addresses, sessions and workshops throughout the week. President Rosemarie Kuptana (Inuit Circumpolar Conference - Canada), and President Julie Kitka (Alaska Federation of Natives), Native Traditional Healers and Elders are among the featured speakers. Topics will include: the role of traditional medicine, knowledge and healing; the impact of sovereignty and self-determination on Native health; causes, treatments and effects of alcohol and substance abuse from a Native perspective; ethics of research in indigenous populations; and examples of community-initiated research and partnerships. The Indigenous Program will also host an evening Native Cultural Celebration featuring drumming, dancing and traditional Native sports.

Telemedicine and Health Informatics

Health and medical information processing is a rapidly evolving field of importance to the delivery of medical services, community health and preventive services, and applied research in the health sciences, particularly for remote regions. Sessions on telemedicine and demonstrations of the rapidly emerging technologies in the field of health informatics will be held during the Congress. In addition, a post-Congress (May 24-25) working group will concentrate on building international collaboration on needs assessment, technology implementation, evaluation, and funding. Drs. J. Sanders, a founder of Telemedicine, M. Ackerman, National Library of Medicine, and a number of other telemedicine experts from other countries are expected to participate.

Continuing Education Credits

Thirty-four continuing education credits have been applied for and will be available for Congress participants.