

THE „DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR ELEKTROSTIMULATION UND ELEKTROTHERAPIE e.V.“ (GESET) - GERMAN SOCIETY OF ELECTROSTIMULATION AND ELECTROTHERAPY - A TOOL FOR QUALITY CONTROL

Mokrusch T, Bossert FP, David E, Lange A, Blum B
University of Erlangen-Nürnberg
GESET German Headquarters c/o Hedon-Klinik, D-49811 Lingen (Germany)

Abstract

The German „Gesellschaft für Elektrostimulation und Elektrotherapie e. V.“ (GESET) was founded in 1996 by scientific experts in the field in cooperation with the leaders of the national professional organisations. Members of therapists and medical doctors, scientists of other faculties and developers, the GESET is thought to serve as a tool for quality control in the field of electrotherapy. The GESET is an interdisciplinary forum. Particularly, it aims to: 1) organizing courses and congresses; 2) certifying other providers of electrotherapeutical training courses; 3) organizing consensus conferences; 4) defining the standards for quality control in electrotherapy; 5) supplementing scientific work with grants and awards; 6) editing a German medical journal with a scientific part „electrostimulation“, and a clinical part „electrotherapy“; 7) defining the curriculum for an additional professional qualification called „electrotherapy“.

or less well-trained therapists may add. A special profession „electrotherapist“ does not exist. There are training courses concerning electrotherapy within the professional training both for physiotherapists and masseurs, with similar guide-lines.

Several national organisations are concerned with vocational questions of physiotherapists and masseurs:

Zentralverband der Physiotherapeuten/
Krankengymnasten e.V. (ZVK).
Deutzer Freiheit 72-74, 50679 Köln
(Tel.: 0221/9810270).

Verband Physikalische Therapie e. V. (VPT)
Hauptgeschäftsstelle: Hofweg 15, 22085 Hamburg
(040/2201236)
Bundesvorsitzender: Leopoldstr. 41, 80802
München (089/343061)

Physiotherapieverband e. V. (VDB)
Bundesverband: Prinz-Albert-Str. 41, 53113 Bonn
(0228/210506)

Interessengemeinschaft freiberuflicher
Krankengymnasten e. V. (IFK)
Königsallee 17, 44799 Bochm (0234/795302)

There is no lobby for the specialization of electrotherapists. Thus, the German „Gesellschaft für Elektrostimulation und Elektrotherapie e. V.“ (GESET) was founded in 1996 by scientific experts in the field in cooperation with the leaders of the national professional organisations. Members are therapists and medical doctors, scientists of other faculties and developers, the GESET it is thought to serve as a tool for quality control in the field of electrotherapy.

Introduction/Background

Every therapeutical success is based on competence and teamwork. In the case of electrotherapy, a clear prescription has to be given from the medical doctor to the therapist, which must be selfexplaining and object-orientated. The therapist, on the other side, has to determine the actual stimulation parameters and the stimulation regime. Finally, the patient himself will tell the therapist his experience with that particularly chosen type of electrotherapy. There must be a close cooperation between the medical doctor and the therapist, if electrotherapy shall be successful. To promote these ideas, it is necessary to have an institution, uniting professionals from different therapeutical groups, which is able to represent their interests.

In Germany, electrotherapy is performend by physiotherapists, masseurs and physicians. Other more

Methods

The GESET is an interdisciplinary forum. Particular, it aims to: 1) organizing courses and congresses; 2) certifying other providers of electrotherapeutical training courses; 3) organizing consensus conferences; 4) defining the standards of quality control in electrotherapy; 5) supplementing scientific work with grants and awards; 6) editing a German medical journal with a scientific part „electrostimulation“ and a clinical part „electrotherapy“; 7) defining the curriculum for an additional professional qualification called „electrotherapy“.

Results

Previous activities were:

1) Organizing courses and congresses: Since its inception in 1996, two major scientific congresses took place in 1996 (Koblenz) and 1999 (Erlangen) with more than 250 participants each, and four minor meetings were held with workshops concerning electrotherapeutical treatment of pain. The next series with four meetings will start in June 2001, concerning motor rehabilitation and spasticity.

2) Certifying other providers of electrotherapeutical training courses: The certification started in 1999 (see also 7).

3) Organizing consensus conferences: As a first step, working groups have been established to work out proposals for particular therapeutical fields. These working groups will be able to make the first recommendations for consensus conferences later in 2001.

4) Defining the standards for quality control in electrotherapy: Total quality management is worldwide of a growing importance in medical fields. There are many efforts in Germany to establish mechanisms of quality control. Particular concerning electrotherapy, however, there are no standards for it up to now. The GESET was asked by the „German Headquarters of the Medical Services“ now to evaluate recommendations for quality control in electrotherapy. The cooperation started in 2000.

5) Supplementing scientific work with grants and

awards: The first award is the „GESET-Preis“ which is sponsored by the industry and amounts DM 10.000,00. It will be awarded every three years, the first time during the next congress in 2002.

6) Editing a German medical journal with a scientific part „electrostimulation“ and a clinical part „electrotherapy“: This journal started with the titel „Zeitschrift für Elektrostimulation und Elektrotherapie“ (ZEE) in 1999 (publishing house: Hippocampus) and is going to be edited quarterly with four annual issues.

7) Defining the curriculum for an additional professional qualification called „electrotherapy“: Two different curricula exist for the training of masseurs and physiotherapist, and there are a few prescriptions for the training of physiatrists. A special electrotherapeutical curriculum now was developed for the training of these groups, and a certificate was initiated for the first time stating the completed training called „Electrotherapy“.

At present, the GESET has 170 members coming from 11 European and Asian countries.

Present Directory Board:

Prof. Dr. med. T. Mokrusch	President
F.P. Bossert	First Vice-President
Prof. Dr. med. E. David	Second Vice-President
Doz. Dr. med. A. Lange	Treasurer
B. Blum	Secretary

Headquarters:

GESET
c/o Hedon-Klinik
Hedonalle 1
D-49811 Lingen (Ems)
Germany

Phone: (+49)/(0)-591-9181111

Facsimile: ---91816

<http://www.geset.de>

e-mail: mokrusch @geset.de

Discussion/Conclusions

Our exeperience from the last five years is that there is a growing interest in the cooperation between the different groups of members (and even non-members) of

the GESET, developers and therapists, basic scientists, physicians, biomedical technicians etc., as mentioned above. Several activities have been initiated and working-groups have been founded (concerning side-effects of electrotherapy, for example). There has also been some growing interest during the last two years to found an international society with the same or similar aims. The Directory Board may encourage any person being concerned with electrotherapy to make contact (address see above) for further discussion.

References

Excerpt from the Bylaws
(Original in German):

§ 2 der Satzung: Zweck der Gesellschaft

Zweck der Gesellschaft ist die Förderung der Elektrostimulation und Elektrotherapie als interdisziplinäre Aufgabe zur Integration in alle medizinischen Fachgebiete. Dies soll erreicht werden durch die nicht auf Gewinnerzielungsabsicht gerichtete Organisation von Seminaren, Kongressen und Begegnungsveranstaltungen für Ärzte, Physiotherapeuten/Krankengymnasten, Masseur und medizinische Bademeister, Physiker, Biomedizinische Techniker, Biologen etc.“.

(Transl.):

§ 2: Aims

The aims of the society are the promotion of electrostimulation and electrotherapy as an interdisciplinary task for the integration into different medical fields. This shall be achieved by organizing seminars, congresses and meetings for medical doctors, physicians, masseurs, physiotherapists, biomedical technicians, biologists etc., without the aim of making financial profits.