



Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the Czech Society of Gastroenterology and the International Digestive Cancer Alliance (IDCA), we would like to invite you and the members of your society to the international conference on

“Screening and Management of Colorectal Cancer in Europe - Actual Practice and Future Trends”

to be held in Prague on June 13 and 14, 2008.

With regard to the incidence, mortality and economic considerations related to diagnosis and treatment, colorectal cancer is the malignant tumor with the highest prevalence in the countries of the European Union.

Not only have the early diagnosis and prevention exert an impact on the life of our patients they may also affect the healthcare costs of our countries. Colorectal carcinoma is the only gastrointestinal cancer in the European Union, in which the secondary prevention programs may be effective. The European Union has therefore encouraged its Member States to implement screening programs with respect to local conditions. In about a half of the Member States, national or regional screening programs aimed at the asymptomatic patients have been launched so far. The situation in the field of dispensary care in high-risk groups of the population with a predisposed disease or hereditary burden is even more intriguing. A number of screening techniques ranging from faecal occult bleeding tests to screening colonoscopy are used and other interesting methods are being developed, the effectiveness and safety of which are the subject of intense research.

The integration of screening programs into the global healthcare policy is not a purely medical issue but requires coordinated activities at the highest political level. Equally important is the attention, the media gives to cancer prevention and early diagnosis since good compliance can only be achieved in a well-informed target population.

It has been made clear that the development of screening programs is the highest priority and that the national Gastroenterology Societies have to be involved in their implementation. This trend was set by the conference on colorectal cancer prevention held in May 2007 in Brussels. During the meeting, an important declaration - *Europe against Colorectal Cancer* - was made, which defines the basic elements of the screening system and strongly recommends its implementation.

The scientific program of the Prague Conference shall cover these issues from the 2008 perspective and its participants will be able to get acquainted with the current scientific knowledge presented by renowned world specialists. The main objective of the Prague meeting is to share experiences and to integrate individual national strategies into the European context.

It is our wish to welcome to Prague all those interested in the issue of colorectal cancer and its early prevention and to achieve common progress in the implementation of screening programs in Europe. Please distribute our invitation and the scientific program among your membership.

Thank you.

Kind regards,



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Chairman
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Sidney Winawer
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Miroslav Zavoral
Vice-president
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