

**In the eve of the 8th Congress of BANTAO,
Belgrade 16-19th September 2007**

The spirit of mutual cooperation in the provision of medical care for renal patients will gather the nephrologists from the Balkan Peninsula in Belgrade at the 8th Congress of the Balkan Association of Nephrology, Dialysis, Transplantation and Artificial Organs (BANTAO), which will be held from 16 to 19 September 2007.

The data from the developed countries worldwide such as the United States and the Netherlands are estimated at 6,5% to 10% of the general population to suffer from some degree of kidney disease. This is an evidence and a serious message for the nephrologists to perceive the magnitude of the problem and to be aware of its global dimension.

The number of patients being treated for end stage renal disease (ESRD) globally exceeded 2 million at the end of 2006 and, with a 6% growth rate, continues to increase at a significantly higher rate than the world population. Out of these 2 million ESRD patients, approximately 1.55 million were undergoing dialysis treatment [Hemodialysis (HD) or Peritoneal Dialysis (PD)] and around 470.000 people were living with kidney transplantation.

The International Society of Nephrology (ISN) and the International Federation of Kidney Foundations (IFKF) in conjunction with the European Dialysis and Transplantation Association/European Renal Association (EDTA/ERA) have jointly launched the idea of a World Kidney Day (WKD) to increase the awareness of the dimension referring to the problem with chronic kidney disease and the need of its prevention.

BANTAO Association has adopted the aforementioned initiative for prevention as the best treatment option for kidney diseases. An applied and gathered knowledge from the respective local and regional levels will be discussed during the Congress in the sessions on epidemiology and renal registries and the experience shared will in turn help further promotion of the new ideas to be accomplished.

The connecting bond between the Balkan nephrologists and the members of the BANTAO Association is our BANTAO Journal – the official publication of the Balkan Cities Association of Nephrology, Dialysis, Transplantation and Artificial Organs. As a biannual publication it conveys the gathered messages from and between our congresses and helps sharing our experiences in prevention and treatment of kidney diseases. We do expect to make our Journal recognizable and *Medline* cited within the next year, since it will be its fifth anniversary and a possibility for such an application based on a continuous improvement on its content and design.

Finally, in the light of the European tradition, the mission of BANTAO is to contribute to the future of Europe and its unity by promoting knowledge, cooperation and tolerance.

We invite you to (submit your manuscripts) publishing in the BANTAO Journal and to help its further strengthening and growing in parallel with our BANTAO Association!

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