

EDITORIAL

Dear Readers, Contributors, Reviewers and Friends,

Tempus celeriter fugit! Do you know that our Journal, transformed in 2013 from a quarterly into a bimonthly, in a few days, i.e. in the New Year 2014, will be entering its 27th year of editorial working?

It is a great occasion to thank you for your cooperation resulting in the IF amounting presently to 1.305. We will do our best to expand it soon.

The present 6th issue, closing the yearly volume of 2013, contains as many as 11 original papers on different subjects. T.A. Dewland et al., the authors from the Curtin University, Perth, Australia, open the issue with their study on the situation of lone working magnetic resonance (MR) technologists, who – according to the recommendation – should not work alone due to health risk. The questionnaire survey revealed that, unfortunately, about half of the interviewed MR technologists experienced lone working, mainly in the private MR centers. However, the training provided by safety officers seemed to be adequate for meeting the legal requirements.

The next paper by W. Drygas et al., the Medical University of Łódź, Poland, the Gdańsk University of Physical Education and Sport, Poland, the Medical University of Gdańsk, Poland, the University of Liverpool, the United Kingdom, reports the epidemiology of physical activity (PA) in the adult Polish population in the second decade of the 21st century. The results of the NATPOL 2011 cross-sectional study showed that the PA level of more than a half of adults is still not satisfactory (only about 48% of adults do exercise for at least 30 min on most days of work) and promotion of an active lifestyle, mainly in leisure time, is necessary.

Predictors of mental health in female teachers are discussed by R. Seibt et al. from the Technical University

of Dresden and the University of Leipzig, Germany. The effort-reward-ratio proved to be the most relevant predictor, while physical complaints as well as inability to recover and sense of coherence were identified as advanced predictors, whereas cardiovascular risk factors and health behavior did not have a relevant influence.

The study on the assessment of children's residential exposure to some allergens (mite, cockroach, cat, dog) and microbial indicators: endotoxins and (1→3)-β-D-glucans is presented by A. Kozajda et al., our colleagues from the Nofer Institute of Occupational Medicine, Łódź, Poland. Higher concentrations of endotoxins, (1→3)-β-D-glucans and each type of allergens in the settled dust were found when the floor was covered with carpet, on the contrary to rooms with smooth floor.

The problem of indoor allergens in the settled dust is also raised by M. Cyprowski et al. (the Nofer Institute of Occupational Medicine, Łódź, Poland, the Central Institute for Labour – National Research Institute, Warszawa, Poland). Their study performed in kindergartens localized in urban agglomeration indicated the high accumulation of house dust mite, dog, cat and cockroach allergens, which creates the need of keeping the kindergarten rooms tidy and clean. G.M. Brożek et al. from the Medical University of Silesia, Katowice, Poland, and the Canadian Center for Health and Safety in Agriculture, Saskatoon, Canada, examined the true occurrence of childhood asthma based on questionnaire-derived estimates. Their comparison of survey estimates and clinical evaluation proved that asthma prevalence was underestimated (5.4% vs. 10.8%), possibly resulting from under-presentation or under-diagnosis, hence the questionnaire estimates should be carefully considered.

The role of occupational hazards in injuries and individual factors contributions among coalminers were assessed by A. Bhattacharjee et al., the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, India, the University of Luxembourg, and from Paris, France: INSERM and the University Paris-Sud & University Paris Descartes. In their case-control study of Indian and French coalminers, the annual rate of injuries amounted to 5.5% and 14.9%, respectively; the major injury causes being hand-tools, material handling, environmental/work-geological/strata conditions among the Indian workers and the biomechanical exposure score among the French ones. The miners' age turned out to be the factor reducing or exacerbating the roles of occupational hazards.

The study by B. Harazin et al. (from the Institute of Occupational Medicine and Environmental Health, Sosnowiec, the School of Higher Vocational Education, Nysa, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Institute, Kraków, and the Luxmed Group Medical Center, Katowice, Poland) comes up with the evaluation of the effect of individual finger skin temperature on the vibrotactile perception threshold (VPT). The findings revealed that the mean VPT values among the subjects with "cold hands" were significantly higher than in those with "warm hands".

The next paper, by C. Sivri et al., the International Faculty of the University of Sheffield and the South-East European Research Centre, Thessaloniki, Greece, is focused on the assessment of psychological and social drivers of non-smokers' readiness to assert their right for smoke-free air in the workplace. It was concluded – as a result of a questionnaire survey participated by employees of small and medium enterprises – that health beliefs related to second hand smoke exposure and concerns about workplace health and job performance, social norms and self-efficacy can increase assertiveness behavior of non-smokers in workplace settings.

The purpose of the investigation by A. Muttray et al. from the Institute of Occupational, Social and Environmental Medicine, Mainz, the University of Applied Sciences, Schmalkalden, and the Institute of Forensic Medicine, Mainz, Germany, was refining a commercial car driving simulation for occupational medicine. The effect of ethanol on the subjects' performance during simulation was examined and disorders of the tracking in the right-hand curves and deterioration of mean tracking reaction time at 0.1% blood alcohol concentration were observed. The conclusion is that simulation seems suitable for occupational research.

The last paper in this issue, by Y. Li et al. from the Fudan University, Shanghai, China, and the University of Illinois, Chicago, USA, is devoted to the associations between genetic polymorphisms in the P53 pathway genes and micronucleus occurrence in vinyl chloride (VC)-exposed workers. There was found a highly significant dose-response relationship between VC exposure and chromosomal damage.

I hope this summary will encourage everybody to read the full texts of the articles.

Since the present issue is the last one in 2013 and closes our editorial series this year, let me express our appreciation to the IJOMEH's Reviewers for their in-depth and on time evaluation of the submitted manuscripts. Our words of gratitude are also addressed to our Contributors for the good cooperation with the Editorial Office. We are sure that the further success of the Journal will depend on an active and stimulating interaction with the international community of occupational and environmental health specialists as well as experts in related domains.

Good luck and prosperity in the coming 2014 year!

*Prof. Wiesław J. Sułkowski
on behalf of the Editorial Board*