

## ***Langenbeck's Archives of Surgery* supporting the 128th annual meeting of the German Society of Surgery in Munich, 3–6 May 2011**

**“Heilen zwischen Ratio und Humanität”**

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Contrary to the trend of increasing subspecialisation, the German Society of Surgery is growing. It presently incorporates ten professional surgical societies, which emphasizes the impact of the annual meeting. The collaborative approach of the society is furthermore reflected by the selection of superordinate major scientific topics as basis for a new structure of the meeting, which will be the 128th since 1872, held in Munich from 3 to 6 May 2011.

This year the President elected to focus on the four major topics—Surgical Intensive Care, Surgical Infection, Transplantation of Cells, Organs and Tissue and Emergency Care/Disaster Management. The scientific program was concentrated around these topics to allow for interdisciplinary discussion amongst the various surgical professions.

This current issue of *Langenbeck's Archives of Surgery* is dedicated to the 128th annual meeting of the German Society of Surgery. It includes a series of review articles reflecting present clinical insight concerning the meeting's four major topics in order to stimulate discussion during the scientific sessions.

Linke et al. picture the essential role of the surgeon for patient care following surgery [1]. They are able to conclude that patient outcome following surgery is improved when surgeons are more than “visiting consultants” on the intensive care wards.

Graf et al. describe the enormous economic burden caused by surgical site infections for the healthcare system [2]. This also applies to infections associated with surgical implants. Thus, morbidity and mortality due to infections, including infections by multi-resistant bacteria, still represent major challenges in all surgical fields and therefore warrant a more thorough and interdisciplinary discussion.

The future of transplantation and the potential role of mesenchymal stem cells and tissue engineering are highlighted by Hilfiker et al. [3], whereas Fändrich reports the current progress in the field of clinical operational tolerance in transplantation medicine [4].

Natural disasters, catastrophes caused by hostile attacks as well as major accidents require professional organisation of surgical emergency care. Fischer et al. describe the progress made in Germany after the Ramstein and Eschede disasters and point to further improvement needed to meet current threats [5]. Willy et al. in this context give an insight into the experience of German military surgeons in Afghanistan [6].

An exciting meeting is anticipated with each of the four congress days dedicated to one of the four topics mentioned above. Keynote lectures in the morning will depict the clinical problem, followed by reports from the different surgical societies. The status of experimental and clinical research in the respective field as well as the status of modern management structures will form the basis for a plenary discussion at the end of each day. A very serious attempt will here be made to sum up the day with a few statements and recommendations concerning current status and future developments.

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