

Dear Readers of 'Palliative Medicine in Practice',



We are pleased to present to you the second issue of the journal in 2018. It contains five original articles, one review article and a translation of the document concerning the Voluntary Service.

The issue opens with the original article by Dr. Tomasz Grądalski, Dr. Krystyna Kochan and Dr. Anna Białoń-Janusz, "Palliative Care Referral Form: An urgent indications triage tool for palliative and hospice care — prospective observational study", devoted to proper qualification of patients for palliative care. This article represents an important voice in the discussion among palliative care specialists about finding the optimal way of qualifying patients for palliative, hospice and supportive care, which would ensure the widest possible access for patients who require such care. As the article shows, this is not an easy task, which seems to be confirmed by recent discussions and attempts to develop a tool for proper qualification of patients. It seems that the clinical evaluation by a palliative medicine specialist, taking into account as many factors as possible, including the clinical condition, diagnosis and prognosis as well as the multiple needs of patients and caregivers, remains the most appropriate approach. The authors of the article, based on their own knowledge and extensive clinical experience as well as the presented referral form, discuss the results obtained and review relevant literature. We are interested in your opinions and cordially invite you to present them in our journal.

The second original article, "Assessment of the quality of life of women with breast cancer depending on the surgical treatment method used" by Dr. Aneta Gałka, Dr. Natalia Świątoniowska, Dr. Jolanta Kolasińska, Dr. Piotr Hańczyc and Dr. Beata Jankowska-Polańska, discusses the problem of quality of life assessment in women diagnosed with breast cancer, treated with various surgical methods. The authors show that the quality of life depends on the type of surgery performed. Anticancer treatment in this group of patients is more and more effective, which results in increased survival time; hence, the problem of the quality of life of women diagnosed with breast cancer remains very important, also in the advanced stage of the disease.

Another original article "Daily life fatigue and coping strategies in family caregivers of home mechanically-ventilated Individuals" describes the problems of caregivers of patients treated at home. This topic is quite rarely the subject of scientific research, especially in our country; hence, the issue seems to be very important. The authors of the article, a clinician (Dr. Zbigniew Szkulmowski) and a psychologist (Dr. Karolina Szatkowska) present problems of caregivers of patients ventilated at home, pointing to a very heavy burden on families involved in long-term care at home and the need to develop an effective way of support the caregivers providing home care to chronically ill patients, which would help to reduce the level of fatigue and stress experienced by them.

In the next original article, "Emotional control and social competence of nurses working in palliative care: a research report on workers from the Warmia and Mazury voivodeship", Dr. Karolina Dąbrowska-Chołostiakow and Dr. Teresa Kocbach discuss problems related to the exposure of nurses to stress. This issue is rarely the subject of research in our country, and it becomes a very important problem for nursing staff who often are not only overloaded with duties, but also experience a significant emotional burden while working with seriously ill patients and their caregivers.

An important issue is education about the proper use of opioid analgesics, which is discussed in the next original article, "What do students know about the use of opioids in the treatment of chronic cancer-related pain" by Dr. Monika Rucińska, Dr. Anna Kieszowska-Grudny, Dr. Anna Sugajska and Dr. Karolina Osowiecka. The authors present the results of a survey conducted among students of the medical department and other university units. The results indicate limited knowledge of students of the medical department and other facul-

ties, especially of lower years, about the principles of using opioid analgesics in the treatment of chronic pain. These data can be used to improve the curriculum of undergraduate education.

The only review paper in the current issue, "The use of opioid analgesics in symptomatic treatment of advanced non-cancer pulmonary diseases" by Dr. Magdalena Osowicka, Dr. Piotr Janowiak and Dr. Agnieszka Gorzewska, discusses the use of opioids in patients diagnosed with non-neoplastic lung diseases. The authors describe the mechanisms of action of opioids in dyspnoea, paying attention to the benefits, but also side effects of this group of drugs, and to insufficient knowledge of healthcare practitioners about the use of opioids in dyspnoea in this group of patients. The article contains a current literature review and is a valuable source of knowledge about opioid therapy.

The issue closes with the translation of the document "Voice of Volunteering – the EAPC Madrid Charter on Volunteering and Hospice Care", which was jointly developed by the Voluntary Group of the European Society for Palliative Care (EAPC), the Worldwide Hospice and Palliative Care Alliance (WHPCA) and the International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care (IAHPC). The document emphasizes the important role volunteers play in the care of patients and caregivers, as well as in the development of palliative and hospice care units.

The 10th World Scientific Congress of the European Association for Palliative Care (EAPC), which took place in Bern, Switzerland, on 24–26.05.2018, is already behind us. We would like to address the main topics of the Congress during our annual meeting. We cordially invite all readers to take part in the 11th Conference of "Palliative Medicine in Practice" journal, which will be an international event. The conference will take place in Gdańsk on 8–9 June 2018 under the patronage of European Association for Palliative Care, His Magnificence Rector of the Medical University of Gdańsk Prof. Marcin Gruchała, as well as the Polish Association for the Study of Pain, the Polish Society of Palliative Medicine and the Polish Association of Palliative Care. All information about the Conference can be found at: www.paliatywna.viamedica.pl

We wish you enjoyable reading and send our warmest wishes,
Wojciech Leppert, Leszek Pawłowski