

Report from the First ESGENA Technical Skills Workshop for Endoscopy Nurses, in Reykjavik (May 2008)

Michael Ortmann

Steam from hot springs in the region is supposed to have inspired Reykjavík's name, as Reykjavík translates to "Smokey Bay". The first permanent settlement in Iceland by Nordic people is believed to have been established in Reykjavík by Ingólfur Arnarson around AD 870. Reykjavik is the capital and largest city of Iceland. It is located in southwestern Iceland, on the southern shore of Faxaflói Bay. With a population of 119,000, it is the heart of Iceland. 37% of the population lives in Reykjavik. Today, Reykjavík is the centre of the Greater Reykjavík Area which, with a population of 200,000, is the only metropolitan area in Iceland. Its location, only slightly south of the Arctic Circle, receives only four hours of daylight on the shortest day in the depth of winter; during the summer the nights are almost as bright as the days. (Wikipedia)

The First ESGENA Workshop for Endoscopy Nurses was held in Reykjavik from 27 to 29 May 2008. Michael Ortmann and Björn Fehrke from Basel University Hospital in Switzerland travelled to Iceland to give the first of these new-format workshops (see the previous article in this issue). Anja Schuster of Olympus Europe provided support for the team both in preparing for the workshop and on site.

The Icelandic Society of Endoscopy Nurses (Insight) has been doing very professional and highly motivated work for many years now. The society has 20 members, and new members joined during the workshop. Iceland has around 15 gastroenterologists and 30 endoscopy nurses (for a total population of around 304,000).

Twenty-eight participants attended the 3-day workshop, which was held in the offices of the Olympus distributor in Iceland (the Inter hf company). The aims of the workshop were to update the participants' knowledge and skills in endoscopic techniques in gastroenterology and bronchoscopy; to emphasize aspects of patient care and assistance; and to provide a forum for exchanging information and experience. The workshop combined state-of-the-art lectures with practical training, focusing on integrated patient care in endoscopy. Training was provided both for beginners and for more experienced nurses. The Swiss team also demonstrated how to make inexpensive, simple and very effective home-made dummies for practicing various endoscopic techniques. The simple dummies will help Icelandic colleagues in training new staff in everyday routine work and in providing effective dummies for national workshops and courses.

The first day of the workshop (Tuesday 27 May) began with presentations by Michael Ortmann on 'The role of the tutor in training new staff' and by Björn Fehrke on 'The nurse's role in sedation and monitoring of patients in endoscopy'. For the hands on training session in the afternoon (Fig. 1), the theoretical background was provided by a lecture by Michael Ortmann on the management of upper gastrointestinal bleeding (Fig. 2). Training in the following techniques was provided: injection therapy and clipping; treatment of varices (band ligation, sclerotherapy, ethoxysclerol, Histoacryl); and bipolar coagulation. Learning outcomes were assessed with a quiz at the end of the day, which closed with a presentation by AstraZeneca.

The second day of the workshop also started with lectures — Michael Ortmann on reprocessing endoscopic equipment, Anna Soffía Guómundsdóttir and Sólrún Hulda Pálsdóttir on the use of high-frequency surgery in endoscopy, and a presentation by the Inter ehf Island. The hands-on training session in the afternoon (Fig. 3) was preceded by a talk by Michael Ortmann on bronchoscopy and associated methods, and training was provided in the following techniques: bronchoscopy, bronchoalveolar lavage, biopsy and cytology, argon plasma coagulation, foreign-body removal, and transbronchial biopsy and needle aspiration. The day again closed with a quiz.

The final day of the workshop (Thursday 29 May) opened with presentations on nursing documentation in endoscopy (Michael Ortmann); the ERCP-V system (Anja Schuster, Olympus); and the activities of the Icelandic society Insight (Herdis Astrádsdóttir). The hands-on training session in the afternoon was

introduced by a presentation by Michael Ortmann about ERCP. For beginners, training was provided in following techniques: cannulation and guide wire techniques; endoscopic sphincterotomy; biopsy with forceps and brushes; stone extraction with a balloon; stenting (with plastic stents); stent removal. Experienced nurses received training in endoscopic sphincterotomy; stone extraction with a basket and lithotripsy; biliary bougienage and dilation; biopsy with forceps and brushes; plastic and metal stenting; and stent removal. The day closed with a quiz again, and with feedback from the participants.

The participants all had an opportunity for networking with friends and colleagues and for continuing the day's discussions at a barbecue held afterwards on the last day.

Very special thanks are due to the local organizers, whose work and enthusiasm brought the project to life — Herdis Astráðsdóttir, the President of Insight, and the Icelandic board and to Mr. Thorvaldur Sigurdsson, local distributor for Olympus in Iceland, who made his company's offices available for the meeting and also provided a great deal of background support before and during the workshop.

Our thanks go to all of our Icelandic colleagues for their warm hospitality, and in particular to Sólrún Hulda Pálsdóttir and Lara Magnúsdóttir for extra support for the tutor's team on the final day.

We are also grateful to the various companies (in addition to Inter ehf Island) whose support made this educational workshop possible: Olympus Europe, Cook, Boston Scientific, AstraZeneca, and Jansen-Cilag. Thanks also go to the ESGENA governing board for their confidence in the organizing team.

This new ESGENA project proved to be a successful way of providing continuing training in endoscopy. The feedback from the participants was very positive, and the effort involved in terms of time, materials, and human resources was certainly worthwhile. This type of workshop has the advantage that training in complex new techniques can be provided in an efficient way with a limited number of participants. The workshops also provide useful time for discussions and for exchanging experience. Further workshops in other European countries are being planned.

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Fig. 1 Michael Ortmann and Icelandic participants during a hands-on-training session.



Fig. 2 Participants listening during one of the theoretical parts of the workshop.



Fig. 3 Björn Fehrke and Icelandic participants during a hands-on training session.