

News

02.04.2007 - the Central European Journal of Public Health became one of the official journals of the Central and Eastern European Chapter of the International Society for Environmental Epidemiology (CEECE ISEE).

The International Society for Environmental Epidemiology (ISEE) is an international organization with members from more than 50 countries. ISEE members have set up local groups in a number of regions, and where they are large enough they can be formally recognized as ISEE regional chapters. ISEE encourages the formation of these regional groups to provide a regional network of scientists involved in environmental epidemiology with specific attention focused on local issues and to provide a way for potential members to join ISEE. Currently ISEE has local groups and chapters in the following areas: in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, South Asia, and East Asia. In 2006 the Czech Republic took a leadership of the Central and Eastern European Chapter of the ISEE by Hana Slachetova being elected president of the Chapter for the next three years.

ISEE provides a forum for the discussion of problems unique to the study of health and the environment. With membership open to environmental epidemiologists and other scientists worldwide, ISEE provides a variety of forums for discussions, critical reviews, collaborations and education on issues of environmental exposures and their human health effects. These include annual meetings, newsletters, workshops and liaisons with academic, governmental, inter-governmental, non-profit and business institutions.

Topics addressed by ISEE members include environmental exposures (e.g. air pollution, hazardous waste, metals, pesticides, radiation), health effects (e.g. cancer, cardiovascular disease, neurologic effects, reproductive effects), methodology (e.g. biomarkers, ecologic investigations, experimental design, exposure/dose assessment, meta-analysis, risk assessment, statistics), environment-gene interactions, and ethics and law. The society encourages membership not only from epidemiology but also from such disciplines as exposure assessment and science, toxicology, biochemistry, and biostatistics among others.

ISEE originated in 1987 when approximately 50 epidemiologists met in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA. Epidemiologists interested in environmental epidemiology and experts in exposure assessment were invited to attend the meeting to discuss the need for an international scientific organization devoted to the field of environmental epidemiology and exposure assessment. A consensus emerged supporting the need for a newly formed society. Facilitated by Dr. Raymond Neutra of the State of California Department of Health Services in the USA, the group subsequently formed a Steering Committee and developed a statement of purpose. A questionnaire was designed to recruit charter members and to elicit their feedback on membership criteria and future meeting programs. One hundred forty-nine individuals completed questionnaires and became charter members of the Society.

Since 1988, the ISEE membership has grown from the 150 charter members to more than 800 members from 60 countries. Although approximately one-half of the membership of ISEE is from North America, the Society has a strong commitment to an international perspective with broad international representation in the Society's leadership, committees, and conferences.

Among the Society's many noteworthy accomplishments are:

- hosting annual conferences that have met in all regions of the world, including the USA, Canada, Mexico, Europe, Middle East, Asia, and Australia, with the 2005 meeting in Africa
- development and advocacy of ethics guidelines for environmental epidemiology research and practice
- development and support of active regional chapters and local groups
- promotion of international collaboration through capacity building activities
- early establishment of close working relationships with exposure assessment professionals, including joint meetings with ISEA and representation on each other's monthly counselor calls
- provision of travel assistance for students and persons from countries underserved by epidemiology to attend the annual conference
- development of a formal awards program in recognition of excellence in environmental epidemiologic research, ethical integrity in research and practice, leadership or service, and outstanding student research accomplishments.

Other milestones include the Society's affiliation with *Epidemiology* as the Society's official journal in 1994 and establishment of a permanent Secretariat in 1996.

More information about ISEE's mission, its by-laws, leadership, past and future conferences, chapters, and committees is available on own website <http://www.iseepi.org/about/index.html>.