

RUSSIAN SOCIETY OF ANGIOLOGISTS AND VASCULAR SURGEONS AND EUROPEAN SOCIETY FOR VASCULAR SURGERY: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

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In the modern world successful work of any medical community cannot be realised without appropriate international cooperation. Close interaction between the Russian Society of Angiologists and Vascular Surgeons and the European Society for Vascular Surgery dates back to 1996. Over more than 20 years the joint work of these Societies not only has not ceased but has reached a higher level.

The article highlights important periods and significant events in the history of our Societies, the interaction at the present stage, and the outlined plans concerning further work. Also given are proofs of the necessity to develop international relations for permanent exchange of experience and scientific ideas, which will contribute to improvement of both the professional skills and quality of care for patients with cardiovascular diseases.

Key words: Russian Society of Angiologists and Vascular Surgeons, European Society for Vascular Surgery, history of vascular surgery, international cooperation.

During the period of active development of vascular surgery and implementation of new technologies of special importance is interaction between various professional communities. Close cooperation between the Russian Society of Angiologists and Vascular Surgeons (RSAVS) and the European Society for Vascular Surgery (ESVS) dates back to 1996 when our physicians commenced participating in annual congresses of the ESVS, receiving research and travel grants to attend training courses.

Interaction between our Societies has been continuing for more than 20 years, thus proving the interest of the RSAVS and ESVS in the joint work. It should be mentioned that Academician A.V. Pokrovsky became the first and only Russian professor who in 2000 took the post of the ESVS President (Fig. 1, 2). This is the evidence of recognition of the significance of the Russian Society and its leader. In the year of being elected President of the ESVS, Anatoly Pokrovsky organized its jubilee conference in London.

In 1985, subsidiary to the All-Union Society of Surgeons there was organized initially a section of vascular surgery later on reformed to the RSAVS. Professor A.V. Pokrovsky was the permanent President of the RSAVS till June 2019 when this post was taken by RAS Academician Professor R.S. Akchurin.

The European Society for Vascular Surgery was founded and inaugurated on May 6, 1987 in London on the initiative of vascular surgeons from Germany,

Austria, Scandinavia, England, the Netherlands and France. This inaugural meeting was attended by presidents and representatives of almost all the national vascular societies in Europe. At the end of the two days of scientific sessions, a business meeting was convened



Fig. 1. Professor A.V. Pokrovsky after being elected President of the ESVS, 2000

and the main objectives of the Society and its Journal agreed (Darke S.G. The European Society for Vascular Surgery and Journal Origins and Early Days. European Journal of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery. 2004; 27: 4: 349–356). Professor Stéphan Haulon (Paris, France) is currently the President of the ESVS.

Speaking about memorable events in the history of our Societies, mention should be made that the 2002 RSAVS Annual Conference held in Yaroslavl was attended by three various-year Presidents of the ESVS who delivered their speeches thereat.

In 2019, as a satellite event to the RSAVS Jubilee XXXV International Conference “Introduction of High Technologies into Vascular Surgery and Phlebology” took place the first in the history of our Societies joint symposium. Addressing it, Professor Sebastian Debus, Secretary General of the ESVS, told about the ESVS activities and defined the trends for constructive cooperation with the Russian Society, thus confirming the ESVS interest in the joint work with the RSAVS. Then A.V. Svetlikov, a current Councillor from Russia in the ESVS, focused attention on the prospects of further cooperation between our Societies.

In the work of the ESVS Council, an active part has for a long time been taken by the Russian Councillor re-elected every three years. This position was in various periods held by Professors A.I. Kirienko, A.A. Fokin, G.Yu. Sokurenko, A.V. Troitsky, V.S. Arakelyan. Associate Professor A.V. Svetlikov, PhD in Medicine, Head of the Vascular Surgery Department of Clinical Hospital № 122 named after L.G. Sokolov (Saint Petersburg) is one of the current Councillors of the ESVS.

Honorary President of the RSAVS Academician A.V. Pokrovsky in annual reports of the Board has constantly underlined the importance of membership in the ESVS. This Society allows its new members, which is of special importance for young vascular surgeons, to participate in educational projects. Such projects contain four most important criteria the vascular surgeon's education is based on, i. e. diagnosis, conservative treatment, open and endovascular surgery. These programmes are available for Russian physicians, since the ESVS has put forward an initiative offering the Russian Society to apply for collective membership.

The ESVS makes it possible to get various grants. Thus, a team under the leadership of Professor R.E. Kalinin (Ryazan State Medical University named after Academician I.P. Pavlov) within the framework of an ESVS grant carried out a study aimed at investigating the effect of factors of the internal coagulation pathway and haemostatic markers of endothelial dysfunction on thrombotic complications in patients with peripheral arteries sclerosis. This is one of examples, demonstrating that to get a grant for physicians from Russia is quite real. During the whole period of interaction, more than



Fig. 2. Persons having served as Presidents of the ESVS (from left to right: Giorgio Biasi, Alain Branchereau, Bert Eikelboom, Anatoly Pokrovsky), 2000

a hundred grants have been allocated for physicians from Russia. It is important to mention that grants are allocated for carrying out research, as well as for travels to attend international meetings and training courses in vascular and endovascular surgery.

Currently, the joint work between our Societies is actively going on. Numerous meetings and sessions, as well as discussion of the most important problems make it possible to outline optimal ways for further development.

Foreign colleagues are interested in close cooperation with the RSAVS which is the acknowledgement of a high status of the Russian Society and its significance for the world medical community. The ESVS Executive Committee's members announced readiness to actively strengthen relations with the RSAVS, to participate in forthcoming congresses of the RSAVS, and to allocate a greater number of grants for young vascular surgeons in training from Russia. Also confirmed was their support of our application to participate in the competition for carrying out a regular Annual Congress of the ESVS in Saint Petersburg. It is most likely that this significant for us event (first in the history of the RSAVS and ESVS) may take place in either 2025 or 2026. However, promoting our application will require colossal efforts, since considerable competition exists for carrying out such an event. Therefore, the RSAVS is facing an ambiguous mission consisting in a 100% membership of Russian vascular surgeons in the ESVS. Detailed information concerning the rules for entering the Society is available at the RSAVS website. Such being the case, this would be a powerful argument in favour of Russia to be nominated.

In 2019, more than 120 vascular surgeons of Russia joined the ESVS. This is a record over all years, suggesting an increased interest of Russian specialists in the ESVS and the opportunities provided by the Society to its members.

In the era of rapid development and implementation of various technologies the key role is played by international cooperation. It is by means of carrying out joint studies that can we find optimal methods of treatment for complicated cardiovascular diseases, thereby improving the patients' quality of life. The ESVS is planning to allocate more grants, to regularly attend and speak at Russian conferences, as well as to include representatives of the RSAVS into

global studies, committees on writing international guidelines. Besides, ESVS representatives are constantly improving the proposal for joining the Society in order to provide Russian specialists with the best terms of acquiring membership. Currently, it is necessary for us to become a full-fledged member of the ESVS, which will make it possible in collaboration with foreign colleagues to considerably contribute to world vascular surgery.

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