

Report: ASEPA Epilepsy Syndrome Workshop
Changchun, Jilin, China
19-20 August 2010

This Epilepsy Syndrome workshop was organized jointly by ASEPA and the China Association Against Epilepsy (CAAE), and was held in Changchun, Jilin, China on 19-20 August 2010. The faculty comprised Wei Ping Liao from China, Ching-Shiang Chi from Taiwan, Chong Tin Tan from Malaysia, and Ernie Somerville and John Dunne from Australia. The 2 day scientific program was planned and coordinated by Drs John Dunne, Chong Tin Tan and Wei Ping Liao.

The CAAE selected the Jilin province as the location for the workshop, as it is a developing area and because the Jilin University is an important national neurology training centre. The workshop was meant to coincide with the launching of the provincial epilepsy society (chapter of the CAAE), but official approval could not be obtained in time.

Jilin province is located in northeastern China, adjoining North Korea and Russia. It has a population of approximately 27 million people, mainly Han Chinese together with Korean, Manchu, Mongol and Hui groups. Seven million people live in Changchun, the capital. Jilin's agriculture centres on rice, corn, timber and traditional medicines, and industry on automobiles, train carriages and minerals. Changchun is a modern city and, in our visits to the surrounding areas, road and rail infrastructure were good.

There are approximately 200 neurologists in the province, with more than 10 with interest in epilepsy. CT scan, EEG and MRI are widely available. Jilin University is an important national training centre for neurology at both the master and doctorate levels. The First Hospital of Jilin University, where the workshop was held, is a modern hospital of more than two thousand beds. It was established in 1949, and has an ongoing expansion programme. The neurology department is housed in a new building with modern facilities and 120 neurology beds, including a dedicated neurointensive care unit. The neurology outpatient clinics see 200 patients per day. There are about 35 neurologists. The neurology department has a longstanding and strong interest in cerebrovascular disease and dementia. In recent years interest in epilepsy has emerge. Two neurologists direct a 6-bed monitoring unit, with epilepsy surgery performed by a neurosurgeon who is also appointed to the neurology department.

There were 150 delegates registered for the workshop. All slides and educational material were translated into Chinese before the workshop and were provided to the delegates. There was strong support for the workshop by the Neurology department and the local authority, as we were hosted for dinner by the Deputy Director of the Hospital.

We believe that the workshop achieved the objectives of enhancing epilepsy knowledge in the Jilin province of China, and of promoting further development of epilepsy at an important regional and national centre for neurology training.

John Dunne