

Introductory message from the President of the Latin American Association for the Study of the Liver

It is with great honor that I speak to all members of ALEH. As all of you, we, the members of the directive committee, are fascinated by the study of liver diseases. Until now, our group was mostly involved with scientific duties, which we have always pursued, and not with the wider view of the associative aspects. Now, we have realized that we can give our contribution to our Society members, in a political and scientific way spreading medical knowledge more easily and, whenever possible, contributing to the Society as a whole. Based on this premise, we have accepted the Presidency of ALEH.

In order to reach our goals, we count on the efficient example of those who preceded us and with the help of a directive board of undisputed quality. In this period, we will do our best to honor this commitment. Our proposal is simple, but we hope it to be effective.

Obviously, the «XXI Congreso de la Asociación Latinoamericana para el Estudio del Hígado» is our major goal. However, in spite of this event being a major focus of our leadership group, it cannot be our only endeavor. That is why we are proposing the organization of some events, which we hope can be feasible. We have the following suggestions:

- *Continuous Medical Education Program*: we intend to promote meetings in some cities in the different countries that are part of ALEH, with the objective of enhancing and spreading the knowledge in the field of liver diseases. This would allow for a greater number of experts in our Society to participate and contribute with their knowledge.
- *Centers of Excellence*: in order to promote integration among our countries, we believe it could be

beneficial to identify several Centers of Excellence that would be able to welcome physicians already initiated in Hepatology. This would allow young doctors to pursue professional training in this area within Latin America and to improve as professionals. These centers would be the platform for the development of a network, which could produce multicenter trials. This is certainly a major challenge we expect to overcome.

- *Consensus Meetings*: we also intend to accomplish a consensus meeting on a subject for which the management is controversial, trying to reach a more harmonic, wiser and, consequently, more representative conduct on the matter.
- *Book on Hepatology*: finally, we believe it would be of great value editing a book on Hepatology in Latin America, a text with the official seal of our Society. Then we would have a guide registering the experience of the greatest experts of our Continent, which would certainly give a valuable contribution to the formation of those interested in Hepatology. It would show the experience produced in our reality, which we believe to be of value.

These are some ideas that we, along with all the members of the directive board, are proposing. To accomplish them we will rely upon the active collaboration of all of our members, who make this singular Society a great family. We, the members of the directive board, will be at your disposal for the matters this Society embraces.

Angelo Alves de Mattos
President