



# kurz und kn@pp news

Nr. 11

January 2008

Dear colleagues,  
Dear friends of our institute,

The whole institute was delighted at the news: Our efforts to improve medical history taking and doctor's interview techniques were awarded a "prize for excellent teaching".

As family doctors, we know exactly how important the interview during visiting hours is. Many medical decisions can be reliably made, solely on the basis of a well conducted interview, or a carefully documented medical history. A doctor conducts around 200,000 doctor-patient interviews during his professional life. In order that these lead to good results for both doctor and patient, systematic training for all medical students is extremely worthwhile.

With the support of the Frankfurt Faculty of Medicine, we are very happy to be in a position to continue this work in the coming years and maybe even to intensify it.

You can find out more about this topic and several others in this issue of "short and sweet".

Enjoy your read, and I wish you many interesting conversations and meetings during 2008!

Ferdinand M. Gerlach

## Prize for excellent teaching

The Faculty of Medicine has announced the 2007 prize winners for "Excellent Teaching".

A working group from the Institute for General Practice (Monika Sennekamp BA, Dr. med. Katja Gilbert and Prof. Dr. med. Ferdinand M. Gerlach, MPH) won 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, carrying a value of €10,000.

The honor and prizes were awarded for "above average achievements and an outstanding commitment to teaching". The Faculty was referring to the development of a new concept for the modules on medical history taking and interview techniques which form part of the course "Introduction to Clinical Medicine".

The awards were conferred at the DIES ACADEMICUS on November 27, 2007. The certificate and prize money were presented at an awards ceremony.

## Drug prescription safety and renal failure

The initial interim results of our randomized controlled intervention study entitled "Increasing drug prescription safety in patients with acute renal failure" were presented at the annual conference of the GAA (Society for medical application research and medical epidemiology) in November 2007. The analysis of the

baseline data (T0) showed that in the case of medicines for which the correct dosage depends on the severity of the renal failure, around every tenth prescription was too high. Following completion of the study, we plan to organize a concluding event at which the final results will be presented to the research practices. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the participating practices for their commitment and support!

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## Prof. Gerlach on the Health Research Council of the German Ministry for Education and Research

Prof Gerlach has been appointed to the Health Research Council of the German Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF), where he represents the Government's Advisory Council on the Assessment of Developments in the Health Care System. Since 1990, the Health Research Council has advised the BMBF on the future direction and structure of promotional activities in the field of health research. From 2006-2010, health research is expected to receive promotional funding of approximately €800 million, equivalent to around an annual €160 million.

[More](#) information on health research promoted by the BMBF.

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## Health in Old Age

Demographic developments in Germany are leading to an increase in the incidence of chronic diseases in the general population. Elderly patients in particular often suffer from several chronic diseases (multimorbidity), the therapy and management of which is often primarily the responsibility of the family doctor. This poses a number of special problems. Systematic research into the causes, risk factors and the consequences of multimorbidity has hardly been conducted at all, and evidence-based guidelines for the therapy of elderly patients with several chronic diseases are sadly lacking.

As part of a program entitled *Health in Old Age*, the Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) is promoting a total of six research groups in Germany, each of which is examining a different characteristic of multimorbidity. Several prospective cohort studies are expected to shed some light on the epidemiological links between the development and course of multimorbidity and to derive recommendations for the management of patients from the results. As one of seven study centers, our institute is a participant in the research group *MultiCare* initiated by the Institute for General Practice at the University of Hamburg. As part of a prospective observational study, this will involve examining the pattern of multimorbidity in elderly patients whose medical care is provided by a family practice.

Elderly multimorbid patients (70 and older) will be interviewed at home, and further data will be collected from the family doctors caring for them. Supporting practices will receive compensation for their work. The study began in January 2008, and we are still looking for practices interested in participating. If you would like to take part in the first ever research into the important subject of multimorbidity in Germany, please get in touch with

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## DEGAM against IGeLn

A position paper arguing against the practice of actively offering self-pay health treatment (IgeLn) to patients, written by the German Society for General and Family Practice (DEGAM), has proven controversial. DEGAM has criticized that in many cases, self-pay treatment is provided without any indication that it may be beneficial, and, as it is not available to all sectors of the population, it is contrary to the WHO principle that access to primary care should be as unrestricted as possible.

[Here](#) you can read the DEGAM position paper (in German)

## A Meeting of Experts on Chronic Heart Failure

An *Expert Panel Meeting on Chronic Heart Failure* took place in Barcelona at the end of November for the purpose of discussing a position paper written by the European Forum for Primary Care (EFPC). Our colleague Christiane Muth (author of the guideline on the primary care of patients with chronic heart failure) accepted the EFPC's invitation to attend the international meeting, along with seven further experts. The EFPC was established in 2005 with the principal aim of improving the quality of primary care in Europe.

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[Mehr über EFPC](#)

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