

Ege University Faculty of Medicine
Department of Chest Diseases
Izmir, Turkey

July 20, 2007

**Re: Report on visit to Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center
(May 24 – June 1, 2007)**

I had the privilege to visit the Department of Chest Diseases of Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center between May 24 and June 2. This followed Dr Juzar Ali' s previous visits to my institution, Ege University Medical Faculty.

The duration of my visit was relatively short, stemming from the fact that I was limited by several other commitments. However, I am happy that it was very fruitful, thanks to the cordial efforts by Dr Ali in planning every hour of every day I spent in LSU.

This was a very structured week, during which I had the opportunity to observe both the medical system and the academic processes. I was able to understand, in fact to gain a good insight on, the way the health system works, the relationships between the system and the institution, and between the institution and the faculty. I had the chance to work with Dr Ali and several other colleagues at various levels of the healthcare system, including the medical intensive care unit, the pulmonary hypertension outpatient clinic of a referral center (Oschner Hospital), a community hospital and a tuberculosis clinic for the underprivileged.

I was honored to be given the opportunity to give two talks during my visit. One of the talks was for the residents and faculty of the Department of Medicine. I chose to present to them an overview of our approach to the management of community-acquired pneumonia in Turkey. I tried to underline the similarities with and differences from the American guidelines. There was also some time for discussion, which enabled us to exchange opinions on the same topic managed at two different settings, with different economic backgrounds and drug resistance patterns.

The second talk was for the faculty and fellows of the Department of Chest Diseases. The topic was the avian influenza outbreak in Turkey, where I tried to summarize the evolution of the infection around the world with particular emphasis on the experience we gained in Turkey. I was delighted to be able to discuss with the attending faculty the potential threat that this infection presents to the world and the advances that have been achieved by the scientific and medical community.

I took part in several regular meetings in the department. In the weekly case discussion session, Dr Ali and I presented and briefly discussed several interesting cases that I had previously followed or that Dr Ali had seen during his previous visit to our institution. We tried to choose cases that would be representative of the epidemiology in Turkey.

I had the chance to participate in two other sessions; a lecture for the medical students and the morning report by the residents on the cases admitted during the previous night. Both of these were very important for me, as I was able to observe the education atmosphere at the undergraduate and residency levels.

One of the most striking gains of my visit was the chance to witness the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Not only was I able to see the remains of the physical destruction it caused, but I also got an idea about its consequences in the scientific and medical

settings from long conversations with Dr Ali and other members of the department. It seems sad and frustrating to observe that a natural disaster can affect, and in fact, change the life of a large and vivid city and its institutions for so long a time. I have just tried to summarize the significance of my visit to Louisiana State University. This whole program was invaluable in that it provided numerous opportunities for communication, exchange of ideas and observations. I feel particularly fortunate to have been able to know and work with Dr Juzar Ali, who was a great organizer and a true friend. I hope this exchange program will lay the foundation of and start a long-term, fruitful collaboration between the two institutions.



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