

The Training Center for Otorhinolaryngology is a voluntary organization of all otorhinolaryngologists interested in Continuous Medical Education (CME). It organizes courses and seminars with renowned speakers on defined topics. The goal of the Center is to create a high standard of up to date knowledge and of surgical skills. It also establishes personal contacts between the course participants and internationally recognised authorities in our specialty. An important role of the Center is to initiate further knowledge transfer and initiate exchange visits between medical institutions in Serbia and Montenegro (SCG) and the home institutions of the invited lecturers.

The initiator of the project is the Society of Friends of ORL, a branch of the Swiss Academic Association of the ORL referral centers in Basel, Aarau, Liestal and Olten, "ORL-BAL". The Society is active in Serbia and Montenegro since several years. It has organised a number of guest lectures by eminent west European scientists, taken part in organising instructional visits of trainees from SCG in medical institutions in western Europe and has initiated other knowledge transfer projects (see www.orl-bal.info). The Society finances its activities from membership fees, donations and through sponsoring by the pharmaceutical and medico-technical industry in Switzerland.

The host of the Center in Belgrade is the Military Medical Academy (VMA), which offers intense support of its specialist team, the premises and the infrastructure. The ORL Department of the VMA has organised high level courses in the past and has experience in their organisation and realisation. The Department entertains long-standing contacts with all other ORL institutions in the country with the aim to provide highest quality courses and seminars to all interested specialists and trainees.

The professional organisation rests with the ORL Section of the Serbian Medical Association. Together with the Swiss Society of Friends of ORL, this section actively cooperated in the projects mentioned above during the past several years, organised travel to the courses in Graz, etc. The Section puts its information channels at the disposal of the Center, it investigates the requirements of the members, the hospital departments and the University Chairs. Periodically it conducts surveys to determine the quality of the educational events. It presents requests to the Universities for the recognition CME points for each individual course and ensures the participation of the chair members in the courses.

The funding of the Center is derived primarily from donations by the Western European medico-technical and pharmaceutical industry and from the funds of the Swiss Society of Friends of ORL. Manufacturers of medical instruments, most prominently Carl Storz Co, Tuttlingen and Carl Zeiss Opton, Oberkochen, Germany, provide fully equipped workplaces for courses in microsurgery and endoscopic surgery. Contributions by other parties are made public at the respective courses. The participants pay a minimal contribution toward basic infrastructure (materials, housekeeping).

Requirements for participation in the courses and seminars: dates and topics will be made known through the ORL Section, the chairs of the Medical Faculties and published on the website <http://www.orl-bal.info/srp/>. Registrations should be directed to the Secretariat of the ORL Department of the VMA, Crnotravska ul. 17, 11000 Beograd or to the Secretary of the ORL Section of the SMA, Doctor Katarina Stanković (kaca@beotel.yu). Trainees should obtain the authorisation of their hospital authority. Criteria for the selection of participants are the professional level of the course (e.g. for basic courses trainees these will have priority before experienced specialists and vice versa) and the sequence of arrival of the registration. Good working knowledge of English is desirable.