



The First Congress on Occupational Medicine and Hygiene in Petroleum Industry

May 11–12, 2010, Tehran, Iran

Most of the oil reserves in Iran are in the Persian Gulf territory. National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) since its inception about a century ago has been a pioneer in the field of occupational medicine. The NIOC Health Organization in collaboration with Tehran University of Medical Sciences held the first ever congress on occupational medicine and hygiene in petroleum industry on May 11–12, 2010, at the IR Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) International Conference Center (IICC), Tehran, Iran. The Congress was sponsored by the four main compa-

nies of the NIOC. Participants included a variety of health professionals, environmental health scientists, physicians, nurses, bench researchers, pharmacists, managers and executive directors.

The program was very tight starting from 8:00 to almost 17:00. During this two-day Congress, 65 oral presentations were given in parallel sessions in two halls. There were also 70 posters presented during the breaks. Participants could also visit several exhibitions presenting safety and work-related instruments. In another hall, six expert panel discussions on different



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aspects of occupational health, safety, and legal issues were presented during these two days.

Most delegates underlined lack of statistics about occupational health in Iran, lack of a well-organized communication system between scientific centers and industries, lack of quality research on psychological problems of workers especially in those who work in stations far away from their family for periods of time or experience shift work, and lack of a well-established national registry for work-related disease conditions.

In my opinion, one of the important events happened in this Congress was presence of representatives of four ministries including Ministry of Petroleum, Ministry of Health and Medical Education, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and Ministry of Science and Technology and their agreement to collaborate on research, capacity building and promotion of occupational health standards in Iran.

Although many scientific papers on various aspects of occupational health and

safety were presented and followed by lively discussions, many of them were not original and of high quality. I believe that would be better if the scientific committee would have been more selective in choosing the papers and the conference could have arranged for oral presentations in only one hall.

The Congress was finished by a valedictory speech the most important points of which were to emphasize on close cooperation between the scientific centers (e.g., universities) and industries; to conduct studies to obtain some basic statistics necessary for future planning; and to study the psychological conditions associated with work.

No doubt, this even was a great opportunity for us at *The IJOEM*, as we could introduce our Journal to many participant researchers and made connections with many research centers throughout the country.

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