



INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MEDICAL PHYSICS

Press Release

IOMP to Celebrate International Day of Medical Physics for the first time

Mary Adams, a 28-year-old woman, pregnant on 15th week was admitted to the hospital with severe abdominal pain. Her symptoms were indicative of appendicitis. Ultrasound examination was inconclusive in determining the diagnosis. Clinicians thought that Computed Tomography (CT) will give them answer. Is the risk of irradiating the fetus less than that the radiation risk from CT? To answer this question, Medical Physicist (MP) was contacted. MP performed calculations to assess conceptus radiation dose and associated risks. Taking into account this information, clinicians and radiologists decided to perform the examination. Once this decision was taken, there was a need to perform CT with least radiation dose without compromising on diagnostic information- again something where Medical Physicist's expertise is needed. CT examination showed an inflamed appendix. Surgery to remove appendix was successful and Mary Adams left hospital a few days after operation.

On November 7th, the International Organization for Medical Physics (IOMP) will celebrate the International Day for Medical Physics (IDMP). The day was chosen by IOMP in recognition of the pioneering research work on radioactivity of Marie Sklodowska-Curie who, on that day in 1867, was born in Poland. IDMP is going to be an annual event in which 80 national organizations of IOMP and countries all over the world shall celebrate the impact of Medical Physics on daily lives of millions of humans, whether patients, workers or members of the public worldwide. IOMP aims to raise awareness of the important role Medical Physicists play in the clinical environment as well as in education, research and development of sophisticated medical technology.

The theme chosen for 2013 is '**Radiation Exposure from Medical Procedures: Ask the Medical Physicist!**' As medical imaging technologies and radiotherapy techniques are fast developing and becoming more intricate, medical physicists are playing an increasingly significant role in the clinical environment. They contribute to the safe and accurate use of radiation to achieve the best outcome of the prescribed medical diagnostic examination or treatment. They assess radiation doses and associated risks to patients and personnel. This is of great importance for children and pregnant patients needing imaging or therapy with ionizing radiation. Medical Physicists optimize radiation procedures by performing accurate measurements and calculations, maximizing the benefit against the potential risk in the use of radiation and contributing to the development and implementation of quality assurance programs.

Medical physicists are highly qualified health professionals with postgraduate studies and clinical training. Most people needing radiation imaging and treatment procedures are not aware that there is a worldwide scientific community specializing in Medical Physics, ensuring the quality of these procedures while minimizing risks associated with radiation. Raising awareness of Medical Physics profession is of great importance to society in general.

Further information is available at <http://www.iomp.org/?q=content/international-day-medical-physics>. Contact: Prof. John Damilakis, Chairman of the IOMP Education and Training Committee john.damilakis@med.uoc.gr or Dr. Madan Rehani, Secretary General, IOMP, sg.iomp@gmail.com, Tel +43-676-3407850.