

MANCHESTER MEDICAL SOCIETY

Section of Anaesthesia

The final meeting of the 2007/2008 session of The Manchester Medical Society (Section of Anaesthesia) was held on **Friday 12th September 2008**. The meeting was held at **The Manchester Conference Centre, Weston Building, Sackville Street, Manchester** with The Royal Society of Medicine (Section of Anaesthesia) and was the fifth biennial all day symposium between the two societies. The meeting proper commenced at 9.30 am, with registration and coffee from 9.00 am.

Dr Deborah Nolan (President of the Manchester Medical Society Section of Anaesthesia) chaired the morning session and began by welcoming the assembled delegates to the meeting. She introduced the theme running through the day as “New Drugs in Anaesthesia” and then welcomed **Dr Nigel Harper**, President of the RSM (Section of Anaesthesia) to say a few words regarding the RSM and the close association between the two societies.

The first lecture was given by **Professor Mervyn Maze** (Imperial College, London). He proceeded to give an informative and most interesting overview of the pharmacology of Dexmedetomidine and its potential application as a sedative, particularly in the field of critical care. He emphasised the pharmacologic basis for the different nature of the sedation produced by Dexmedetomidine in contrast to other drugs such as the benzodiazepines, quoting relevant clinical data to support his contention.

The second lecture was given by **Dr Iain Glen**, formerly of ICI (now Astra-Zeneca). He gave a thoroughly entertaining and informative account of the prolonged, tortuous process involved in bringing any drug, and specifically propofol, to market from the initial concept that a better drug than thiopentone was required. He was very modest in underplaying the key role that he played, without which propofol might not have seen the light of day.

After a break for coffee, there followed an excellent lecture from **Dr Barbara Pleuvry**, (ex Manchester University) on the subject of developments in GABA receptor pharmacology. This covered everything all up to date anaesthetists should know and was delivered in an easily digestible manner, using pictures of flowers to illustrate all the various receptor subtypes!

The afternoon session was chaired by Dr Nigel Harper. He introduced **Dr Ganesh Suntharalingam** (Director of Intensive Care, Northwick Park Hospital) who proceeded to give a fascinating account of the dire medical emergency that followed a series of severe life-threatening adverse reactions to six patients participating in a phase I study of a new anti-inflammatory drug.

There then followed two lectures on the new muscle relaxant antagonist, Sugammadex. In the first, **Dr A Bom** (Organon Laboratories) gave an account of its development and his key role therein. In the second, Professor Rajinder Mirakhur (Queen's University, Belfast) presented persuasive evidence that Sugammadex would be a genuine breakthrough in anaesthesia with the possibility of it consigning suxamethonium to the dustbin in the future.

The final lecture of the day was given by **Professor Brian Pollard** (Manchester University). Entitled “Anaesthesia in 50 years time – a trip in professor Pollard’s time machine”, it was an amusing, entertaining lecture on the concepts of time, time travel and how to build a time machine. More seriously, there were thought-provoking insights into how anaesthesia may develop in the future.

After the afternoon lectures, Dr Harper returned the floor back to Dr Nolan who reflected on what a good meeting it had been with the highest quality contributions from all the speakers. Finally, a vote of thanks was proposed by Dr Nolan for all the speakers and the organisers of the meeting, especially to Miss Fiona Lamb and her team, which was received with thunderous applause.