

Six countries honoured at European Parliament for their work to prevent cervical cancer

Six European countries were honoured for their particular dedication to the cause of cervical cancer prevention at a special ceremony to close the 3rd Cervical Cancer Summit at the European Parliament in Brussels on 21 January. The presentations to Portugal, Estonia, Germany, Serbia, Georgia and Croatia were made by Dr Jolanta Dičkutė MEP and Glenis Willmott MEP, Co-Chairs of Politicians for Cervical Cancer (PCCP).

Announcing the inaugural Pearl of Wisdom Cervical Cancer Prevention Awards, Dr Anne Szarewski, President of the European Cervical Cancer Association (ECCA) said they were being made to organisations or individuals “who, through no self-interest, have shown particular dedication to achieving the reduction of cervical cancer in their countries.”

Secretary of State for Health Manuel Pizarro collected the award on behalf of the people of Portugal for “their outstanding efforts in mounting a highly successful Cervical Cancer Prevention Week in January 2008. One of the greatest achievements was the success of the STOP Cervical Cancer Petition which had exceeded 100,000 signatures by the end of the Prevention Week 2008 and now stands at over 136,000, more than any other country in Europe.”

Vice-Prime Minister Jadranka Kosor accepted the award on behalf of the people of Croatia who were also recognised for the “outstanding achievements during European Cervical Cancer Prevention Week 2008 and the success of the STOP Cervical Cancer Petition.”

The establishment of national cancer screening programmes in Estonia and Serbia were honoured, along with regional programmes in Tbilisi (Georgia), Wolfsburg (Germany) and Alentejo (Portugal). The awards will become an annual focus of the Pearl of Wisdom Campaign to Prevent Cervical Cancer - a united, global effort to raise awareness of cervical cancer and prevent the 500,000 new cases and 250,000 deaths that happen every year.

The campaign reaches out to women, healthcare providers, policymakers, health advocates and the media to raise awareness of the tools that are now available to prevent cervical cancer, including screening and HPV vaccination, to advocate for the equitable implementation of these programmes and to encourage women to take advantage of them. The campaign also promotes the Pearl of Wisdom brooch as the global symbol for cervical cancer prevention.

The summit and awards were key events of European Cervical Cancer Prevention Week 2009 (18-24 January) which also saw the launch of a new European campaign website: www.pearlofwisdom.eu

Link to photos:

1. Jolanta Dickute MEP presenting the award to Portuguese Secretary of State for Health Manuel Pizarro, accompanied by members of the Portuguese delegation

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/quarsan/3216916449/in/photostream/>

2. Jolanta Dickute MEP presenting the award to Croatian Vice-Prime Minister Jadranka Kosor

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/quarsan/3216916255/in/photostream/>

3. Prof Karl Petry, Klinikum der Stadt Wolfsburg, accompanied by Hiltrud Breyer MEP, accepting the award from Jolanta Dickute MEP and Glenis Willmott MEP

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/quarsan/3217769904/>

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