The silica carcinogenicity issue in Japan

In the opinion of this writer, the recent action by the Japanese government amending relevant laws designating lung cancer as a compensable complication of pneumoconiosis is a big step towards improvement. Pneumoconiosis victims who develop lung cancer will be compensated under the national compensation plan. In Japan, there are currently an estimated 12 000 pneumoconiosics officially recognised as "administrative level (AL) 2.3 or 4 (1 stands for 'no pneumoconiosis')" who would be potential beneficiaries. Prior to the amendment, compensation was restricted to lung cancer cases complicating pneumoconiosis of only AL 4 (and even AL 5, were it to be raised to AL 2 or higher), with entitlement to additional benefits only to surviving family members' pension, if and when they develop lung cancer. Needless to say, such action falls into the realm of secondary and tertiary prevention. Further steps should be taken to reevaluate silica carcinogenicity and incorporate it into administrative measures aimed at primary prevention.

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References

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**NOTICE**

The Faculty of Occupational Medicine, Silver Jubilee celebration conference, Thursday, 29 January 2004

The Faculty of Occupational Medicine has scheduled their Silver Jubilee celebration conference for Thursday, 29 January 2004 at the Royal College of Physicians in London.

Keynote speakers include Professor Malcolm Harrington CBE, Emeritus Professor of Occupational Medicine at the University of Birmingham; the leading oncol-ogist of international repute, Professor Karol Sikora, once Chief of (and still Adviser to) the World Health Organisation Cancer Programme; and the management “guru”, Christine MacNulty from the United States.

The aims of the conference will be to consider key human and medical issues relating to occupational medicine today; and explore potential advances over the next quarter century. The conference is expected to attract around 300 Faculty members and their colleagues, including occupational physi-cians; and senior human resource managers in large and small public and private sector organisations.

For further information please contact Gini Jackson:
Email: gini@crac.org.uk; Tel: +44 (0)1223 448529; Fax: +44 (0)1223 311708 or visit http://www.crac.org.uk.
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