FORUM FOR INTERNAL MEDICINE

Voice in the forum for internal medicine

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Prof. Barbara Rogala, MD, PhD A specialist in internal diseases, allergy, and clinical immunology; graduated from Medical University of Silesia, Katowice, Poland; served internships at the National Heart and Lung Institute in London (1999), Hirszfeld Institute of Immunology and Experimental Therapy, Polish Academy of Sciences in Wrocław (2005), and Respiratory Medicine and Research Center on Asthma and COPD at the University of Ferrara; since 1999, Head of the Department of Internal Diseases, Allergology and Clinical Immunology at the Medical University of Silesia; in 2009–2012, President of the Executive Board of the Polish Society of Allergology; received numerous awards for her contribution to the field; other interests include skiing and classical music

Internal medicine has been referred to as the Queen of Medicine. Although at present its standing has somewhat deteriorated, it should remain the Queen. It is so because it encompasses all pathological conditions in humans and the whole complexity of their health problems.

So many of us, in the course of our professional development, have learnt the medical trade under the guidance of internists. Despite our later interest in one of the narrow fields of medicine, the knowledge and experience within the area of internal medicine always remains the solid basis for further development in the specific field of medicine, which cannot function without the internal medicine. Such an understanding of the discussed issue is in accordance with the attitude towards the problem in other European countries and in the United States.

Internal medicine was defined in the late 1800s as a specialization which applied scientific knowledge and clinical expertise to the diagnosis, treatment, and compassionate care of adults across the spectrum from health to complex diseases. Such an understanding still remains valid and fully correspondences with the advent of personalized medicine that should be customized to the individual patients' needs. According to these trends, the health needs of individual patients should be taken into account, given the prevalent coexistence of diseases in one and the same patient who is treated by physicians of different subspecializations.

It is only the structure of vocational training based on sound knowledge and experience within the area of internal medicine that can ensure sound medical practice and further professional development. And modern medicine should remember this.

Note The opinions expressed by the author are not necessarily those of the journal editors, Polish Society of Internal Medicine, or publisher.

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