Welcome to issue 2 of Volume 18 of the journal! By the time you read this Editorial, we will be half-way through 2009, and only 5 months away from Laser Tokyo 2009, the joint meeting hosted by the Japan Society for Laser Surgery and Medicine (JSLSM), with the cooperation of the International Society for Laser Surgery and Medicine (ISLSM) and the World Federation of Societies for Laser Medicine and Surgery (WFSLMS), taking place in Tokyo from November 29th to December 3rd. Please visit the website, http://www.islsm-tokyo2009.com for full information of the meeting, the structure of which is developing very well. You really need to attend this meeting!

I have talked before about the need for some standardized internationally-recognized certification for laser clinicians, and mentioned the new and exciting initiative jointly developed by the ISLSM and WFSLMS, the International Medical Laser Specialist (IMeLaS) qualification. This has been fine-tuned with the cooperation of leading laser specialists world-wide, and we have reached a consensus on what the format should be. The important news is that the IMeLaS scheme will be officially launched during Laser Tokyo 2009, which adds even more to the importance of the meeting, and is another compelling reason why you all need to be with us in Tokyo at the year-end. Basically and briefly, there will be 4 grades of IMeLaS certification: the entry level is Grade 4, or C-IMeLaS, followed in ascending order of competency by Grade 3 (B-IMeLaS), Grade 2 (A- IMeLaS) and Grade 1 (I- IMeLaS) where the 'I' stands for 'Instructor'. The table below summarizes the grades and their respective requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Medical Laser Safety Course and Examination</th>
<th>Hands-on Session</th>
<th>Membership of ISLSM (minimum)</th>
<th>Oral Presentations &amp; Written Papers</th>
<th>Submission of 10 Cases</th>
<th>Symposia, Special Lectures, Etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C-IMeLaS</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>0 years**</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>NR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-IMeLaS</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>NR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-IMeLaS</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-IMeLaS</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R: Required  NR: Not required
† Must be first author of the oral presentation, but not necessarily the presenter
* First author of written article = 2 oral presentations; 2nd and subsequent author = 1 oral presentation
** ISLSM membership required before certification can be issued

It is our plan to induct and certify the first set of core I-IMeLaS candidates during Laser Tokyo 2009. These are all well-experienced laser clinicians from all over the world, thereby establishing a central core of instructors who are qualified to teach candidates for C-IMeLaS up to A-IMeLaS grades. In addition the first group of C-IMeLaS candidates will be certified during the meeting, starting the ball rolling internationally. It is our intention that this approach will allow international standardization of laser clinician training, and will be particularly important in those countries that do not have their own laser association to offer training and accreditation. To establish a solid core even better, at the suggestion of Professor Isaac Kaplan and ratified by the ISLSM and WFSLMS executives, the past presidents of the major international medical laser societies...
have been invited to accept Honorary I-IMeLaS Certification. They will be presented with their certificates at an award ceremony during the forthcoming Laser Tokyo 2009 meeting.

No laser association can exist without funding: in the case of the ISLSM funding has been a little shaky, whereas in the case of the WFSLMS funds are as yet virtually nonexistent, the society having depended on benevolent donations. However, the establishment of the IMeLaS initiative and its fee structure will provide a source of funding for both associations, while at the same time encouraging young laser surgeons to grade up their skills through incrementally attaining IMeLaS grades, culminating in their becoming instructors through attaining the I-IMeLaS grade. Funds accruing to the two societies will be ploughed back into the initiative so that we anticipate a really strong future for the IMeLaS programme with full international recognition of both the initiative and its participants. Naturally, our IMeLaS guidelines are in their infancy, and only through expansion of the scheme will they evolve to help with the standardization process, which will in turn strengthen the authority of the IMeLaS programme internationally. As a matter of interest, lack of funds is not in itself an insurmountable barrier to a society’s doing some good. Despite the lack of a solid funding base in the WFSLMS, thanks to support from organizations such as Lions International, to date the WFSLMS has established medical laser initiatives to help developing countries. Viet Nam and Thailand have been the first successful recipients of equipment, training and educational internships at leading clinics and hospitals in Japan where laser is used. Another WFSLMS programme enjoying success is the internationally-recognized Blood Saving Campaign, or BSaC, through which existing blood transfusion stocks are spared by strategies to help cut down intraoperative blood loss. Armed with more substantial funds, the potential for WFSLMS to do even more good is extremely strong, and the IMeLaS initiative is an excellent way to achieve this.

Other Matters

As you are all aware from the front cover of the journal, Laser Therapy is now the official organ of six national and international photosurgical and phototherapeutic societies, which I believe is an outstanding achievement and points to the ever-improving quality of the journal. This should lead to increased contributions from society members which will in turn enable us to improve the quality of the journal even more with the potential for an increased number of annual issue or a further increase in the page count per issue, or even both. However, Rome was not built in a day, and we are committed to keep on going steadily on the path we have chosen: the fact that we have added so many societies who use the journal as their official organ suggests that we are doing something right. Once again, may I ask you all please to send in papers for consideration by our reviewers. It does not matter which aspect of laser surgery, phototherapy or associated research you are involved in, we want to hear from you. It does not have to be an original article: case reports, brief communications or letters to the editor are all welcome. Furthermore we are very happy to publish the details of any forthcoming meeting in the journal, so meeting organizers should please take note of the address details which can be found elsewhere in the journal.

I often ask for contributions from the nursing fraternity, and I am happy to say that we are starting a new section in the journal with this issue, titled ‘NURSING PERSPECTIVES’ in which an interesting article from a registered nurse in New Zealand is published, on LLLT particularly for lymphoedema. Other nurses, please take note, and let us have your articles. Please make sure they follow our usual Notes for Contributors, and contain all laser parameters where appropriate, and your article will be published after submission to our peer review panel.

A further boost to the credibility of the journal has been given by the acceptance of Laser Therapy by the Japanese equivalent of Medline and Embase, J-STAGE (Japan Science and Technology Aggregator, Electronic). This means that Laser Therapy will now be indexed and searchable online at http://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/browse/. The website allows searches in English as well as in Japanese. This will bode well for future applications for online indexing of the journal in the European-based EmBase (Excerpta Medica) and the US-based Medline (ePub). I will keep you informed of our progress.

It has often been the case that really excellent and innovative laser and phototherapy science from Russia and Eastern Europe has in the past failed to gain the correct recognition in the West due to the fact that the majority of the articles are published in Russian. There are of course a few notable exceptions to this, the prolific body of excellent work from Professor Tiina Karu being a shining example. So, I should like to draw your attention to a review article in this issue of the journal from Professor Vladimir Mikhailov, a dear friend and long-term colleague of mine from Moscow. Prof Mikhailov’s article (of course
in English!) looks in depth at the fascinating field of the intravenous irradiation of blood using fiberoptic laser delivery systems with a wide-ranging selection from the Russian literature, and is well-worth reading very thoroughly.

Finally, on April 10th just past, one of the most experienced of laser surgeons and one of the real pioneers of laser surgery, Professor Isaac Kaplan, celebrated his 90th birthday. Professor Kaplan is no stranger to readers of Laser Therapy, or indeed any other laser journal, and was of course the founding father of the ISLSM. His poetic efforts have graced our pages in the past. It is only fitting that I conclude this Editorial on behalf of the Editorial Team and all Laser Therapy readers by sending Professor Kaplan all of our very best, if somewhat belated, wishes on the occasion of his becoming a nonagenarian, and what better way than in poetry, penned by Dr Glen Calderhead, one of our Editorial Board members and a prolific contributor to Laser Therapy.

### An Ode to Isaac

On April 10th, oh happy day,  
To a great and famous humanitarian:  
I had some heartfelt words to say  
When Isaac became a nonagenarian.

With countless years of laser lore  
A fount of knowledge Isaac is,  
From which we all may freely drink.  
Meanness is ne’er a fault of his.

He makes us laugh with sparkling wit,  
And yet with boundless knowledge wide,  
His mind can effortlessly flit,  
And us, to the right answer, guide.

He puts the ‘gentle’ into ‘man’,  
And with sweet Masha at his side  
He does the best that e’er he can  
for their laser ‘family’, worldwide.

So, “Happy Birthday!” we all roared  
To Isaac, on his happy day.  
May he have many, many more  
With happiness, along the way.

Tokyo, June 2009