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Press Information

Henrik Bergquist receives Assar Gabrielsson Prize for dissertation on esophageal cancer

Dr. Henrik Bergquist MD has been awarded the Assar Gabrielsson Prize for an outstanding scientific dissertation in cancer research at Göteborg University during the past three years.

The prize is SEK 50,000, with the possibility in autumn 2008 to receive a research grant of SEK 100,000. The prize was presented today.

Henrik Bergquist works at the Department of Otorhinolaryngology/Head & Neck Surgery, the Sahlgrenska Academy, Göteborg University, Sweden. He received the prize for his dissertation "Aspects of the management of patients with esophageal cancer."

In his dissertation, Henrik Bergquist chose to specifically study patients offered relief treatment, so-called palliation, with regard to esophageal cancer and then compared with two other treatment methods. Henrik Bergquist has also studied treatment results for esophageal cancer with a new surgical technique for tumors positioned high in the throat (proximal esophageal or hypopharyngeal cancer). Despite advanced tumor disease, the outcome is positive with regards to long-term survival and function, which opens possibilities of establishing a new treatment principle.

Esophageal cancer is the eighth most common cancer form in the world and is increasing sharply, particularly among middle-age men. In Sweden, about 400 persons are diagnosed each year with esophageal cancer. Patients seek treatment late in the course of the disease and the tumor is often advanced already at diagnosis. Despite modern diagnostics and treatment, the prognosis overall is poor. Only 12-15% survive up to five years. Since the disease is often advanced at diagnosis, slightly more than 40% of the patients can only be offered palliative treatment.

In its citation, the Assar Gabrielsson Foundation Fund writes that Henrik Bergquist's dissertation is an example of a well-implemented clinical dissertation that in itself is

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significant for care management of the heavily impacted cancer population and that clears a path for continued significant research efforts.

In addition to this prize, each year the Assar Gabrielsson Foundation Fund offers grants to young researchers in the field of clinical research, particularly cancer. Assar Gabrielsson was one of Volvo's founders.

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