

14th Nordic Congress of General Practice

Stockholm, Sweden — 15-18 June 2005

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Friday, June 17, 15.15-16.30: Minisymposium.

Title: Medicines, health and environment – what is the price we pay?

Medicines are very important tools for the GP in everyday work. However, treating risk factors like hypertension and hyperlipidemia with medicines is a doubtful strategy, for the individual and society as well as for the environment. Medicines are stable and long lived, and thus have a strong negative potential in nature. Is it our duty to prescribe less medicines?

Chairman

Ingrid Eckerman, MD, MPH, Swedish Doctors for the Environment (LfM)

Panel

Arne Melander, MD, NEPI (Network for Pharmaceutical Epidemiology). **Preventive medication – of any use to the society?** Today's recommendations on treating healthy individuals with medicines is discussed. What is the number needed to treat to prevent one single event? What is the use for the individual? What are the costs for the society?

Åke Wennmalm, MD, Environmental Director, Stockholm County Council. **Environmental cautiousness in the use of pharmaceuticals in Stockholm County Council.** Residuals of medicines are found in our lakes, rivers, ground water and sea. We have insufficient knowledge of what this can lead to. To reduce the dangers, doctors must be able to “prescribe environmently friendly”. In the County Council of Stockholm, an environmental assessment list for medicines is developed.

Ingrid Eckerman, MD, MPH, Swedish Doctors for the Environment (LfM): **Alternatives to medicines. Do life style changes have any effects? How can we motivate the patient to change life style?** Today we know that the life style plays an important role in most common diseases and complaints. How do we use this knowledge? Some tools for quality assurance of the individual prevention work will be presented.