

INTRODUCTION OF GUIDELINES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF PATIENTS WITH TBI IN HOSPITALS OF CEE COUNTRIES

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Trauma is the most frequent cause of death between the 1st and the 40th year of life in most of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Care provided along the Scientific Evidence Based Guidelines leads to the improvement of outcomes, which is useful not only for the patient, but for entire national economy, too.

The program of Scientific Evidence Based Guidelines on TBI implementation began in 1997 in collaboration with the local Open Society Institutes in each participating country by identifying the hospitals that receive the most head injury patients. Nine selected hospitals received extensive training in TBI Guidelines and intensive technical support. As a teaching tool the database, workshops and symposium increased scientific "Guidelines" compliance from less than 10% to 93%. Most patients who are in a coma from severe head injury die in the first two weeks. Using the Internet database, which is maintained in New York, Brain Trauma Foundation has reviewed approximately 450 patients to ascertain whether the education

program made a difference in practices and patient outcome. The “Guidelines” education program, utilizing brain pressure monitoring, made a significant difference in saving lives and in improving patient outcome.

This successful program is now being expanded and replicated to disseminate better head injury treatment throughout Eastern Europe and to help stimulate a new paradigm for treating other medical problems using evidence based guidelines.

The Internationale Gesellschaft zur Erforschung von Hirntraumata, Vienna, Oesterreich continues to help manage the largest and most successful implementation of evidence-based medicine project through the *Central and Eastern European Head Injury Initiative* funded and supported by the U.S. Brain Trauma Foundation and the Open Society Institute Foundation. The primary aim of IGEH / IBTF is to improve the outcome for brain trauma patients through the implementation of evidence based scientific guidelines. In order to reach this goal, the IGEH/IBTF coordinates and manages activities, including educating and training health professionals, providing them with tools to assure quality of care, as well as the knowledge required to reengineer existing trauma systems.