

SUCCESSFUL ISoP WORKSHOP AT ISPE MEETING IN BORDEAUX



On August 25th 2004, Brian Edwards and Elizabeth Loupi of ISoP chaired a special joint workshop at the ISPE meeting in Bordeaux entitled 'Breaking out of the Bubble: what have we learnt about risk communication?' The workshop consisted of four speakers from different backgrounds who discussed challenges, successes and failures in risk communication including lines of communication, advice about what can be done to help the public understand an organisation's response to risk and uncertainty so to help us improve our communication with relevant stakeholders in patient safety.

Dr Carmen Kreft Jais (Responsable de l'Unité de Pharmacovigilance, AFSSAPS) discussed the communication responsibilities of the regulatory authorities, how they cooperate, the tools that they use and how messages are adjusted for the audience. Dr Kasia

Petchel (Worldwide Drug Safety, Pfizer) gave a colourful description of how Pfizer responded to the many unpredictable risks with Viagra to win through in the end. Frederic Boudier (Senior Research Fellow, King's Centre for Risk Management London) reminded us to look at the spectrum of messages that the media transmit about medicines, discussed pitfalls and misconceptions in our understanding of risk communication and emphasised the importance of trust in ensuring messages are understood. Finally, Dr David Salisbury (Principal Medical Officer, Department of Health, London) presented the UK experience of defending vaccines against misrepresentation by media and other pressure groups. He described how much effort is required to monitor the opinions of a representative sample of parents so as to keep your messages relevant and in tune with their views.