We would like to dedicate this volume to the memory of Germano Pellizzoni: a patient, a friend, a journalist and a person whose spirit and enthusiasm still lives with us.

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Preface

The use of peritoneal dialysis is well established worldwide. In spite several advantages have been identified in terms of clinical efficacy, social impact and individual tolerance, peritoneal dialysis is still underutilized around the world. The significance of the present book is mostly related to the effort to identify possible barriers for a wider application of peritoneal dialysis and at the same time to carry forward the project undertaken by the Department of Nephrology Dialysis and Transplantation of Vicenza called USS PD: Understanding, Starting and Sustaining Peritoneal Dialysis. Since 1982, the International Vicenza Course on Peritoneal Dialysis has been considered one of the most important and complete educational events in the field of PD. This book is the compendium of the presentations given by leading experts in the field in the Course of 2006.

The initial part of the course and thus of the book is dedicated to basic principles of PD, assuming that understanding how peritoneal dialysis works is one of the pre requisites to improve the quality of its application and ultimately the outcomes. The second part is dedicated to reviews of important issues which have been debated for many years and for which a state of the art discussion is needed. In depth reviews help the physician to identify the benefits and the problems involved in a PD program and thus become an important step for the process of starting a new program or new patients on PD. The third part is dedicated to potential complications and technical solutions designed to solve the problems of the different techniques. This part corresponds to the phase in which physicians must sustain the use of PD after having acquired the know how and the capacity of starting the program.
In designing such initiative defined USS PD, we looked backward and we analyzed all the difficulties but also all the successes that led Vicenza to become an important reference center for peritoneal dialysis with more than 100 patients currently treated with this renal replacement technique. The acronym reminds the name of the USS Enterprise and the difficult pathway ‘to boldly go where no man has gone before’. The USS PD, includes many initiatives and the Vicenza Course and its book represent some of them. Others are postgraduate masters for physicians, specialization courses for nurses, programs of education such as the ‘PD start’ and the ‘PD GO’ with specific programs for beginners and finally stages for ‘research fellows’ that in several cases have been supported by the International Society of Nephrology. We are indebted with the faculty, with the sponsors, with Mario and Anna Saccardo and with all individuals who made possible these initiatives. We thank Karger for the timely publication of this book with the usual outstanding quality.

We hope that our effort and the USS PD project will push everybody towards a wider utilization of peritoneal dialysis ‘to boldly go where no man has gone before’ i.e. to increase levels of PD utilization beyond any point of the past.

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