



The Newsletter of European Medical Specialists

Editorial



Dr Zlatko Fras
President

Dear Readers,

We are pleased to release this new issue of the UEMS Newsletter which presents as a main item the outcomes of the UEMS Council Meeting held in Istanbul mid-October.

Probably the most important decision taken at this stage involved the issue of the draft directive on patients' rights in cross-border healthcare in view of the forthcoming meeting of EU health Ministers which will be held in a few weeks. Member States unfortunately removed reference to the UEMS key concerns, and this even as they had received an overwhelming support from Members of the European Parliament!

This is why UEMS Members are now encouraged to lobby their government and defend these priorities. We now rely on everyone's effort and are confident that a positive will be achieved in this respect.

UEMS News 2009 / 06

November 2009

Outcomes of the UEMS Council Meeting Istanbul, 16th-17th October 2009



The Board and Council of UEMS met in Istanbul on the 16th and 17th of October for their bi-annual meeting. On this occasion, a wide range of issues were addressed and decisions taken with regard to current EU issues on the one hand and internal rules and guidelines on the other.

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Cross-border Care – The UEMS worries about current discussions in EU Council

At their meeting in Istanbul, the UEMS delegates discussed the latest developments with respect to the draft Directive on Patients' rights in Cross-Border Healthcare, particularly the proposed compromise from the Swedish EU Presidency. Concerns were raised that this revision of the text had left out key elements that were initiated and promoted by the UEMS, then taken

over by Members of the European Parliament in a first reading. These elements include:

- The establishment of European-wide standards for healthcare providers
- The application of safety and quality standards to e-health and telemedicine uses
- The introduction of consultation procedures and involvement of expert stakeholders

Therefore, the UEMS adopted a motion whereby it rejected the Swedish proposal to revise the draft Directive and encouraged its Members to lobby their national Health Minister to ensure that this proposal is not adopted and that the patient safety elements of the text are maintained and reinstated. □

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European Affairs

The important issue of Cross-Border Healthcare was addressed by the national delegates during the Council meeting resulting in an adopted motion condemning the Swedish compromise (See on page 1). Other issues debated included the European Working Time Directive (See on page Y) as well as the EC Green Paper on European Workforce for health and its latest developments.

Internal Issues

The UEMS' Rules of Procedure were updated and amended plus the suggestion from the Working Group on the Future Structure of the UEMS, chaired by Dr Gunilla Brenning, to invite one representative per Section & Board of the UEMS to attend Council Meetings was agreed as a principle (UEMS 2009/25). This Working Group will now continue its work and look into the practical implications of this new development.

A number of documents intended for internal use were also adopted by the Board reflecting the development of UEMS with administrative transparency. In addition to the adoption of the budget for 2010, three other papers were endorsed, namely the Internal Guidelines on Attending International Meetings, the rules on Reimbursement of Expenses and the Code of Conduct Rules for Members of the UEMS Executive and Enlarged Executive Committee, which includes a code of ethics, a confidentiality policy and rules concerning potential conflict of interest.

Policy Statement on Emergency Medicine in Europe

A statement was endorsed by the meeting outlining the purpose of the European Society and that of the Multidisciplinary Joint Committee on Emergency Medicine. The Policy Paper notably states that "the specialty of Emer-

Outcomes of the UEMS Council Meeting



From left to right:

- Dr Gerd Hofmann (Liaison Officer)
- Dr Bernard Maillet (Secretary-General)
- Dr Zlatko Fras (President)
- Dr Kari Pylkkanen (Vice-President)

gency Medicine should continue to develop to the standards endorsed by the Council of UEMS to seek to ensure the highest quality of emergency care for patients. This care should be delivered by physicians trained in Emergency Medicine."

European Syllabus in Paediatric Surgery

The UEMS Section and Board of Paediatric Surgery (EBPS) and the European Paediatric Surgeons' Association (EUPSA) presented the first volume of their publication on Paediatric Surgery for en-

dorsement by the UEMS Council in Istanbul. The syllabus, which is intended to serve as a reference for the profession, sets out optimal standards for training throughout Europe and beyond, was endorsed by the UEMS Council. □

All documents were added to the UEMS website (www.uems.net) and the report of that meeting will be made available soon (UEMS 2009/31). Please contact the Secretariat of UEMS, should you need any further information.

Policy Development on Global Health for 2010

As mentioned in the EC Treaty (Art. 152), the EU has an obligation to 'foster cooperation with third countries and the competent international organisations in the sphere of public health'. More recently, the 2008-2013 EU Health Strategy points out that the EU and its Member States 'can create better health outcomes for EU citizens and for others through sustained collec-

tive leadership in global health.' Improving health in developing countries is also seen as essential in order to reduce poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals set up by the UN in 2000. For these reasons, the European Commission has been working on an EU policy on health and development since 2002 and is currently holding a public consultation on

these issues until early December. The aim of this work is to elaborate a Communication covering all aspects of Global Health, which should be adopted at the start of 2010 under the Spanish Presidency of the EU. Three departments of the European Commission (Development, Health and Research) will each draft a paper to accompany the general Communication. The issues to be ad-

dressed are global health equity, global health coherence and global health knowledge. Individuals, organisations and countries that wish to participate in the consultation process are invited to complete the questionnaire elaborated to the Commission. A Conference will be held on 11th-12th February 2010 in order to

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EC first reactions to the Court of Auditors' Report

A report from the European Court of Auditors, published in June, questioned the management of the European Public Health Programme (PHP) 2003-2007 by the European Commission. See UEMS News 2009/05.

This report was on the agenda of the October Meeting of the EU Health Policy Forum, which convenes a number of short-listed approved EU health stakeholders, amongst which is the UEMS. This meeting was an occasion for the Commission's DG for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO) to share its

reactions on this report with stakeholders. The Commission's main reply to the criticisms raised, and the recommendations made by the Court, was that projects have improved since the creation of the PHP and that a mapping exercise was made every year. Besides, the Council has acknowledged these improvements and recognised the added value of the PHP. One of the Court's recommendations, namely the idea to use other methods such as the Open Method of Coordination (OMC), as a way to facilitate the

actions and save money, was rejected by the Commission on the grounds that this was in contradiction with the agreement approved at the start with the EP and the EU Council. DG SANCO also pointed out that the scope of the Report was fairly limited since only a few projects had been evaluated. It also stated that it was the first such evaluation made by the Court and that it would be unfair to come to such a conclusion so quickly. The Commission is looking forward to the next CoA's evaluation which is planned for next



year.

It was decided by the EU Health Policy Forum that a joint Position Statement from those stakeholders sitting on the Forum will be addressed to the Council and the EP at the beginning of next year in order to protect the programme that could allegedly be put under threat. □

EU Health Strategy implementation

The Senior Level Working Party on Public Health, which is entitled to discuss issues concerning public health and health and medical care, will hold its third meeting in December 2009 in order to identify the progress and any gaps in the programme.

Two main points will be discussed: the implementation of the health strategy and the performance assessment of the health

systems. The Working Party has warmly invited input from the stakeholders, as well as from the Commission and the Member States.

At its recent meeting, the European Health Policy Forum welcomed the will from the Swedish Presidency to include the stakeholders' opinion and Members of the Forum expressed their wish that the following Presidencies will do the same. □

The Euro Health Consumer Index

The Euro Health Consumer Index 2009 (EHCI), launched in partnership with the European Commission's DG INFSO (Information and Society), was released recently, giving first place to the Netherlands.

The index, that encompasses 38 indicators of quality divided into six

categories: Patient rights and information, e-Health, Waiting time for treatment, Outcomes, Range and reach of services provided and Pharmaceuticals, revealed big gaps between the 33 Member States' healthcare systems analysed, despite a general trend in improvement. □



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launch this Communication and invite stakeholders to discuss the key elements arising from the public consultation. For recall, the UEMS joined the HIFA 2015 campaign (Healthcare Information for all by 2015), as well as the European Partnership on Neglected Diseases in April 2009. (See UEMS News 2009/04). At the request of one of its Members, the UEMS also joined

Global Health for 2010

an Open Letter supporting another Campaign on Water Poverty to be released on the occasion of the World Toilet Day to be held on 19th November 2009.

The UEMS will work on ensuring that the EC Communication and Conference thoroughly consider and address the priorities and concerns raised by these international campaigns and invites its constituent bodies to also contribute to the consultation for that purpose. □

<http://ec.europa.eu/development/how/consultation/index.cfm?action=viewcons&id=4765>

To join HIFA 2015, please visit: www.hifa2015.org

EVENT

e-Health congress

26th November 2009 - Brussels, Belgium

More information on http://www.tmb.be/event/16/39/e-Health_congress/default.htm



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**For further
information
on issues
covered in this
Newsletter,
do not hesitate
to contact
the UEMS
Secretariat.**

IN BRIEF

New European Research Council

The launch of the European Research Council "ERC - The Future Starts Today" took place on the 24th of September 2009 at the Executive Agency's new headquarters in Brussels to celebrate the new independence of the body. The EU Commissioner for Science and Research Janez Potočnik and Dr Thomas Krantz, Swedish Minister for Higher Education and Research, inaugurated the ERC. This new body was created by the EU Commission two years ago and has already signed 600 grant agreements for a total of € 900 million. □

eHealth week 2010

The ministerial event, known as the High Level e-Health Conference, will be jointly run with the World of Health IT (WoHIT) Conference and Exhibition from 15th until the 18th March 2010 at the Convention Centre CCIB in Barcelona. The Conference is organised by the European Commission, HIMSS Europe, the Spanish Ministry of Health and Social Policy, the Regional Government of Catalonia and Foundation TicSalut. The previous meeting was held in Prague from 18th to 20th February 2009 and focused on the legal issues arising from the use of telemedicine and e-Health services, particularly in relation to the draft directive on patient's rights in cross-border health-care. □

For further details and registration to these events:

<http://www.worldofhealthit.org/registration/registration.aspx>

DG SANCO 10th Anniversary

European Commission's DG SANCO marked its 10th anniversary by holding an online consultation on its activities and achievements. Contributions are accessible online and the conclusions were released during a Conference earlier this month. □

For further details:

http://europa.eu/debateurope/health/index_en.htm

EP future key role in Health

In a recent statement, the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) emphasised the important role that the newly elected European Parliament will play in promoting EU actions on health matters. Policy challenges include promoting a health-friendly EU environment, keeping people healthy, managing the patient journey and experience, and enabling developing countries to achieve the health Millennium Development Goals by 2015. □

Call for New Proposals: New funding opportunities in health

The Commission recently decided to award grants for proposals under the second Health Programme (2008-2013). This follows the adoption of its Work Plan in early 2009, whose total budget available for its execution amounts to €48.2 million. The grant will be given to a project that focuses on major health problems that cannot be dealt with at the national level. The deadline for proposals is 20th May 2010. □

NEXT MEETINGS OF THE UEMS

2009

UEMS Advisory Council on Continuing Medical Education (EACCME)

Saturday 28th November 2009 - Brussels

Restricted - Upon invitation only

2010

UEMS Sections & Boards

Saturday 6th March 2010 - Brussels

Restricted - Upon invitation only

UEMS Council

Saturday 17th April 2010 - Brussels

Restricted - Upon invitation only