



UNION EUROPÉENNE DES MÉDECINS SPÉCIALISTES  
EUROPEAN UNION OF MEDICAL SPECIALISTS

*The UEMS Section of Neurosurgery*

**UEMS MEETING  
LUXEMBOURG 2006  
MINUTES**

ATTENDANCE LIST:

Pierre Lasjaunias – France  
Kristina Cesarini – Sweden  
Olga Mateo-Sierra – Spain  
Rab Hide – UK  
Andrzej Radek – Poland  
Michael Bodosi – Hungary  
Juraj Steno – Slovakia  
Ion Poata – Romania  
Irina OGREZEANU – Romania  
Vinko Dolenc – Slovenia  
Guy Matgé – Luxembourg  
Ken Lindsay – UK  
Shlomi Constantini – Israel  
Manuel Cunha e Sa – Portugal  
Stephanie Garfield-Birkbeck – EANS

Stephane Litrico - France  
Tomasz Trojanowski - Poland  
Johan van Loon – Belgium  
Lars Wallstedt - Sweden  
Bernd Richling - Austria  
James Palmer - UK  
Martin Bettag - Germany  
Agahan Unlu - Turkey  
Josip Paladino – Croatia  
Massimo Collice – Italy  
James Steers – UK  
Panagiotis Selviaridis – Greece  
Manfred Mühlbauer - Austria  
Hans-Juergen Reulen – Germany

1. WELCOME

H.J. Reulen (HJR) welcomed Drs.Constantini, Wester, Mateo, OGREZEANU, Poata, Purins and Litrico, who participated for the first time in the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

These were approved unanimously

3. SECTION OF NEUROSURGERY UEMS

a) Report of President

HJR reported that:

- The Section of Neurosurgery now had a section on the UEMS website and that there was a link to this from the EANS website
- Operative figures are to be published in Acta Neurochirurgica and that they would be included in the Training Charter. The competency tables were still in hand and would be finished ready for the summer meeting of the section.

- The results of the enquiry into training by country are to be published in Acta Neurochirurgica. This will provide a useful tool for national societies to gauge their training standards and also to ensure their compliance
- The specialties were asked for manpower plans in order to establish provision of doctors in relation to population figures. This provides an opportunity for neurosurgery to defend its numbers. Rab Hyde (TAH) will be sending out requests for information in the next 2 weeks with a 2-month deadline for responses. The section will then be in a position to discuss its strategy in this matter at its summer meeting
- The MJCICM met on February 24 in Brussels. The final version of the working paper concerning the new European Board of Intensive Care (EBICM) was presented and adopted. The representatives will be drawn equally from all nine sections with an interest in ICM and the ESICM. The Chair of the Board and the Secretary will be appointed by consensus among the Board members. If somebody is interested in this paper, a copy can be requested from Ilona Anders. A delegate of the Section of Neurosurgery is needed and H.J. Reulen proposed Prof. Rickels, Ulm/Germany, a colleague who has sincere interest in Neurotraumatology and ICM. The delegates approved this proposal. HJR will provide Mr. Rickels with all necessary information. He will be asked to report to the Section.

#### b) Report of Treasurer

Professor van Loon (JvL) reported that it had been agreed at the July meeting in 2005 that each national body would be asked to pay €200 per annum to the section. An account has now been set up via the UEMS and a letter has been sent to all the Presidents of the national societies requesting payment. To date 6 countries have paid – Croatia, Hungary, Netherlands, Portugal, Belgium and Italy. It is likely that Cyprus, Iceland, Malta and Luxembourg are not members of the section in their own right and James Steers will liaise with Ireland. The meeting agreed that a fee was payable if there was a national professional society with a delegate to the UEMS. It was agreed that a reminder would be sent out in March and delegates were asked to follow up nationally.

HJR thanked JvL for his work. He also thanked the EANS for their financial support over recent years.

#### 4. JRAAC

The Chairman Professor Trojanowski (TT) reported the following:

- Site accreditation visits had been made to Bursa in Turkey, Freiburg in Germany and Lodz in Poland. The final outcome of these visits is to be agreed at the next meeting of JRAAC
- 5 new training programmes had been accredited in 2005
- There is a shortage of site visitors and members of the meeting have been asked to take part in the process. In addition the accreditation application form has been reduced in order to make the task less bureaucratic for applicants

HJR informed the meeting that some UEMS sections were visiting national societies in order to provide information on training requirements and to offer advice.

## 5. EANS

The President Ken Lindsay (KWL) reported that in the last 6 months since the last section meeting:

- The Winter Meeting in Luxembourg had been attended by some 167 delegates; there had been a joint meeting with the CNS in Boston in October 2005 and that following this, the CNS had asked to join the European Congress in Glasgow in September 2007; there had been 2 training courses one in Luxembourg and one in Thessaloniki; the second Training the Trainers course had taken place in Luxembourg and the EANS now had 4 trained facilitators to continue these courses. There are plans to extend this theme to run Training the Examiners courses from next year with the same idea of training EANS facilitators over a 2-year period. Finally KWL reported that the first CME (Continuing Medical Education) course was taking place in Luxembourg under the auspices of the Education Committee chaired by Professor Constantini.
- Short term spine fellowships had been established in partnership with the AOSpine Foundation and 3 had so far been awarded
- EANS membership of the EBC (European Brain Council) continues to be important in influencing funding decisions on scientific research at European level. The EBC had produced a consensus document as requested by the European Parliament to inform budgeting decisions of the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme. EBC had also produced research looking at the costs of brain disorders in Europe
- The proposal for joint EANS/UEMS Examination, and joint UEMS/EANS CME Committees had been approved by the Executive Committee of the EANS. The UEMS was asked to provide two or three members for each of these committees

## 6. EUROPEAN BOARD EXAMINATION

HJR informed the meeting that the UEMS Federation of Surgical Specialties was considering the matter of examination at the end of specialist training and that the European Parliament in a previous directive had expressed a wish for an assessment of qualifications. At a meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> May this year, it is likely that a decision will be made that end of training should be marked by both a written and an oral examination. There are plans to establish an inter-board faculty with a view to developing common standards which will become the European Board Qualification in Specialty Training.

- a) The Chairman of the EANS Examination Committee Dr Kristina Cesarini (KC) reported that: The exam is in 2 parts.
  - The part I multiple-choice written exam can be sat once trainees have a minimum of 3-years specialist training. The results are studied by a statistician (Dr Schappel in Germany) and is increasingly used by countries which do not have a written examination themselves such as Switzerland and Sweden. It is perfectly possible that Part I in its current form could become the European standard and could, if national societies chose, become acceptable instead of the national written examination
  - The standard of candidate sitting the Part II oral examination is steadily increasing. 17 candidates sat the examination in Luxembourg and there are now 8 members of the current committee. Currently this examination has no legal status given that at the moment the EANS Examination Committee cannot act as a Board Certifier. For this to come about, the Committee would have to become a certifying authority rather than just an examining authority

## b) Position Paper Approval

The meeting discussed this and considered the following:

- Part II of the examination could be presented in several ways:
  - i) The examination committee should consider to remove the 1 or 2 year post certification practice current requirement
  - ii) As the gold standard of national societies to refer to and which could be used as an alternative to the national examination, however this would be a decision for each national society
  - iii) To inform the national societies on offers of the Examination Committee to review their examination arrangements. This would be achieved if the individual societies had a member of the UEMS on their examination board so enabling the society to award a European qualification to the candidate. It was agreed that this would be piloted by the Polish National Society and that in the meantime the Position Paper should reflect this proposal.

The question of language was considered by the meeting:

- i) Under EU legislation no candidate can be forced to take a final examination in a foreign language. Therefore if Part II were to be offered to national societies, this would have to be done in all languages of the European Area.
- ii) KC informed the meeting that based on results from Part I use of the English language did not in itself present a barrier to candidates' success or failure
- iii) While the Part II remains voluntary, the issue of language is not a consideration

The meeting agreed that the current EANS Examination Committee should become a Joint EANS/UEMS committee and that the following colleagues should be approached to become members from the side of the UEMS section. I. Poeta already agreed.

- Professor Evelyne Emery (Caen, France)
- Professor Roberto Delfini (Rome, Italy)
- Professor Ion Poeta (Iasi, Romania)

Kristina Cesarini was asked to send a list of all members of the Examination Committee to see if there were any countries without representative.

## c) Structured Oral Examination, Austria

Professor Mühlbauer reported that:

- i) Most trainees wish to sit an oral exam at the end of specialist training
- ii) The current exam is structured in such a way as to ensure the objectivity of the exam
- iii) Questions are devised to a particular standard
- iv) The National Society is considering Part I of the EANS examination but at the moment is likely to keep its Part II

## 7. REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON “NEUROINTERVENTION”

The working party met with the following results:

- Recommendations will be published in Acta Neurochirurgica and the European Medical Journal

- Work will continue on reviewing the guidelines originally published in 1998. They will be considered from both aspects of neurosurgery and radiology. New guidelines will be drafted and circulated to the UEMS, EANS and WFITN. These are likely to become requirements for training and practice rather than remain as guidelines
- The conclusion of the guidelines will be that general neurosurgical training has to include 1 year's worth of training or exposure to diagnostic practice

HJR thanked the working party.

## 8. EUROPEAN WORKING TIME DIRECTIVE

HJR informed the meeting that:

- The Administrative Council of the UEMS would be meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2006
- The Position Paper shall be taken forward to a commission of the European Parliament (Committee of Employment and Social Affairs) by the surgical specialties and additionally from the Administrative Council of the UEMS to the European Parliament.

The meeting discussed:

- A united front among all surgical specialties in Europe was essential and would represent in the region of some 150 000 specialists
- The position paper shall be published in *Acta Neurochirurgica* under EANS Affairs, be sent to Members of the European Parliament and finally the media should be informed
- Taking a route of voluntary waiver within the document could lead to a risk of two-tier trainees at the end of their training
- Emphasis on the fact that in the US working hours of residents have been reduced to 80 hours per week. The risk exists that European training is not equivalent and recognition may be endangered.

The meeting agreed:

- The paper should be accepted in principle with one delegate against this. There were no abstentions

## 9. SUBSPECIALISATION: WORKING GROUP, PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Professor Manuel Cunha e Sa (MCeS) reported to the meeting that subspecialisation was seen as a way to create centres of excellence for patient care; a way to prevent fragmentation of specialties and the impoverishment of neurosurgical skills when certain procedures are taken away from the neurosurgical stable. MCeS reported on the responses to questions submitted by the work:

- The question of Paediatric subspecialisation was not controversial and was accepted
- The matter of spine surgery subspecialisation was accepted, however is controversial largely due to the overlap with another specialty

The meeting agreed that this subject would be further discussed at the meeting of the UEMS in July at which point recommendations would be agreed.

## 10. CME

### a) Report on CME meeting in Brussels

Johan van Loon (JvL) reported that the Advisory Council of the EACCME had met in November and had discussed the matter of harmonisation of CME credits in Europe. This meeting concluded that national organisations should be left to award nationally based CME, while any supra-national organisations or organisers of supra-national activities should apply to a European CME Accreditation Board.

- b) The meeting agreed to the above proposal. It was also agreed that as the UEMS section was the only neurosurgical body empowered to award CME credits; the current EANS Education Committee should become a joint committee with the UEMS as approved by the EANS Executive Committee. Applicants should apply to the UEMS for CME accreditation 3 months before their activity, and pay their fee to the UEMS. The assessment of these applications will be by the new Joint UEMS/EANS CME Committee and the decision will be communicated within 3 weeks of the application.
- c) It was agreed that Professor Bodosi (Hungary) and van Loon (Belgium) would be UEMS delegates to the Joint UEMS/EANS CME Committee

## 11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Rab Hide (TAH) reported that the questionnaire on manpower provision had had to be amended and will be sent out again. It was agreed that the results of this would be an essential tool against political moves to reduce manpower across Europe.

## 12. CLOSE

- HJR thanked Dr Matgé for his hospitality in Luxembourg
- Date of next meeting in Brussels is 1<sup>st</sup> July 2006