

Annual report for 2007 from the UEMS section of occupational medicine

The section has had two ordinary meetings during 2007, in Zagreb, Croatia and Doonbeg/Limerick, Ireland. At the meetings there were 27 and 24 members/observers present, respectively. During 2007 16 UEMS member countries and 4 observer countries (see appendix 1) have been represented. Among the larger European countries we miss regular representation from Greece, Italy, Poland, Switzerland, Slovakia and Turkey.

The section's president is Consol Serra, Spain, the secretary is Knut Skyberg, Norway, the treasurer is Annette Gässler, Germany and the revision of finances is done by Jadranka Mustajbegovic, Croatia. All are elected for the period 2005-2009.

The section has a close cooperation with EASOM (European Schools of Occupational Medicine) and the Cochrane collaboration. To develop the web site we have had close contact with the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EE-OSHA). At present there is a test website available: <http://uems.osha.europa.eu/> The section has previously had representation at meetings from the occupational health office of WHO in Europe, and also members of the board of ICOH. One member of the section is also a member of the Permanent Committee (CP) of the UEMS.

The first day of the meeting in Zagreb was organised as a scientific meeting celebrating the 10 years anniversary of the section. The history of the section and present activities were presented by Tom McMahon, Ireland and Ewan Macdonald, United Kingdom, former presidents and secretaries of the section. The president of the UEMS, Zlatko Fras, gave a broad overview of UEMS, CME/CPD (Continuous medical education/continuous professional development) and EACCME (European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education).

During the ordinary meeting the second day in Croatia, the section's action plan was reviewed See appendix 2. The ATOM (Assessment tool for occupational medicine) project was followed up.

At the section's meeting in Ireland, several working groups gathered, and specified their goals. The ATOM project was linked to working group 6. We were informed that an ICOH conference will address this topic in Glasgow, 10.-12.4.08. A proposed strategy document for maintenance or improvement of the position of occupational physicians in the various European countries was approved. Jacques van der Vliet, the Netherlands, who drafted the document, will take this further. The status from a survey of the societies of occupational medicine in Europe was presented by Monica Ballester, Spain. Stanislav Pusnik, Slovenia, volunteered to update a survey on training.

The next autumn meeting of the section will be held in cooperation with EASOM, to establish a European CME accreditation procedure for occupational medicine.

In conclusion, after 10 years the section has a fairly good representation from most countries that are members of the UEMS. The section has broadened the activities through recent years, and should be more visible through policy documents, surveys and working groups reports in the near future. These documents will be spread nationally and internationally through the EU-OSHA website.

February 2008

Consol Serra
President

Knut Skyberg
secretary

Appendix 1:

UEMS member countries attending section meetings during 2007

Austria
Belgium
Czech Republic
Croatia (associate member)
Denmark
Finland
France
Germany
Ireland
Norway
Portugal
Romania
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
The Netherlands
United Kingdom

Observers

Bosnia-Herzegovina
Macedonia
Montenegro
Serbia

Appendix 2:

Action plan 2006-2009, working group tasks given priority

1. To continue and strengthen the development of the Section's website
2. To advance in the harmonisation of basic requirements and quality of speciality training programmes.
3. To influence stakeholders and legislators and to promote one voice for OM at EU and national levels.
4. To advance in the harmonisation of CME criteria and recertification.
5. To promote good practice and continuous quality improvement.

6. To contribute to the assessment of training programmes and trainees.

7. To participate in key forums and conferences with important impact on the speciality.

8. To collaborate with EU institutions related to occupational health

9. To strengthen the impact of the Section in member countries

10. To find new ways in OH to cope with the changing world of work, new intervention techniques, knowledge transfer.

11. To make a plan of future tasks to finance

12. To attract new members

13. To discuss the establishment of a future Board within the Section

14. To ensure that all member countries contribute equally to the financing of the Section