



The Newsletter of European Medical Specialists

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Editorial

EACCME - Finding the right way



Dr. Bernard Maillet
Secretary General
of UEMS-EACCME

As provided in its Statutes (Article III), UEMS commits itself to promote the free movement and the highest level of training of Doctors within the EU. Setting up the European Accreditation Council for CME five years ago was in line with these two objectives.

This body ensures the recognition of CME activities at European and international levels and allows European Doctors follow high-quality CME activities around the world.

This process is rather young and must continuously be improved. Regular meetings with stakeholders are held in order to progress in this way. (See page 2)

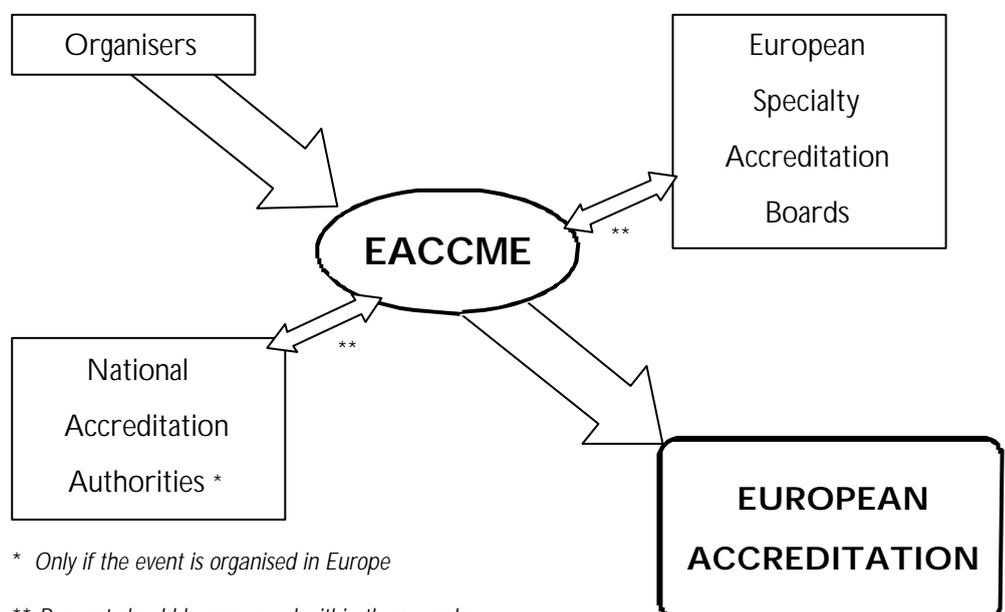
Nobody now puts into question the central role of EACCME as the gatekeeper and the clearing-house in the European accreditation process. It has though been felt appropriate among UEMS Executive to recall what the ideal procedure should be. We are of course aware that a lot of work must still be laid down but remain confident that it would be achieved in the near future.

Summary:

- EACCME partners meet in Rome to define common values
- New regulation for paediatric medicines
- Gender discrimination and health
- First set of EU health indicators

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* Only if the event is organised in Europe

** Request should be answered within three weeks

EACCME - Stakeholders' meeting in Rome

International harmonisation of CME-CPD accreditation systems

Accreditation stakeholders convened in Rome on 26 April last and discussed how to improve accreditation and credit systems at European and international levels. UEMS guidelines are now completed with further ethical requirements.

After more than five years of operation, the European Accreditation Council for CME (EACCME) that was set up by UEMS in 1999 is now thoroughly recognised at European and international levels as the genuine body that facilitates the free movement of European Doctors wishing to improve their practice abroad.

This process was made possible by UEMS involvement in networking with various partners in order to draw appropriate guidelines for this collaboration. In this respect, UEMS Secretary General Dr. Bernard Maillet attended a stakeholders' meeting held in Rome on April 26 last.

This meeting was an opportunity to increase uniformity between countries with regard to the principles and outcomes in the accreditation and credit systems of CME-CPD. Together with delegates of health authorities and medical societies and associations from Europe and North America, UEMS-EACCME agreed on several values of CME-CPD accreditation and credit systems as well as various responsibilities for partners in the system: physician-learners, accreditation bodies and CME-CPD event organisers.

Values notably include the improvement of physicians' performance, better information on educational needs.

Physician-learners should commit themselves to e.g. ensure their educational needs are relevant to their professional practice and patient care improvement, and met in the context of a renewal of knowledge, competence or performance. Accrediting bodies should notably guarantee reasonable standards and criteria for organisers, promote continuous quality improvement of accreditation processes and education systems and efficiently collaborate with partners. Organisers must also ensure e.g. that outcome measures include education effectiveness, learning objectives are clearly defined and teaching methods are appropriate.

It was felt that these new constituents would contribute to facilitate the free movement of physician-learners between the various national CME-CPD systems. The stakeholders involved in this consensus believe that the implementation of CME-CPD systems fulfilling these criteria would lead to improved mutual recognition and reciprocity while respecting each partner's specificity.

A declaration of ethical conduct aiming to exclude conflict of interests was also drawn during this meeting.

These documents would now complement UEMS guidelines for CME-CPD events' assessment and help build a single union of knowledge and lifelong learning for European Doctors.

*Common values
defined for
physicians-
learners,
accreditation
bodies and event
organisers*

European Parliament - Committee meetings

Special medicines for children

The Environment Committee of the European Parliament adopted on July 13 last the Report of Mrs. Françoise Grossetête by 40 votes to 9 and 9 abstentions.

This draft regulation aims to encourage pharmaceutical companies to produce drugs specifically designed for children. Few industries do because the clinical trials are more difficult than for adults and the time taken to perfect them is longer. Therefore, most of the time sick children have to take smaller doses of medicines designed for adults, although their organism absorbs or eliminates them differently and there can be particular side effects.

The draft report proposes extending the life of patents or supplementary certificates by six months. This option was preferred as it was feared that variable protection regimes might cause insurmountable problems of implementation. There will, however, be one exception: the exclusive commer-

cial rights of "orphan drugs", intended to treat rare illnesses, will be increased from 10 to 12 years if they are invented specifically for children.

The European Commission is urged to review the regulation six years after it enters into force and amend it if it has not produced the desired impact, notably on research. For now on, MEPs want to boost research by other means and call for the creation of a special EU programme for research into medicines for children (MICE - Medicines Investigation for the Children of Europe). In order to optimise efforts, a network of research centres would also be created.

The regulation will also set up a Paediatric Committee which would issue opinions on paediatric research plans submitted by companies seeking extra six months protection. Details on its composition were not settled yet, but it is already known that representatives of paediatricians would take part in its works.

"Europe desperately needs more medicines

which are proven to be safe for children.

The proposed regulation is a welcome step forward,

but it has to tackle head-on the need for

strong and effective incentives to attract

more competitive R&D to Europe"

Prof. José RAMET

Secretary of UEMS Section of Paediatrics

Gender discrimination and health systems

The European Parliament's Women's Rights Committee adopted on July 14 last the own-initiative Report of Mrs. Eva-Britt Svensson on gender discrimination and the health system by 21 votes to 2 and 5 abstentions.

It is known that gender can have an enormous impact on health, as much as age or socio-economic differences.

This report aims to make health sector workers aware of the role of gender in determining the individual's health. This means including education on

gender disparities in the training of healthcare staff.

According to the report, all publicly funded health services should provide good services on equal terms.

According to the EP Committee, the report also urges improved measures to fight breast cancer. Comprehensive screening programmes in accordance to EU guidelines should exist in all EU Member States and mammography screening be made available at two-yearly intervals to all women aged 50-69.



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New EU Health data published

The first set of EU-wide health data from the European Community Health Indicators (ECHI) project has been published on the Commission's Public Health website. The aim of ECHI is to produce better and more comparable data that will enable policy makers to track developments in the health status of EU populations. The ECHI indicators aim to cover the 25 MS, the EU Candidate Countries (Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey), the West Balkan Countries, the USA, Canada and

Japan and the data they contain is available in English, French, German and Spanish. The ECHI pages on the Public Health website will be developed over the coming months and updated on a regular basis.

For further information:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_information/dissemination/echi/echi_en.htm

UEMS ON THE WEB:

WWW.UEMS.NET

Events - Conferences - Seminars

Congress for social science and health

Istanbul, 21-26 August 2005

The International Forum for Social Sciences and Health

www.ifssh.net

EuroNanoForum 2005

Edinburgh, 6-9 September 2005

The Institute of Nanotechnology & Azonano.com

www.euronanoforum2005.org

Interactive computer-aided learning Conference

Villach (Austria), 28-30 September 2005

www.icl-conference.org/cfp_handout_icl05.pdf

Future meetings

UEMS Council

Munich, 20-21 Oct. 2005

Brussels, 11 March 2006

EACCME Adv. Council

Brussels, 26 Nov. 2005

The voice of practising medical specialists in Europe