



UNION EUROPÉENNE DES MÉDECINS SPÉCIALISTES EUROPEAN UNION OF MEDICAL SPECIALISTS

Association internationale sans but lucratif

International non-profit organisation

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UEMS 2013 / 01

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

UEMS COUNCIL MEETING

Meeting to be held at the Maison des Associations Internationales

*Rue Washington 40
1050 Brussels (Belgium)*

Friday 19th April 2013

Saturday 20th April 2013

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The UEMS had a particularly busy year in 2012, and this increased workload has been carried through into 2013. These increased day-to-day challenges have been met by an increased productivity by the Brussels Secretariat, as supported by the Executive.

This increase in activity has been related to:

- enhanced political lobbying

of the Commission, the Parliament,

and in support of NMAs and Specialist Sections

- the introduction of the new accreditation criteria for Live Educational Events

- difficulties related to the planned alterations to the new UEMS building

- greater contact with Specialist Sections and Boards

new bank accounts; new training templates; increased competencies

- the confirmation of VAT status for the UEMS

with a requirement to comply with this within a narrowly defined period

- increased financial scrutiny and greater accounting requirements

related to the UEMS's status as a large not-for-profit organisation

- new ways that the working of Secretariat and Executive

we're all doing more for the UEMS!

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LOBBYING ACTIVITIES

The UEMS has been particularly active in lobbying key European political decision-makers. This has partly been as a result of progress in the legislative timescale of certain key political initiatives, but also due to greater emphasis being placed by the UEMS on this activity.

A summary of this activity includes:

Professional Qualifications Directive

- Contact with MEPs, Commission representatives and the Representatives of Member States, in order to lobby for amendments to this revised directive
- The UEMS was influential in ensuring that key concerns were included in the report of the Rapporteur, Mme Vergnaud (released on 16th July 2012)
- Key amendments (particularly AM95 on the duration of training and competences) were endorsed by vote in the IMCO committee (23rd January 2013)
- Work within the framework of Trilogue negotiations, and continuing lobbying efforts in order to secure key elements (such as competences as the basis for mutual recognition)

EU Healthcare Workforce

- The UEMS has been included as an active partner within the EU Joint Action on Healthcare Workforce Planning and Forecasting for data collection (in co-operation with the CEOM within the framework of the “European Observatory on Medical Demography”) and horizon scanning
- The first meeting of the Joint Action was held on 11th April 2013

Comité Européen de Normalisation

- The UEMS has repeatedly made clear its absolute opposition to the CEN initiative to develop standards in Aesthetic Medicine/Surgery
- This has been addressed through a campaign based on an open letter, that has been supported by other EMOs and NMAs
- The UEMS has also used its contacts with relevant stakeholders political decision-makers to emphasise its profound concerns

Corporate Social Responsibility: Ethics & Transparency

- The UEMS participated in the European Commission platform that drafted the European Code of common values and principles applicable in key areas of industry involvement in CME/CPD, research and development, clinical trials and promotional activities.

Specific initiatives

- The UEMS has supported the Section of Ophthalmology in its lobbying regarding Fluorescein strips, helping to make the case for their continuing clinical use
- The UEMS has supported EBCOG in its lobbying regarding Women's Health
- The UEMS has been an active participant in the EU Health Policy Forum
- The UEMS has joined with partner organisations to respond to European calls for tender, including the Leonardo da Vinci and Public Health programmes
- The UEMS is involved as an expert partner organisation in the European Commission's e-Health Stakeholders Group
- The UEMS has contributed to the work of the "Momentum" and "Renewing Health" EU-funded projects

You can therefore be assured that the policy of the UEMS is being represented in an effective and influential manner!

PRIORITISED FINANCIAL ISSUES

Two issues, that have significant financial implications, remain major priorities for the UEMS.

Domus Medica Europea

Considerable difficulties have been encountered with the Brussels planning authorities as regards the proposed renovations to the UEMS premises at 24 Rue de l'Industrie.

It had been planned that our five floor building would be extensively altered, with the addition of two floors, creating a modern, fit-for-purpose seven floor building with additional meeting rooms and extensive office space. However, these plans were rejected by the planning authorities, with the reasons cited for this being alterations to the façade of the building and a new requirement for buildings in this area to have mixed office space and residential accommodation.

The UEMS has submitted revised plans that have reduced the scale of the planned renovations, have minimised the alterations to the exterior of the building, but also, inevitably, have required a reduction in the scope of the intended alterations. It is hoped that these plans will be supported, and that work on the new home for the UEMS, and colleague organizations, can commence.

The delays already incurred has meant that the likely opening date for Domus Medica Europea now is projected to be in April 2014.

UEMS finances

Major legislative changes have been enacted in most European countries, including Belgium, related to the increasing the transparency of financial accounting, and to raising revenue through tightening taxation rules. As a result of these changes in Belgian law, and the UEMS's status as an “international non-profit organisation (AISBL)”, the UEMS has had to comply with much more stringent rules and regulations.

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This has required the UEMS to comply with a more detailed form of financial accounting, and also to ensure that all funds, related to the activities of the UEMS, are held in accounts related to the central UEMS account. It is very encouraging to note that almost all parts of the UEMS family now comply with this legislative requirement, and to emphasise that the law requires this to be all parts that comply.

In addition, late last year, the VAT status of the UEMS was confirmed by the Belgian VAT authorities, with a deadline of just over three weeks given for the UEMS to provide accounts that detailed all relevant VAT-liable activities. This required a full accounting for most aspects of our activities, through the UEMS-EACCME, in the accreditation of educational events and materials. Considerable work was performed by the Secretariat to ensure that the UEMS complied with this ruling in accordance with the very tight timescale required of us.

The required application of VAT to the accreditation service of the UEMS-EACCME has required the regularisation of all accreditation invoices. It is possible that the Belgian tax authorities may require VAT to be levied against other aspects of the UEMS's finances, and legal advice has been sought as regards this.

While noting these challenges, it must be emphasized that the UEMS continues to benefit from healthy finances, largely related to the income accrued from the EACCME's accreditation activities. As a result, it has been possible for the UEMS to maintain subscriptions from National Medical Associations at very reasonable levels.

SECTIONS AND BOARDS

The UEMS has 39 Sections (most of which have associated Boards – S&Bs), 11 Multi-disciplinary Joint Committees (MJC)s and 1 Thematic Federation (TF). The strength in active membership of the UEMS is related to the excellent work performed in each speciality area.

Of particular importance is that the Specialist Sections and Boards co-ordinate their activities, and much work will be done in 2013 to ensure that the competences of the S&Bs, MJC's and TF are developed and enhanced.

It also is essential for improving communication that the UEMS maintains an up-to-date register of all colleagues involved in our activities. A central database has been developed, but can only be as accurate as the information provided. Please ensure that your details are correct!

European examinations

The UEMS, working through CESMA, has had a major impact on the quality and appropriateness of European examinations, that now are held in 21 specialities. Many of these examinations have been accepted by national authorities as the applicable examinations for trainees in their countries.

It is expected that the new template for European training requirements will provide a co-ordinated structure for all specialities, and will be helpful to the development of examinations based on appropriate elements of these programmes.

In order to enhance the quality of these examinations, CESMA has begun work on an initiative that will support the visitation of European examinations, with feedback being provided to the examination organizers and the speciality as to strengths, and areas for potential improvement.

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ECAMSQ

Considerable progress has been achieved, with the initial pilot project – based on working with Anaesthesiology, Intensive Care and Cardiology – now leading to the planned more widespread introduction of this means of assuring specialist performance.

The UEMS recognizes that e-platforms and e-portfolios will be the basis for much of the future development in this important area, and will be inviting a range of organizations to demonstrate what they might be able to contribute.

Liaison and communication

The members of the UEMS Executive recognize the importance of close interaction with colleagues working in the S&Bs, MJC_s and TF, and are happy, subject to individual availability, to attend meetings and to contribute to these.

It is helpful if invitations can be extended with sufficient time available to check availability, and to ensure that an available member of the UEMS Executive team is able to attend. Please send these invitations to the UEMS office.

It also would be helpful, in order to achieve greater communication of the excellent work being achieved in each speciality, if the reports of meetings could be provided to the UEMS office, and placed on the relevant part of the UEMS website.

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EACCME

The UEMS-EACCME continues to play a major part in setting the standards for CME/CPD throughout Europe. This leading role increasingly is being recognised by:

- political organisations (European Commission and Parliament),
- provider and funding organisations, who look to EACCME accreditation as a confirmation of the quality of CME/CPD, and
- doctors who benefit from the international transfer of European CME credits and from the validation of the quality of their learning.

During 2012, the international mutual recognition agreements with the USA and Canada were renewed, and a new agreement, with Dubai, was confirmed.

Following the extensive consultations on the proposed new criteria for the accreditation of live educational events (LEEs), these were introduced as of 1st January 2013.

The scheduled meeting of the EACCME Advisory Council (1st December 2012) also served as a training event, in preparation for the implementation of the new accreditation system. A further training event, and review of the new criteria, will be held on 6th July 2013.

Regrettably, the planned implementation was affected by difficulties with the online application system. These problems were rapidly rectified, through the hard work of the UEMS Secretariat and the EACCME web-master.

A quick summary of the accreditation activity for 2012 is:

Accreditation of Live Events (according to the “old criteria”)

- 1871 applications were received
- 1755 applications were accredited (some submitted in 2011)
- 38 applications were rejected
- 76 applications were suspended pending further evaluation

Accreditation of e-Learning materials

- 72 applications for accreditation were submitted in 2012
- 57 applications were accredited
- 4 applications were rejected
- 11 applications are ongoing

Accreditation of Live Events 2013

- 455 applications have been received
- 374 applications have been accredited (total of “old” and “new” criteria)
- 167 of which were accredited with the new criteria (2013 applications)
- 6 applications were rejected
- 3 of which were rejected with the new criteria (2013 applications)
- 25 applications have been suspended pending further evaluation

The EACCME continues to need experienced reviewers, including those who also are willing to receive applications referred for more detailed scrutiny. If you are willing to contribute to this specialist work, please volunteer!

NEW UEMS WEBSITE

Colleagues will have noted that the new UEMS website is considerably more user-friendly, and is being developed in a manner that supports all parties of the UEMS family being able to highlight their activities.

In order to ensure that the information displayed is relevant and up-to-date, please liaise with the UEMS office.

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A PERSONAL NOTE

Colleagues who have emailed me recently will have noted that I now have a new hospital email address. This is because I have started work as the Medical Director of a group of hospitals in Shropshire, England. Please use my email address of sg@uemsnet.net for all UEMS correspondence. I extend my thanks to my colleagues on the UEMS Executive for helping me to deal with the UEMS workload while I have undergone this “change of life”.

I would also like to thank all members of the UEMS Secretariat for their excellent work that they perform on behalf of all members of our organisation.

Edwin Borman
Secretary General
April 2013