



UNION EUROPÉENNE DES MÉDECINS SPÉCIALISTES EUROPEAN UNION OF MEDICAL SPECIALISTS

Association internationale sans but lucratif International non-profit organisation

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UEMS COUNCIL MEETING

BRUSSELS, 19-20 OCTOBER 2018

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

1. Introduction - 60 and counting!

The upcoming Autumn Council meeting of the UEMS that will take place between the 19th-20th of October 2018 in Brussels will be a significant millstone in the history of our organisation since we are going to celebrate the 60th anniversary since its establishment on the 20th of July 1958.

When we go through the historic document of the founding of our organisation, I believe that we can safely make the following two main observations:

1. The principles, values and noble causes of the UEMS have never changed. The founders had the vision and the aspiration to create a European organisation that will be inclusive, democratic and transparent and will serve as a vehicle of close and productive collaboration of medical specialists aiming to advance the standards of training and professional practice and, ultimately and most importantly, the quality of care offered to patients in Europe. We are proud to say that all Colleagues who served the UEMS over the last six decades, did so with great commitment to those principles, values and causes. It is our clear and sound pledge that we will continue to do so in the years ahead of us. This commitment is today more important than ever when we can all see the level of doubt (and on certain occasions hostility) towards European collaboration and harmonisation. It is the unfortunate truth that

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the lessons taught to us by the massive catastrophes in European history were either never learned, or were easily forgotten.

2. Our principles, values and causes are the same but the size, structure and activities of the UEMS have increased dramatically. The fact that almost 1,600,000 medical specialists from the 40 Countries are formally represented through their National Medical Associations (NMAs) and collaborate in all areas of specialist practice through an ever-growing number of Sections, Boards, Multidisciplinary Joint Committees (MJC) and the Thematic Federations (TFs) of the UEMS is remarkable. It is even more remarkable to see the output of this work that translates in substantial and palpable projects that support and advance the professional development and collaboration of medical specialists in Europe and much beyond.

The great achievements of the past, generate a great responsibility for all of us to carry the UEMS flag with pride and success in the future. I have to say that looking at the width and depth of the work that is being done across the board in the UEMS, including of course the upcoming Council meeting, we can state with confidence that we are up to the great legacy of the past 60 years and we pave the way for 60 more successful years.

The session for the celebration of our 60th Anniversary is planned for Friday the 19th of October. We will have an opportunity to celebrate our history and achievements, remember absent friends, honour Colleagues who had a distinguished contribution to the UEMS and discuss our vision and plans for the future.

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2. The UEMS Awards

In 2017, in preparation of the celebrations for the 60th Anniversary of the UEMS, we discussed with our NMAs and UEMS Bodies, processes that we could establish to honour Colleagues across the UEMS constituency who demonstrated exceptional commitment, work and contribution to our organisation. This was in addition to the well-established highest accolade of the UEMS which is that of the “Honorary Membership”. The Extended Executive Committee (EEC) went through many proposals that came from Colleagues from the NMAs and the UEMS Bodies regarding the terms of reference for awarding those important accolades. The terms of reference were approved by the UEMS Council and there was an open call to all our NMAs and UEMS Bodies to put forward nominations formally and by using a structured reference/ justification form. Following the initial scrutiny by the EEC, the nominations were forwarded, as per the terms of reference, to the NMAs that voted for every nomination through a secret electronic ballot. We are confident that the announcement of the names of the awardees on Friday the 19th of October will be met by a warm and loud round of applause in recognition of their truly exceptional contribution to the UEMS.

It is most important to emphasize that the process of awarding those distinctions is not a one off related to the celebrations for our 60th Anniversary. This will be from now on an established process, so more nominations can come forward in the future. We believe that we owe it to Colleagues who did exceptional work for the UEMS to say our “special thank you”.

3. The Extended Executive Committee (EEC)

The EEC continues to work closely, democratically and with great commitment. President Krajewski ensures that focus and momentum are not lost even for a second. I have to say that the

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regular teleconferences of the Executive Committee (EC) and the EEC are of great importance for the efficient running of our organisation; please keep in mind that you can ask us any time to consider issues related to your area of work in the UEMS. Moreover, you can also use teleconferences organised by the UEMS Office in Brussels to facilitate the day to day business that you conduct for the UEMS. Many colleagues have found it to be a very efficient way of communication.

Over the last 6 months the members of the EEC have attended a series of meetings. The details as to what kind of meetings were attended, who attended, the reason for UEMS attendance and the outcome are available to you anytime by the UEMS Office. I would like to highlight that those meetings fall in the following categories:

- Business or professional development meetings organised by our NMAs and the UEMS Bodies.
- Meetings organised by the broader professional and scientific specialist medical community in Europe and beyond where we have a clear opportunity to raise the profile of the UEMS and establish areas of constructive collaboration.
- Meetings organised by EU bodies or other European and international medical organisations that allow us to build alliances and further enhance the work of the UEMS.

Over many years, there has been a continuous request by many UEMS Colleagues for our organisation to engage more actively with the EU and its relevant Directorates aiming to enhance the involvement and influence of the UEMS in shaping EU health policy. We believe that the time to proceed systematically with such a project has come and in Brussels we will discuss how this can

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be done meaningfully and efficiently. It will require of course human and financial resources; but if carefully planned, it can certainly open new horizons to the UEMS.

4. The UEMS Office in Brussels

First, I would like to take this opportunity to express our most grateful thanks to our CEO and all the members of our Team in Brussels for their fantastic work. I have the honour and the pleasure to work with them on daily basis and witness their commitment and hard work for our organisation. To really appreciate their work we have to remember that they need to deal with Colleagues and issues coming from 40 different Countries! It is a great challenge that they face with top class professionalism and efficiency.

There are some important developments for our Office in Brussels over the last 6 months that, as always, have two main targets: increase the efficiency of our work and advance the professional development of the Team that translates into great work for the UEMS.

The first important change was the enhancement of our financial team since the handling of our finances becomes a more and more complex enterprise. This, in combination with the clear and unnegotiable demand by the Belgian Authorities for 100% accountability demand a top-class team dealing with our finances. The work of our finance Colleagues includes mainly (the list is getting longer by the day!) the following:

- Bookkeeping and review of general and analytical accounts (UEMS and UEMS Bodies).
- Monitoring and management of 71 bank accounts.
- Production of financial statements, balance sheets, budgets, cash flow forecasts, monthly VAT reports and corporate tax returns.

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- Recording and control of payroll transactions.
- Monitoring proper monthly cut-off and closing procedures with Sections.

There has been great progress over the last two years related to the management of our finances and we will continue to work hard to advance it even further.

When it comes to the support of the UEMS Bodies and the work of EACCME, a new generation of talented Colleagues have been trained and supported by the “old guard” and they are now working productively and with great enthusiasm for the UEMS projects. This is clearly important and in response to the ever-developing workload and the complexity of the work related to the projects of the UEMS Bodies and EACCME.

The processes of recruitment and annual professional appraisal of our members of staff that have been set by our CEO with the support of the EEC have established a framework of sound governance for the UEMS Office Team. Thanks to the prestige of our organisation and the opportunities we offer, we have managed to recruit some very talented people to add to our existing highly experienced Colleagues. However, we always wish to go one step further and enhance the framework of professional and financial advancement of the members of our Team so that we can ensure that our good Colleagues feel appreciated and they have a clear process regarding their progress in the UEMS. The proposed salary grid that will be discussed in Brussels, has been developed following benchmarking against other European organisations, it is based on fairness and recognition of hard work and commitment and is also financial affordable.

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5. The Domus Medica Europaea (DME)

The report of our CEO gives a very clear picture regarding the evolution between 2015 and 2018 related to the utilisation of the DME and the income that it generates; from a “shy start” being a newcomer in the market to a well-established professional and business hub that generates a steady source of income. Furthermore, the refurbishment of the parking space has now been completed and we hope that it will soon add to the income coming from the DME. The level of utilisation of the DME is very satisfactory when we consider that half of the office available for renting/ events in Brussels is empty.

The Report of the CEO goes into more detail regarding the use of the DME by our NMAs and UEMS Bodies as well as by external organisations. It is clear that, although a lot has been achieved, a lot more can be done. We need the support of all UEMS Colleagues in further advancing the utilisation of the DME and, equally importantly, if they have used it to give us their feedback as to how we can improve our services.

6. Finances

The documents produced by our Treasurer and the Office Team give all the details regarding the financial status of our organisation and there is no intention to repeat all the figures and tables.

I would like though to make the following comments:

- It is of great importance for all Colleagues to go through those documents in detail. For the UEMS Bodies I would like respectfully to make a plea to always include them in the agenda for their business meetings. We all wish to have a constructive discussion and a healthy

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debate regarding financial matters, but this can only be meaningful and constructive if it is based on sound knowledge of the facts. The experience is that lack of this knowledge can only lead to misunderstandings and unnecessary confrontations.

- The overall financial status of the UEMS is sound; the data demonstrate that, (as it was the case for 2017), we will end up with a positive end of year position for 2018 and the same is forecasted for 2019 based on the proposed budget. This reflects the benefits of our tight fiscal policy, the lack of any more recurrent costs for the DME and increased income by the projects of the UEMS portfolio. Needless to say, this does not mean that we can lose focus or be complacent even for a second. We will continue to work towards improving the financial position of the UEMS, aiming to further invest into our current and future projects.
- The overall financial reserves of the UEMS Bodies are substantial, reflecting the success of their work. However, it is important to point out that there is variability when it comes to the “financial muscle” of each UEMS Body and any financial plans we will put in place have to take this most important factor into consideration. It is important to emphasize that, as a non-for-profit organisation operating under Belgian law, we cannot just pile funds in the bank. This will have serious tax implications. The overall concept is that UEMS Bodies need to identify the funds they need every year to cover their operational costs, add to this a security fund and then discuss how they could use part of the surplus of their resources for projects of common interest that will support medical specialists across Europe and will translate of course into better care for patients. This is most important discussion for the future that can be facilitated through the Advisory Board (AB) and the Council.

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- At the Council meeting of April 2018 in Marrakesh, we had the opportunity to discuss the proposal for the implementation of an administration fee that needs to be covered by the UEMS Bodies. This is because of a cost pressure for the UEMS budget due to: a) the increasing workload for our Office in Brussels in support of the activities of the UEMS Bodies which is beyond the services of the Office for which the UEMS Bodies already contribute financially and b) the VAT that cannot be reclaimed by the UEMS due to the fact that the income from VAT exempted activities of the UEMS Bodies is increasing. In Marrakesh, we discussed various ways that could be used to ensure that the distribution of this fee amongst the UEMS Bodies is fair and affordable. Following this initial discussion, we requested that all UEMS Bodies offer their comments and proposals regarding the optimum way to distribute the administrative fee. We have received a very good number of replies and this issue will be an important item for discussion in Brussels. Recently, the Chairs of the three Groupings of the Sections produced a very comprehensive letter explaining the background of the issue, the discussion that has taken place so far and the proposed way for the future; this letter was accompanied by the SG and CEO reports from the last Council meeting as well as the financial reports of 2016 and 2017 that give the complete picture regarding the financial status of the UEMS. We believe that, following a constructive discussion in Brussels, we will decide the best way forward. One thing that we wish to highlight in the most categorical way is that the EEC will make sure that whichever way we will all decide to use for the distribution of the administrative fee, financially more vulnerable UEMS Bodies and their function and projects will be protected.

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- The piloting of the new e-platform for the handling of our finances is one more step towards the evolution of our financial management to assure efficiency, accountability and transparency. We are most grateful to the UEMS Bodies who have offered their support in this piloting phase.
- Responding to the request of the AB as well as many individual UEMS Bodies, for the first time in December of 2018 in Brussels we will organise a meeting of the Treasurers of the UEMS Bodies. The meeting will aim to bring the Treasurers up to speed with the governance, management and progress of the UEMS finances and also to offer them an opportunity to discuss any issues related to their work and enhance their collaboration with the UEMS Office and with each other. The indication is that the meeting will be well attended and could possibly be organised regularly.

7. European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education- EACCME

First, a very big thank you on my behalf to the EACCME Team in Brussels for their world class work and our excellent collaboration.

EACCME is a massive and ever evolving project of the UEMS; regarding the work of the last 6 months I would like to highlight the following:

7.1 Activity

The EACCME activity is advancing and it is very pleasing to see that the implementation of EACCME 2.0 was successful and sustainable.

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Table 1 demonstrates that the number of events submitted and accredited by the 30th of September 2018 has increased by 19% and 45% respectively compared to the same period in 2017. The number of “on-going events” has been decreased by 49% in 2018 compared to 2017; data up to the 30th of September for both years. In summary this means that we receive and review more applications and we do it in a more efficient way.

Table 1

Live Educational Events Comparison 2017 - 2018 at 30th September

	2017	2018	Difference	%
New	1402	1672	+ 270	+ 19 %
Accredited	998	1446	+ 448	+ 45 %
Rejected	13	7	- 6	- 46 %
Cancelled	36	39	+ 3	+ 8 %
Still on-going	355	180	- 175	- 49 %
Appeals	5	1	-4	- 80 %

Report of the Secretary General

Table 2 demonstrates the number of applications we received in 2018 based on the number of participants of the event. We received a strong number of applications from big events and we also received a very big number of applications from smaller events (< 100 participants). I believe that this means that one of the aims of EACCME 2.0 which was to be more inclusive and give a chance

to smaller but high-quality educational events to go through the robust EACCME process and be accredited has been achieved.

Table 2

Live Educational Events 2018 STATUS AT 30TH SEPTEMBER

Type of LEE	Number of applications
< 100 pax	759
101 – 250 pax	368
251 – 500 pax	179
501 – 1,000 pax	110
1,001 – 2,000 pax	69
2,001 – 5,000 pax	41
> 5,000 pax	25

Report of the Secretary General



Table 3 demonstrates a clear increase in the number of e-educational material that is submitted to EACCME for review. There was a 64% increase in 2017 compared to 2016. Furthermore, comparing the number of submissions until the 30th of September, there was a 13% increase in 2018 compared to 2017 (Table 4).

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Table 3

E-Learning submissions 2010 - 2018

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total	71	95	72	91	91	97	85	140	121

Report of the Secretary General



Table 4

E-Learning Materials Comparison 2017 - 2018 at 30th September

	2017	2018	Difference	%
Number of applications	107	121	+ 14	+ 13 %

Report of the Secretary General

Last, but certainly not least, the overall income generated by EACCME by the 30th of September 2018, was by 3.5% higher compared to the income generated for the same period in 2017.

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7.2 Development of international collaborations

In April of 2018 in Marrakesh, we signed an agreement between the UEMS and the Spanish National Medical Association that allows for national events taking place in Spain to be reviewed through a process that is totally in alignment with EACCME principles and process and accredited by EACCME. This means that national events taking place in Spain will have EACCME recognition. Our Spanish Colleagues have dedicated a massive amount of human and financial resources for the development of this project that paves the way for other Countries should they wish to have their national events being accredited by EACCME. The formal launching of the project will take place on the 26th of October in Madrid. Our Spanish Colleagues have our grateful thanks for their superb work.

Another important development was the Toledo Declaration by CONFEMEL which is the federation of Medical Associations of Central and South America. Thanks to the good offices of the Spanish and the Portuguese National Medical Associations, we had the opportunity to have high level discussions at the CONFEMEL meeting that took place in Toledo, Spain in May of 2018. The result was the Toledo Declaration by CONFEMEL that paves the way for a close collaboration between the UEMS and CONFEMEL on CME-CPD and more specifically in the field of accreditation of high quality educational events. It is certainly a great prospect for the UEMS and for CONFEMEL; a lot of work needs to be done and the UEMS Council will be kept informed for all developments.

7.3 The EACCME Working Groups

The establishment by the EACCME Advisory Council of 4 working groups aimed to pave the way for EACCME 3.0.

The 4 EACCME working groups and their Chairs are follows:

- Group 1: Expansion of recognition of professional qualifications (Chairman: Prof. Hans Perrild).
- Group 2: Development of a training module for reviewers (Chairman: Prof. Wolfgang Grisold).
- Group 3: Collaboration with other healthcare professionals (Chairman: Prof. Augusto Machado).
- Group 4: Conflict of interest disclosure forms and accredited programmes and the involvement of industry (Chairman: Dr Kristiina Patja).

The outcome of the work of the 4 groups can be seen in Appendices 1-4 respectively, attached to this report. Following our discussion in Marrakesh, a final round of consultation was opened. It was widely recognised that the content of the documents is comprehensive and progressive and there were no suggestions for major changes.

The plan is that, if no other changes/ additions are proposed at the Council meeting in Brussels, the working groups would kindly be asked to finalise the documents in the form of suggested EACCME principles to be considered at the January 2019 meeting of the EACCME Advisory Council. The final version of those documents will come to the UEMS Council meeting of April of 2019 for review and approval.

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7.4 The EACCME Conference of 2018

The EACCME Conference will take place on the 23rd -24th of November 2018 in Brussels.

The EACCME Conference of 2016 focused mainly on the developments related to EACCME 2.0

The 2018 Conference will have the character of an active workshop aiming to pave the way for CME-CPD and accreditation of educational events for the years ahead of us.

The programme will start with a joint session between the UEMS and the European Scientific Societies (ESSs) that will aim to monitor progress on the areas of collaboration agreed at the last UEMS-ESSs meeting; the development of the European Council on CME-CPD being a flagship project.

This will be followed by presentations that will appraise the whole CME-CPD portfolio of the UEMS along with a practical workshop for providers and reviewers.

The next set of sessions will feature a series of interactive presentations by NMA Members of the UEMS, UEMS Bodies, ESSs, European Medical Organisations, International Medical Organisations, Allied Healthcare Professionals, Educational Providers and Industry to define their views on the upcoming developments on CME-CPD.

The last set of sessions will be workshops to discuss the expressed views, reach consensus and translate this consensus into action points for EACCME.

It is a unique opportunity to be part of this high-level meeting that will shape the future. It is massively important that our NMA and UEMS Bodies will participate in big numbers. This is OUR/ UEMS CME-CPD CONFERENCE and we need to be there, work with our partners and come up with palpable outcomes!

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8. European Training Requirements (ETRs)

Over the last two years, at every Council meeting we review ETRs of increasingly high quality; I believe that the upcoming Council meeting is no exception! The ETRs are the consensus product of hard work led by the UEMS Bodies. I would like to highlight the following regarding the recent progress of our work on ETRs:

- The UEMS ETRs are not just an exercise on paper. They reflect years of hard work across Europe in establishing commonly accepted standards of training and organising specialist assessments and accreditation of centres.
- The UEMS Bodies build strong partnerships across Europe with ESSs, other accreditation bodies as well as academic and professional organisations. This adds a wealth of experience and expertise to the ETRs and enhances their status across Europe and beyond.
- The ETRs offer a holistic approach to specialist training including the trainee, the trainer, the training centre and the educational activities linked to them.
- The ETRs review Committee has played an important role in optimising the review process and the preparation of the ETRs for the Council meeting as well in avoiding conflicts between UEMS Bodies. The establishment of a lead reviewer for each ETR was a positive experience; proposals for the further improvement of the work of the ETRs Committee will be discussed in Brussels.

9. Concluding thoughts

The SG report is the summary of an enormous amount of activity and data. The more challenging it becomes to write it and summarise in a few pages the work of 6 months, the more one realises that

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the UEMS is becoming bigger and stronger by the day. We are all equal shareholders of this great process and deserve to be proud of it. There are without doubt challenges ahead of us, but the success of the past combined with the experience, expertise and hard work of all Colleagues allows for optimism for the future.

Let us raise our glasses in Brussels and offer a joyful wish: *To 60 More Years!*

Professor Vassilios Papalois, UEMS Secretary General

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