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Facing Adversity with Training and Education

Our societies in Europe are facing great challenges. The financial and economic crisis, climate change and demographic change are all high on our agenda. Demographic changes have repercussions for health supply and in particular, hospitals. It is nice that we are living longer but this leads to increased responsibility to make sure this can be coped with sociopolitically. Older people have always depended on the welfare of the younger generation but there are less and less young people. The burden on medical and nursing treatments is increasing while the number of young people joining the healthcare workforce is decreasing. It is becoming more difficult to find sufficiently qualified young employees for the health professions. In Germany, for example almost 70 percent of medical students are women. This will undoubtedly change the way in which hospitals are organised.

Changes in both health policy and education policy are needed to provide lasting solutions. But the management must also face these changes and find labour organisation solutions on the one hand and more flexibility with new forms of the medical and nursing supply structures on the other.

Even more significant is the direct responsibility of the hospital management regarding these issues. This of course happens at the level of the entrepreneurial behaviour in the hospitals. However, it is just as important that the hospital directors become more openminded and are aware of their responsibility on both a national and a European level and make the necessary changes in the structures and processes of the health supply.

The training and education of employees and also the executives in the hospital sector is of special importance in this context. The course is set for success here. Executives and employees trained well create the prerequisites for positive motivation and successful qualitative processes and excellent results (efficiency and effectiveness). This issue of (E)Hospital puts further education and training for management and leadership into the centre stage.

The country focus in this issue of (E)Hospital focuses on beautiful Ireland, famous for innovative structures and processes and positive results in hospital care. EAHM is concentrating on its European congress on September 9th and 10th, 2010 in Zurich. We are all looking forward to this event and may I invite you to the beautiful Switzerland on behalf of the committee and the executive board.

Heinz Kölking

Vice-President EAHM

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