

Volume 12, Issue 5/2010 - Editorial

New Challenges for Hospitals

As this issue appears the year 2010 is already almost behind us. The transition to a new year offers the opportunity to both look back to the old one and to look ahead to the next one.

Newly elected EAHM President, Heinz Kölking valued the work of 2010 as a new chapter in the history of our association. Not only because of the election of the new Board and the Executive Committee during the general assembly and congress in Zurich, but also because of our reflection process. A process that resulted in the development of a medium-term strategic plan in response to the structural changes in European healthcare systems and in hospitals themselves.

These structural changes are multifaceted but they have one thing in common: the need for effective crisis management and strategic planning to ensure hospitals are adequately supplied. This topic is the central focus of the current issue of (E)Hospital. There is a strained financial situation in many European countries but this is not the only reason for these structural changes. Less access to financing is a long-term situation for hospitals necessitating structural change. This issue includes an account of the consequences of the financial crisis in French hospitals and of the measures taken to overcome it.

New crisis management strategies are often required in hospitals. For example, how to cope with an epidemic or, like in the Irish hospitals, if an act of nature prevents the delivery of needed material goods. Besides the examples we focus on in this issue there are also other challenges to overcome, including demographic change (aging populations), new developments in medicine and techniques, our occupational image, the number of healthcare sector jobs available and the basic working conditions nationally and Europe-wide.

Thanks to our reflection group, the focal points of the EAHM programme will be orientation guides for management, adhering to our basic structural conditions. Our target is to impart know-how to colleagues – both theoretical and practical – so that they can cope with their responsibilities. Our members should be active, not only concerning their management duties in their own hospital but also within the activities of the EAHM.

As part of our new strategy, the EAHM programme has been designed from the bottom up, first with the national federations and then at the association level (in the three advisory boards and in the working groups). The new constitution is announced in our EAHM news section (See page 6).

At this point, we would like to thank all the colleagues who have helped during this reflection process, sharing their valuable time and knowledge. Their contribution will be retained for the EAHM as well as for the hospitals. Now it is important to implement the ideas of the reflection process in the newly elected advisory boards and in exchanges with the national associations. We will report about this in the journal and on our website. Every member and reader is invited to share their own knowledge and experience, we are looking forward to another constructive and enriching exchange of experiences. In this spirit, I would like to wish you a happy and successful 2011 in the name of the EAHM Board and Executive Committee.

Published on : Mon, 20 Dec 2010