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News from the European Association of Hospital Managers

39th Ordinary General Assembly - Friday, 20 November 2009

The 39th Ordinary General Assembly of EAHM, held in Dusseldorf after this year's successful seminar "Towards a balanced cooperation of public and private actors" focused mainly on two topics: The report on activities and the upcoming EAHM seminar in Zurich 2010.

Activity Report

After thanking Mr. Kölking and his team for their organisation of this year's seminar, Mr. Paul Castel, President of EAHM reported on the activities of 2008-2009. Before commencing the report, Mr. Castel called for a minute silence in memory of Georg Schäfer, the 7th president of EAHM from 1983 to 1985 and Theo van der Zanden, the 10th president of EAHM from 1989 to 1992. Both men played large roles in the construction of EAHM and have been nominated as honorary members.

He began by applauding the success of the 2008 EAHM congress "New Leadership for New Challenges" held in Graz; an excellent panel of speakers and a learning experience for all who attended.

Financial Crisis

Mr. Castel highlighted the impact of the financial crisis on the hospital sector. Many hospitals and healthcare institutions have suffered and have had to cut costs and reorganise. The same is true of some of our national associations who have been unable to pay association fees. EAHM must in turn be cautious to ensure financial stability and in this vein, stricter statutes regarding membership were implemented.

(E)Hospital- the official journal of EAHM has also suffered from the crisis with shrinking advertising. The board is happy that the journal has surmounted this difficulty and give special thanks to the Editorial Board, Christian Marolt and the editorial team.

On the European Level

Another challenge of 2008-2009 was undoubtedly the Treaty of Lisbon. Controversial and delayed by the European Elections and the Irish Referendum, the treaty was finally ratified by all Member States. It is now hoped that the European Union can progress in its work.

The year also saw the implementation of the European Working Time Directive. Again, another controversial issue for the EU and indeed the hospital sector with working hours being decreased to 48 hours per week from 31 July 2009. This Directive is especially difficult regarding trainee doctors' working hours. Hungary, the Netherlands and the UK are simply unable to meet this target and have been granted an extension until 2011 but in interim may not exceed 52 hours.

The Services Directive adopted in 2006 should also be implemented into law by 31 December 2009 respecting clauses on social and health matters. It is expected that many Member States will be unable to meet this deadline and the Commission has been invited to develop special proposals in this area.

Crossborder healthcare and patients' rights were also on the European agenda. Along with the other directives previously mentioned, this is being closely monitored by the EAHM subcommittee on EU affairs.

EAHM were also proud co-organisers of the IT @ Networking Awards 2009. First prize went to Dr. Pierre Biron and his team from the Rhone Alpes region of France for the SISRA Health Information System and DPPR Shared and Distributed Patient Record. Mr. Castel stressed the diversity of European healthcare IT solutions and projects and how benchmarking of healthcare IT on a European level could be very useful. This awards event encouraged EAHM to push forward with the Working Party on IT.

Towards Next Year

2010 will see the 23rd edition of the EAHM congress "Roadmap to Top Quality"— this time in Zurich, Switzerland. Mr. Castel also called for a period of reflection and the Board decided to set up a reflection group. The upcoming year is an opportunity to create new dynamics in the organisation and to develop national association groups. The General Assembly in September 2010 will elect a new board, President and Vice-President.

Conclusion

In Conclusion, Mr. Castel called for all members to join and become involved in EAHM projects. The association needs the help of all the national associations to achieve its ultimate goal of providing Europe with its expertise. He suggested becoming more of a think tank; setting up a younger managers group to capitalise on their enthusiasm and expertise stressing that EAHM needs more propositions than it currently has.

Accounts and Economic Plan

The accounts for 2008 were presented by the Secretary General followed by the report from the auditors. These accounts were approved and the Board and Secretary General were discharged. The economic plan for 2010 and membership subscription fees of full members and associate members were both proposed and accepted.

New Members

The Italian Association ANMDO, an association of medical doctors who are also general directors, was accepted as a new full member of EAHM. As protocol requires, the Italian Association of Hospital Managers were first asked if they had any objections to the acceptance of ANMDO. They had no objections and it was put to vote during the General Assembly and unanimously accepted. The Ecclesia Group (insurance and risk management) was also unanimously accepted as an associate member of EAHM.

2010 Congress

The Swiss Organisation Committee are very excited about the upcoming EAHM Congress in Zurich, 9-10 September 2010. The first announcement has already been printed and copies are available in English, German and French. The website [www.zurich2010- EAHM.ch](http://www.zurich2010-EAHM.ch), also available in three languages, is up and running and contains a wealth of information on the congress. Cristoph Pachlatko from the Swiss Organising Committee stressed that each national association should encourage and motivate colleagues and friends to attend.

The programme has been jointly prepared by EAHM's Scientific Subcommittee and the Swiss Organising Committee with the speakers being finalised after the Board's visit to Zurich.

Online registration was made available from 1st January. Mr. Pachlatko finished his report on the congress with a short but informative promotional video of the congress. This marked the end of the 39th Ordinary General Assembly.

It was agreed that the next Ordinary General Assembly will take place on 9 September 2010 at 9am in Zurich.

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