

EULAR Standing Committee on Education and Training

Minutes of the business meeting held in Copenhagen

12 June 2009, 12.00 – 13.15

Chairman: Prof. Hans Bijlsma, NL

Chairman-elect: Prof. Maurizio Cutolo, IT

Participants: 26 delegates representing EULAR member societies

1 Opening

Hans Bijlsma welcomes all participants and initiates a round of introductions.

2 Minutes of the previous business meeting, held on 13 June 2008 in Paris

The minutes are approved without changes.

3 Activity Report

Hans Bijlsma reports on the successful past year of the Standing Committee on Education and Training and informs the delegates about ongoing activities:

3.1 Congress Programme

Maurizio Cutolo will be in charge of educational sessions at the EULAR congress 2010 in Rome. Educational sessions are specifically designed for fellows; however, other visitors are also welcome. Hans invites all participants to contact Maurizio if they have suggestions and ideas for these sessions (mcutolo@unige.it). He also refers to the session on "Clinical Decision Making" that will be held this afternoon at the congress in Copenhagen and invites everyone to attend.

3.2 Postgraduate Course

This popular course is held every year. In 2009, the course will take place from 28 September to 2 October in Torre del Greco, Italy, close to Naples. So far, 35 participants have registered. Hans is pleased to announce that EULAR has increased the number of bursaries to 30, whereby supporting almost every 3rd participant.

3.3 EULAR On-line Course on Rheumatic Diseases

The first On-line Course started in September 2007 and was completed in April 2009. 125 students took the final exam and nearly all of them passed it successfully. The second and third courses are ongoing and the fourth one is scheduled to start in September. The price per participant is EUR 400, respectively EUR 150 for people living in countries with a GDP below USD 10,000. As Hans explains, it is also possible for pharmaceutical companies to bear the costs for participants. Additionally, he announces that there will be a separate On-Line Course on Connective Tissue Diseases. This course will start in September 2008 and shall also attract participants from other specialties.

In order to further improve the course, it is suggested to establish a small evaluation group of 3 to 4 people. The group will examine the students' evaluation forms, and liaise with convenors and authors. They will report back to the Standing Committee and make suggestions for improvement. The group will be headed by Maurizio Cutolo and Hans welcomes all delegates to contact

Maurizio if they wish to participate in this working group. It is also suggested to include students.

3.4 EULAR Compendium on Rheumatic Diseases

The compendium is based on the On-line Course, containing all 50 modules. The first edition of the book was finished just in time for launch at the congress in Copenhagen. Sales figures seem to be promising.

3.5 Other courses

The EULAR Executive Committee very recently adjusted the rules for EULAR Courses and EULAR Patronage of courses. The new rules are available on the EULAR website. The major change for EULAR courses is that sponsoring of up to 40% of the overall costs is now allowed. As Hans emphasizes, there are very strict rules about the influence of sponsors on the content of the course. All EULAR courses as well as courses running under EULAR patronage are listed on the website.

3.6 Learning Tools project

Maurizio Cutolo reports on the progress of the Learning Tools project. Task Force meetings were held in March 2007, September 2007 and February 2008, additional ones are planned for June and July 2009. After lively discussions it was decided to create 3 DVDs covering the following topics:

- History taking and general aspects of physical examination
- Anatomy and semiology of joints
- Screening of abnormalities of joints

The story board has been finished and production has started. A professional team in Nottingham is working on the DVD's. The first one is almost completed and shall be freely available as of September 2009 on the EULAR website. Possibilities for translation into different language are being discussed.

3.7 Bursaries and sponsorship

Hans Bijlsma informs that bursaries are available for all EULAR courses. Information can again be found on the website. EULAR also considers increasing the offers of bursaries for educational training.

3.8 Accreditation

The Standing Committee collaborates with the UEMS Section of Rheumatology (José da Silva and Karen Lisbeth Faarvang) which is working on setting up an effective accreditation for all teaching activities in Europe. The accreditation for national courses will have to be elaborated.

3.9 New function: EULAR Educational Officer

Given the enlargement of the EULAR educational programme over the last years, especially with regard to the on-line course, the EULAR Executive Committee felt it was important to introduce more continuity to this field. Therefore it was decided to create the function "EULAR Educational Officer". The Educational Officer is mainly concerned with strategic issues, whilst operational issues will stay with the Standing Committee Chairman. The Executive Committee appointed Hans Bijlsma to become first EULAR Educational Officer with immediate effect.

3.10 EURORITS (Young Rheumatologists in Europe)

Francesca Bandinelli, Chairman, reports on the recent meeting. The presentation is attached to these minutes. Following the presentation it is discussed how the EULAR website could be used to disseminate information about EURORITS and make them accessible for a broader audience.

3.11 Database of pictures and figures

As last issue, Hans informs about the planned EULAR database of pictures and figures. The project just started and there is a number of legal issues that need to be clarified. More information will be available at the next meeting.

4 New Chairman

Hans then hands over to his successor, Maurizio Cutolo, who will start office as new Chairman of the Standing Committee after the congress. Maurizio cordially thanks Hans for his dedicated work in bringing EULAR's educational activities forward.

5 Any other business

Karen Lisbeth Faarvang suggests creating an award to be bestowed for exceptional achievements in the field of education. Maurizio is in favor of this and asks Karen Lisbeth to come forward with a detailed proposal.

6 Next business meeting

The next business meeting will be held in June 2010 during the EULAR congress in Rome.

7 Closing

Maurizio Cutolo thanks all participants for their time and closes the meeting at 13.15 h.