

18<sup>th</sup> September 2014

I hope that you have had a good summer with some opportunity for rest, enjoyment and recuperation. I expect that you are very busy again now that September is here. Please cascade this newsletter to others in your country working in the field of musculoskeletal epidemiology and health services research. This edition brings you some information about what has been happening in EULAR and related arenas since the EULAR Annual Congress in June 2014.

## 1 FEEDBACK FROM THE EULAR EXECUTIVE

The EULAR Research Foundation has been renamed FOREUM (Foundation for Research in Rheumatology). In future, all applications for primary research will be considered by FOREUM. For the foreseeable future FOREUM will only consider applications within the specified area for that year. The topics for 2014-5 are expected to be ankylosing spondylitis and SLE. The call has not yet been announced but is expected soon via the EULAR website. From now on, EULAR itself will only consider applications for EULAR branded outputs such as guidelines, points to consider and recommendations. If you are considering making an application to either of these funding sources, I would strongly recommend that you visit the EULAR website for guidance and contact me so that we can make sure that the application matches the expectations of those who will consider it for funding.

I am pleased to say that the EULAR executive recently agreed to fund an application put forward via our committee to develop a questionnaire to be used in studies of 'pre-RA' that is to identify individuals with symptoms likely to develop into RA. The project is being led by Dirkjan van Schaardenburg and colleagues in the EULAR study group on risk factors for RA.

## 2 SCEHSR NEWS FROM THE EULAR CONGRESS

Axel Finkch is now the Chair Elect of our standing committee and Ingemar Petersson is our representative on the scientific committee which is currently planning the 2015 EULAR Congress.

Many thanks to those of you who attended the annual meeting of the standing committee during the EULAR Congress in Paris. I attach a copy of the minutes \* which were kindly taken by Axel and provide an excellent summary of the current and future activities of our committee.

The open meeting at the Paris Congress featured presentations from our two study groups (EULAR RODS and the EULAR Study Group on Public Health). It was called 'Improving patient care and safety through data acquisition and analysis'. EULAR RODS (Registers and Observational Drug Studies) held a very successful meeting in Prague in November 2013. A further meeting is planned for December 2015. The Study Group on Public Health is continuing the work of EUMuscNET in raising the profile of RMDs in Europe.

Plans for the Rome Congress (10<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> June 2015) are progressing well. We have already had two meetings to discuss sessions for the 'Outcomes science' stream and we have also had input into some of the clinical sessions. The website will open for abstract submission on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014 and close on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2015. Further details are available on the much improved website: [www.congress.eular.org](http://www.congress.eular.org). Apparently 50% of abstracts are submitted in the final 24 hours! The 'Epidemiology and Health Services Research' topic generally has the largest number of abstracts – well over 300. However many of the abstracts submitted to this topic would fit better with the disease topic to which they apply and are not really epidemiology or health services research! Please encourage your colleagues to consider carefully which topic they select in order that their abstracts be considered by the most appropriate reviewers.

### 3 EULAR and the EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

EULAR has an office in Brussels which is dedicated to raising the profile of RMDs throughout Europe and especially within the EU parliament. Prior to the 2013 elections, the EULAR Brussels office contacted many candidates to provide them with some basic information about RMDs and to seek their support. Around 40 of those who expressed an interest have been elected. EULAR are working to expand that group and to provide them with regular and digestible updates. I have been invited to attend a conference for MEPs called: 'Analysing how to reduce barriers to health care for people with chronic diseases in Europe' which will be held in Brussels on 16<sup>th</sup> October.

EULAR is starting to work on developing a 'Roadmap for research' to be adopted transnationally. This will identify areas of priority to patients, likely to be solvable within a 5-10 year time span, and which have relevance across diseases.

### 4 News from the EMA

The EMA is considering the cardiovascular safety of over-the-counter ibuprofen. Please see attached press release \*\*.

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If you have any questions or information you would like circulating, do not hesitate to contact me. We are keen to keep members informed of developments and initiatives in other countries.

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