

Newsletter/European Board 09.04.2002

The European Section and Board of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine (PRM) has been very active over the past year. In 2001 the Board decided to reorganise its activities into three main working commissions:

1. Education and Training
2. Clinical Affairs
3. Professional

This report is concerned with the work of the Board in relation to Education and Training. Three main areas received the attention of the Board viz. (1) PRM Board Examinations, (2) Site Visits and (3) Quality Issues and European Programmes.

(1) PRM Board Examination

The results of the examinations in PRM organised by the Board are an important measure of the standards being attained in the speciality in Europe. Examinations are held each year. The most recent examination took place in November 2001. Forty-four candidates were admitted to the examination and 41 were successful and will be issued with a certificate. A number of other candidates applied for certification by equivalence. This is based on their Continuing Professional Development (CPD), scientific teaching and clinical activities. Nine candidates were adjudicated to be eligible for certification by this method.

Professor Guy Vanderstraeten (Belgium) is Director-General for examinations. Other members of the examination committee are Professor Gustaaf Lankhorst (Holland), Dr Anthony Ward (UK), Professor Andre Bardot, (France), Professor Alain Delarque (France) and Professor J. P. Didier (France). Professor Didier has operational responsibility for correcting and issuing the results to the PRM Executive. They met in Paris in December 2001 to consider the examination results.

This education committee also meets several times a year to design, formulate and agree new examination questions, which are prepared in both French and English and are added to the existing databank of questions for inclusion in future examinations.

(2) Site Visits

The role of the site visits is an essential part of the work of the Education and Training Commission. Professor Alex Chantraine, Chairman of the site-visit committee, presented his annual report (2001) of the work of the site visit committee. Other members of this committee include Professor Alain Delarque (France), Professor Veronika Fialka-Moser (Austria), Drs A. McNamara (Ireland), R. Valera (Spain), M. Terburg (The Netherlands). This group met twice in 2001, in Paris and in Amsterdam. Twenty-four visits were planned and 20 completed during 2001. It was not possible for a number of reasons, outside the control of this committee, to carry out visits at the other four centres. The Committee decided that, in future, it would be

necessary to clarify the rules regarding site visits and visitor eligibility.

A new report from the site visit working group was presented at the Marseilles meeting of the Board (February 2002) and new policies were discussed and agreed for presentation to the General Assembly in Brighton, UK (May 2002).

(3) Quality Issues and European Programmes.

The Board acknowledges the importance of quality and accreditation issues in PRM. Leadership in this area was assumed by Professor Alain Delarque (Secretary General of Board and Section) in the organisation of a lecture and seminar programme in Marseilles (Feb 2002). The overall theme of the meeting was "Quality and Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine/European Teaching Programmes". Contributors were:

Dr Pierre Benezet, PRM MD, an expert in "Quality in PRM", who is also a representative for the National Agency for Accreditation in Health in France (ANAES) and Dr Michel Enjalbert, PRM MD, who also has expertise on Accreditation and currently, is Secretary-General of the French Scientific Society and PRM, SOFMER (French Scientific Society) and is a delegate to the PRM European Federation. These speakers provided an overview and direction on the subject of Accreditation for PRM.

Other speakers addressed the theme of "European Teaching Programmes" and provided advice and guidance to the Board on the structures of the existing grant systems in Europe under programmes such as Socrates, Erasmus, Leonardo and Tempus. These speakers were from the International Relations Department at the Universite de la Mediterranee namely Madame Helene Olivier, Madame Claude Tigrette and Madame Mireille Robert.

Discussions on European Research and Development Programmes also took place with the Executive of the Board. The invited speakers were M. Lucien Laubier, a former manager of the "Centre Oceanologique de Marcella" and M. Jacques Huchet, manager of the European Commission Representation in Marseilles. They described the very important role of the lobby process in Brussels.

Two further Presentations were delivered in Marseilles on relevant topics in developing work of the Board. The first lecture was on "distant teaching" by M. P. Vigliano (Univ. THETYS) and the second by Professor J. M. Viton on "Consortia implementation projects". Some important issues and possibilities for trans-national collaboration may emerge from these deliberations.

The Executive greatly appreciated the reception given by Professor Michel Laurent President of the University de la Mediterranee and his colleagues.