

Newsletter n.2 - October 2003

European Region News

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General Meeting 2004 of the European Region of WCPT

The European Region of WCPT would like to invite all Member Organisations to participate in the **General meeting of the European Region**, to be held on **13-15 May 2004** in **Limassol, Cyprus**.

Please note that any proposed amendments of articles to the Charter of the European Region must be sent to the Secretariat by **13 November 2003**.

Detailed information on accommodation, the agenda and other supportive documents will be provided in the near future.

European Congress on Physiotherapy Education: Extended Deadline for Call of Papers for 31 January 2004

The deadline for reception of abstracts for the European Congress on Physiotherapy Education is now **31 January 2004**. "Physiotherapy Education in the new Europe – Linking Education, Profession and Employment" is the theme of the Congress, which will take place on 4-5 November 2004, in Estoril, Portugal. It is not a Congress "only for educators"; all interested in the development of the quality of physiotherapy education, from all perspectives, are welcome. For further details and to obtain the abstract form, please consult www.apfisio.pt/ecpe.

The European Region of WCPT would like to recommend to all Member Organisations to create a link from their own national association's website to the website of the European Congress on Physiotherapy Education at www.apfisio.pt/ecpe. Please kindly inform other colleagues and national universities that you think may be interested to participate in this event.

Bologna website

<http://www.bologna-berlin2003> is a very useful website where all main documents of the Bologna Process, as well as the Bologna Position Papers, are available. The website also provides news, a glossary, a review of EU activities and all information on the latest conferences and seminars in the context of the Bologna process.



Prague Declaration

On 21 September 2003, Health ministers of eight Acceding States - Cyprus, Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia, as well as of Austria, Greece and Italy, set up a Steering Group of health ministers to cooperate more closely in the field of health and social care, and signed a joint Declaration in Prague, in the presence of representatives of the World Health Organisation.

For further information: Prague Declaration - 21 September 2003 and Participants to the Conference of Health Ministers (Prague, 19-21 September 2003)

Bologna Process

In June 1999, education ministers from 29 European countries signed the Bologna Declaration, which initiated the Bologna Process. They agreed on important joint objectives for the development of a coherent and cohesive European Higher Education Area by 2010. During their summit meeting in Berlin on 19 September, the education ministers agreed to set a 2005 deadline for promoting effective quality assurance systems, adopting a system essentially based on two main cycles (bachelor-master) and improving the recognition system of degrees and periods of studies; to secure closer links between the European higher education area and the European research area by including the doctoral level as the third cycle in the Bologna Process; to reaffirm that higher education is a public good and a public responsibility and that the social dimension of the Bologna Process is important; to take the necessary steps to enable the portability of national loans and grants; to stress the involvement of university and student organisations.

PLOTEUS

PLOTEUS is a Portal on learning opportunities throughout Europe at the following website www.ploteus.net. Ploteus is a service of the European Commission, whose purpose is to enhance the right of freedom of movement of European citizens by providing the necessary information.

The Portal has five different sections: "learning opportunities", "education systems", "exchanges", "contacts", and "moving to a country". Ploteus provides useful functions such as lists of schools, colleges or other educational institutions, links to database at the national level, training systems, European exchange programmes, or important practical information for a possible new destination...

Recommendation on Patient Mobility

On 8 December 2003, the Health Ministers from the Member States in co-operation with the European Commission will adopt a Recommendation on Patient Mobility. The reflection process seeks to produce a coherent political response to a range of issues affecting health care systems including recent European Court of Justice judgements on the right of patients to have their national healthcare system pay for treatment received in another Member State. This informal high level process on the question of patient mobility was launched in February this year, and benefits from the participation of the Health and Consumer Protection Commissioner David Byrne, Internal Market Commissioner Frits Bolkestein, Director General for Employment and Social Affairs Odile Quintin, as well as observers from the Acceding States.



Successful case of Twinning:

**Summary Report from the twinning project Danske Fysioterapeuter
– Bulgarian Association of Rehabilitators and Kinesitherapists**

SUCCESSFUL SEMINAR IN SOFIA, BULGARIA

When the regionalisation of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (or the WCPT) was decided in 1991, it was at the same time decided to encourage the physiotherapy associations of the world to co-operate in twinning projects

The Danish Physiotherapy Association was the first to start a twinning project with physiotherapy associations in Eastern Europe with the Bulgarian Association of Kinesitherapists and Rehabilitators (BAKR)

Over the years since then we have had joint projects every year, sometimes even twice a year, and the subjects have been organisation issues like trade union work, democracy, co-operation between health care organisations, negotiation skills, etc. and later on some professional courses in Bobath and manual therapy have been arranged at the request of BAKR.

Recently we arranged in October 2003 a two-day seminar in Sofia for 20 delegates from the executive committee and members of the regional branches.

The desired programme issues from BAKR were e.g.:

- Physiotherapy education in EU and Bulgaria, standards, recognition of qualifications, etc.
- Professional issues in Bulgaria, like recognition, autonomy, professional title, physiotherapy diagnostics, interrelations with other health professions, etc..
- Professional Status of Physiotherapists in EU and Bulgaria. Legislative aspects.
- Evidence based physiotherapy practice. Benchmark statement, core physiotherapy standards, etc.
- Health Insurance and Reimbursement of physiotherapy services.
- Life-Long Professional Learning, Project on Continuing Professional Education. Continuing Professional Development

During the seminar meetings were arranged with

- the Ministry of Health,
- the Ministry of Education and Science and
- with the Chair of the Parliamentary Commission of Health

The outcome and the results of this seminar proved very successful for the meeting participants and the future of BAKR

FUTURE TWINNING PLANS:

With the accession procedures into the EU for Bulgaria getting closer, it will be even more necessary for the BAKR to be in close contact with the authorities on the development of the education and the profession matching the standards in the European Union.

Danske Fysioterapeuter has suggested a three-year plan for future twinning with BAKR on continuing professional development. A plan that will enable BAKR to fully meet the needs for continuing professional development of the physiotherapists of Bulgaria.



**Summary Report from the fifty-third annual session of the WHO Regional
Committee for Europe in Vienna, 8 – 12 September 2003**

The 29 ministers of health and more than 300 policy-makers from the 52 countries in the WHO European Region who attended the meeting agreed that joint efforts by international partners and strong political commitment from countries would place better health within reach.

This year's session paid particular attention to mental health and young people's health. The delegates expressed concern about the gap between understanding what needs to be done and taking action. To narrow this gap, the WHO Regional Office for Europe will hold two conferences: A conference on Children's Environment and Health in Budapest in June 2004 and a conference on mental health in Europe which will take place in Helsinki January 2005. The Regional Committee asked the Regional Office to provide detailed evidence-based analysis to support the work of these conferences.

WHO Director-General Dr. Lee Jong-wook addressed the Regional Committee for Europe for the first time and pointed out that "inequalities in development have reduced the life expectancy to 40 years in some countries but have raised it to about 80 years in others". He stressed that "the 25th anniversary of the Declaration of Alma-Ata on primary health care provided an opportune moment to recall that good health is for all".

WHO Regional Director Dr. Marc Danzon pointed out in his report to the Regional Committee four recent WHO achievements; the successful struggle against the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), the adoption of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, the increased awareness of AIDS in European countries and the greater financial investment in them from Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Of course, much further work in each area is still needed.

A lot of attention was paid to the concerns about the Mental Health situation in Europe. Mental health is an essential part of public health. Factors triggering mental health problems include changes in socio-economic conditions, armed conflict, increasing poverty and the growing gap between the rich and the poor even in the developed world.

More effort is needed to protect and promote the health of children and adolescents. Investing in the health of young people brings lifelong benefits not only to them but also to the society as a whole.

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