UEMS — EUROPEAN UNION OF MEDICAL SPECIALISTS

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In this issue:

Europe's Health Workforce of Tomorrow: UEMS to address the Belgian Presidency's Ministerial Conference

Dr Zlatko Fras *(UEMS President) and* ***Dr Bernard Maillet*** *(UEMS Sec.-Gen.) were both invited to address the Conference in order to present the UEMS activities and advise Member States on the political orientations to be taken on the issue of healthcare workforce.*

In the framework of its EU Presidency, Belgium will address a certain number of key healthcare issues including the EU workforce for Health. For that purpose, a European Ministerial Conference will be held at the beginning of September, in which the UEMS was invited to take an active part with the participation as speakers of Dr Fras and Dr Maillet.

To provide certain degree of continuity in the work of the EU, Belgium set up a common work program with the previous Presidency (Spain) and the following Presidency (Hungary), in accordance with the legislative provisions of the EU Treaties. Spain, Belgium and Hungary have agreed in their common program to promote among other the sustainability of European healthcare systems, innovation in Healthcare, competent healthcare professionals in particular in the context of ageing population.

Following the efforts undertaken by the Spanish Presidency regarding health-related issues, the Belgian Presidency committed itself to tackling major health issues such as cross-border care or healthcare workforce. In this respect, the Ministerial Conference to be held on 9th and 10th September 2010 will aim to deal with the challenges Member States are

Continued on page 3

Potential EC action on medical applications of ionising radiation and security of supply of radioisotopes

The European Commission recently adopted a "Communication to the European Parliament and the Council on medical applications of ionising radiation and security of supply of radioisotopes for nuclear medicine". Considering the issue of shortage of supply in radioisotopes, the Commission aimed to raise awareness of Institutions and stakeholders as well as to look into ways of addressing this issue.

The medical use of ionising radiation encompasses nuclear medicine, in which radioisotopes are used for specific diagnostic examinations or for therapy, and radiological X-ray imaging for similar diagnostic purposes, both including treatment planning or guidance (e.g.

Continued on page 3

!!! REMINDER !!!

The meetings of the UEMS Board & Council will be held in Prague from 7th to 9th October 2010.

Further information is available on page 4.

Activities from the "Alliance for MRI"

- *Magnetic Resonance Imaging put at risk by EU legislation*

The UEMS is a member of the Alliance for MRI which aims at preventing EU legislation from threatening the use of MRI in the medical field through the introduction of exposure limits to protect worker's safety. The proposal to revise the Directive 2004/40/EC was significantly delayed. Still, the Alliance will pursue its effort to ensure that MEPs and Member States understand what is at stake for the future of patient care, public health, research and innovation. Moreover, the alliance has launched an online petition which will be part of a campaign to convince key decision-makers of the importance of MRI to healthcare and research. For the moment the proposed text is at consultation stage but should this text be adopted by the Council and the Parliament, a lot of work still needs to be done in the Member States.

The Alliance has set out the key actions for 2010 such as the online petition, a meeting with Commissioner Laszlo Andor, a European Parliament campaign as well as strong collaboration with the European Science Foundation. Those actions will raise awareness of European Institutions and Member States regarding the impact of the revised directive on MRI.

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New directive on electromagnetic fields expected

- *Commission to envisage legislative overhaul of the current provisions*

The European Commission recently launched a second stage consultation of the social partners on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to electromagnetic fields at work. This process aims at renewing the actual Directive (2004/40/EC) considering that certain issues have to be addressed. For the time being, the Commission is requesting the social partners to produce documents as regards the appropriateness of a new directive.

The proposal of the EC is set as follows:

- ~ Cover all sectors of activity (unchanged),
- ~ Propose a new set of definitions for adverse health effects (Article 2),
- ~ Include a revised system for limit values different from the current Limit Values and Action Values for the range from 0 to 100 kHz (this will affect Articles 2 and 3 plus the annex of Directive 2004/40/EC),
- ~ Introduce due flexibility by proposing a controlled framework for limited derogations (new),
- ~ Propose a rationale for medical surveillance (Article 8),
- ~ Pay due attention to specific cases such as medical applications using magnetic resonance (new),
- ~ Will provide for the introduction of complementary non-binding measures.

For more information:
http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=5019&langId=en.

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Revision of tobacco directive

The European Commission recently expressed its willingness to reinforce the current legislation on tobacco given its devastating impact in European citizens' health and will consult the stakeholders in June or July so as to explore possible improvements into a new text. Following the World No Tobacco Day on the 31st May 2010, the European Commission has now committed itself to tackling the issue of Tobacco's negative impact on Health through the revision of the Tobacco Product Directive (2001/37/EC). The objective of this initiative is to maintain a good functioning of the internal market as well as to decrease tobacco-related morbidity and mortality. The idea is to provide a higher level of health protection and to update it to new developments as regards ingredients and national legislations. For example, giving consumers more information and making tobacco products less attractive, in particular to young people. The Commission plans to put forward a revised proposed Directive in the second half of 2011.

Following the Council Recommendation of November 2009 on smoke free environments, the European Commission strongly supports Member States' work towards "A Smoke-free Europe by 2012". In this context, the Commission encourages all Member States to protect their citizens from exposure to tobacco smoke in public spaces, workplaces and public transport, to reduce children's exposure to second-hand smoke

For further information:
http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/planned_ia/docs/46_sanco_tobacco_products_directive_en.pdf
http://www.europa-eu-un.org/articles/en/article_9788_en.htm

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Reprocessing of medical devices

- *The SCENHIR raises concerns on the safety of reprocessed medical devices*

The reprocessing of single-use medical devices is potentially dangerous for the European population. The Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) recently issued a paper whereby it expresses its concerns about the safety of reprocessed single-used medical devices.

Two types of medical devices exist: those intended by the manufacturer to be reused and those which are intended for single-use. The use of Single-use Devices (SUDs) considerably increased during the past years. Despite the obvious aim of SUDs many of them are reprocessed and potentially introduce health hazards for European citizens. According to The SCENIHR the reuse of SUDs should be done according to the risk of the primarily use of this device. Three categories can be identified: (i) non-critical use (in general for skin contact only); (ii) semi-critical use (contact with mucous membranes without penetration of tissues); and (iii) critical use (penetration of tissues or entrance into the vascular system). The highest risk occurs when a reprocessed SUD is used for invasive medical procedures, while the lowest risk is associated with external (skin contact only) use.

For further information: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/lsa/115003.pdf.

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Potential EC action on medical applications of ionising radiation and security of supply of radioisotopes

Continued from page 1

interventional radiology). Radiotherapy is another use which includes brachytherapy and external beam radiotherapy.

The benefit for patients of ionizing radiation is clearly stated. However, the Commission shares the view that in some cases the use of such technique is not always fully justified and can unduly expose patients to avoidable risks. The Commission is therefore willing to reinforce the existing legislation in this regard.

In the Communication, the Commission also expresses a certain number of concerns about the potential health hazard of ionizing radiation. It will therefore be intended to increase the level of protection while using this technology so as to protect both the patients and the professionals the work undertaken by the Commission and will participate actively in the process.

The UEMS through its Specialist Sections of Nuclear Medicine, Radiology and Radiotherapy welcomes these efforts undertaken by the Commission and looks forward to taking an active part in any further concrete initiative aiming to find solutions to the globally fragile isotopes' supply.

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Belgian Presidency: Ministerial Conference on Europe's Health Workforce of Tomorrow

Continued from page 1

facing today for a competent healthcare workforce for tomorrow. Four topics will be addressed during this conference, namely:

~ Assessing and forecasting the needs in health workforce

~ Skill mix and task re-allocation

~ Improving working environments

~ Improving quality, safety and efficacy

Ever since the launch of the European Green Paper on this issue, the UEMS committed itself to supporting any initiative aiming to address the challenges faced by the medical profession in Europe (*See UEMS 2009/07 - UEMS contribution to EC Green Paper*). In the framework of this conference Dr Zlatko Fras (UEMS President) and Dr Bernard Maillet (UEMS Secretary General) will present UEMS actions and positions as regards healthcare professionals' involvement in the improvement of quality and safety of care, such as notably the accreditation system established by the UEMS for CME-CPD (EACCME®) but also the currently developed project for specialists qualifications assessment (ECAMSQ®).

The UEMS Executive is encouraged by this recognition from the Belgian Presidency of the importance the two accreditation systems initiated by the UEMS is gaining. This acknowledges the considerable contribution of the EACCME® over the last decade and potential of the ECAMSQ® for the future. The UEMS looks forward to continuing close collaboration with European Institutions and Member States to ensure quality of care through high standards of medical training for all European doctors. In addition, UEMS National Members Associations and Sections and Board were invited to contribute their comments and suggestions in view of this participation to the conference and are kindly invited to send their comments to the UEMS Secretariat.

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UEMS BOARD & COUNCIL MEETINGS (Prague, 7th-9th Oct. 2010)

These meetings will present an outstanding innovation with the participation from one representative of each UEMS Section and Board. This extension will as from now be applied further to the decision taken in Istanbul last year. As a consequence, the time schedule for the meetings was re-organised as follows:

Thursday 7th October 2010

11.30-12.30 Groupings of UEMS Sections
13.00-15.00 Plenary Meeting of the UEMS Sections & Boards
15.00-16.30 UEMS Working Groups
16.45-18.30 Discussion Forum

Friday 8th October 2010

8.30-9.30 UEMS Board
10.00-17.00 UEMS Council

Saturday 9th October 2010

9.00-12.30 UEMS Council

Practical information is available on the following website: http://amca.cz/uems/
Registrations to the meetings can also be made via this website.

Any suggestion for items to be put on the agenda for discussion or decision should be received by the UEMS Secretariat ideally by mid-September.

Upcoming Events

Ministerial Conference: Investing in the health professionals of tomorrow in Europe

La Hulpe, Belgium — 9th-10th September 2010

For more information, please visit the following website:
http://www.eutrio.be/ministerial-conference-investing-health-professionals-tomorrow-europe

Hearing: The Fluoridation of Drinking Water

Brussels, Belgium — 17th September 2010

For more information, please visit the following website:
http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/events/ev_20100917_en.htm

Conference: Working with Communities to Reduce Health Inequalities

Brussels, Belgium — 20th September 2010

For more information, please contact the UEMS Secretariat.

Ministerial Conference: Innovation and Solidarity

Brussels, Belgium — 23rd-24th September 2010

For more information, please visit the following website:
http://www.eutrio.be/ministrial-conference-innovation-and-solidarity

Conference: The real cost of fraud and corruption in health care: how can it be reduced?

Brussels, Belgium — 28th September 2010

For more information, please visit the following website:
http://www.eutrio.be/real-cost-fraud-and-corruption-health-care-how-can-it-be-reduced

Conference: Making Europe Fit for Work

Brussels, Belgium — 30th September 2010

For more information, please visit the following website:
http://www.eutrio.be/making-europe-fit-work