



European Regional Organisation of
the Fédération dentaire internationale



The ERO Newsletter July 2008 – No.5

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear fellow dentists,

The plenary session in Istanbul proved extremely fruitful and clearly revealed the new face of the ERO. The reports presented by the working groups showed that the triennial action plan is being followed to the letter, and the policy statements on pain management and liberal dental practice have proven, if need be, that we are strongly determined to position our profession within the medical field and to help it preserve its independence. As to the recent return to our organisation of our friends from the British Dental Association, it shows that taking part in the life of the ERO definitely holds benefits for all involved. It is through the action of all the national dental associations and their members that we can continue to bring success to the ERO.

Thank you to you all.

I wish you a very pleasant summer and look forward to seeing you soon in Stockholm.

The ERO President,

Dr Patrick HESCOT

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE ERO

THE ERO WORKING GROUPS

Each Working group is supervised by one of the Board members:

Bartolomeo GRIFFA – *Parity and The Dental Team*
Philippe RUSCA – *Liberal Dental Practice in Europe and Women in Dentistry*

Gerhard SEEBERGER – *Quality and Prevention*

Alex MERSEL – *Education*

Vladimir SADOVSKI – *Enlargement*

Prevention

Group chaired by Prof. Denis Bourgeois

European Prevention Day for Oral Health

During the plenary session in Istanbul, Prof. Denis Bourgeois presented the results of a questionnaire concerning the promotion of a European Prevention Day for Oral health. These results show that a majority of member associations organise regular oral health promotion actions. Prof. Bourgeois also presented the calendar campaign conducted in Latvia, which provides a good example of a low cost campaign with a high impact. The ERO may envisage something similar for the European Prevention Day for Oral Health. The most frequently mentioned obstacle to organising this type of event is the financial aspect.

Early screening and prevention of oral cancer

Most member associations are willing to undertake actions in this field. Oral cancer is a priority issue, and a major conference will be organised in 2009. A consensus conference on the same subject may also be organised in 2009. Additional information will be given at the plenary session in Stockholm.

EGOHID project

At the plenary in Istanbul, Prof. Bourgeois also presented a report on the activities of the EGOHID (European Oral Health Indicators Development) project. A conference about the project is scheduled in Stockholm during the FDI Congress.

It is important to keep in mind that prevention is part of the promotion of health, and that the more the population is aware of the importance of oral health, the easier it will be for the dental profession to be recognised as a medical profession.

Education

Group chaired by Prof. Alex Mersel

Having thoroughly explored the subject of basic training, the group is now working on continuing education.

Prof. Mersel has developed a continuing education project designed to help the national dental associations with their continuing education programmes. Eastern European countries are not the only ones interested in this project, which could be launched as a "pilot project". The ERO cannot be a supervisor in the field of continuing education, but must be a facilitator. A list of the courses and seminars and especially the e-courses on offer could be drawn up. This non-exhaustive list could be placed on the ERO website. Prof. Mersel emphasised that there is no question of interfering with the national systems.

Parity

Group chaired by Dr Anna Lella

The group is currently working on analysing the structure of dental care in the different countries. All member associations are invited to provide information and, of course, to submit proposals. The working group will also explore the impact of social and cultural differences.

Liberal Dental Practice in Europe

Group chaired by Dr Voicu David.

The resolution on "External interference in dental practice" is available on the ERO website.

The number of independent dentists in Europe is steadily increasing and it is our duty to defend our profession.

The Working group will now investigate the "Basic rights of the dentist with regard to insurance companies". It will explore how insurance companies are gaining power of the profession and the risk there is that these companies may draw up selective contracts with dentists or groups of medical professionals – something that would equate to a selection for health care workers as well as for patients. We want to clearly establish that patients must receive the treatment they need and that dentists draw their contracts with their patients and not with the insurance companies.

Enlargement

Group chaired by Bedros Yavru-Sakuk

This working group is important for the new member countries, several of which need support in their dealings with their governments. A country that has been an ERO member for a number of years could act as "godfather" to a more recent ERO member in order to give them support in different matters. The

new member associations count on the ERO to help them improve dentistry in their countries.

The working group has been successful in the first phase of its mission, which was to motivate the countries of Eastern Europe to join our organisation; now begins the second phase, which consists in giving these countries the help and support they need.

Women in Dentistry

Group chaired by Dr Vesna Barac Furtinger

During the plenary session in Istanbul, Dr Vesna Barac Furtinger reported on her group's work, which consisted in comparing the data collected for the years 2006-2008. This analytical work has brought to light new data. Demographic data shows that in a few years' time, over 50% of all dentists will be women. However, the decision-makers in the profession are still men; women do vote, but apparently not for other women. The working group has also identified specifically women-related difficulties with regard to post-graduate training.

Quality

Group chaired by Dr Gerhard Seeberger

The group has been discussing several topics such as the quality of structure, process and outcome. The group's mission is to provide advice and information. The ERO could for example draw up a list of errors, establish quality circles... As for developing guidelines, it is agreed unanimously that this is not a task for the ERO. Health is the national prerogative of each member country.

The "Pain Management" project

Dr Philippe Calfon has prepared a paper with the purpose of positioning the dental profession in the medical world. Pain is a very important issue. The ERO statement on Pain Management, which was adopted during the plenary session in Istanbul, is available on the ERO website.

The Dental Team

Group chaired by Dr Bartolomeo Griffa.

The group held its kick off meeting in Istanbul and laid the foundations for its future work. Edoardo Cavallé has been appointed chairman and Stefaan Hanson, vice chairman.

The group investigated the situation of the various individuals involved in the dental team. The characteristics specific to each situation need to be identified, and it is important to clearly establish

what the different roles within the team are and how the team's work can best be organised. The first remarks to arise are that:

- Dental technicians should not treat patients' dental problems;
- People who work in prevention may assist dentists, but may not themselves set up dental practices (this applies for dental hygienists and dental technicians).

The group will work on a resolution which will establish that the patient's mouth is under the sole responsibility of the dentist. Patients must have the guarantee that the professionals treating them have the best training possible. This is essential because the future of our profession depends upon it.

PAN-EUROPEAN DENTAL CONGRESS

Our friends from the Turkish dental association, who hosted our plenary session last April, held their congress and celebrated their 100th anniversary in Istanbul in July. The Pan-European Dental Congress (PEDC) took place in this context, on 4th and 5th July. The PEDC was organised independently from the ERO, but under the ERO's aegis.

A discussion will take place during the plenary session in Stockholm to decide whether the ERO should organise the future PEDCs directly or delegate this task to another entity and draw up a convention to this purpose defining the roles of each of the parties involved.

FDI

The FDI will be holding elections during its World Dental Congress scheduled in Stockholm next autumn from 24th until 27th September. All relevant documents are available on the FDI website.

The FDI President Dr Burton Conrod attended the ERO plenary session in Istanbul. He thanked our Organisation for the availability of our members who are always willing to help the FDI committees and commissions and who provide valuable support to the Federation. Burton Conrod added that the ERO is one of the most active regional organisations and congratulated the ERO working groups on their achievements.

The ERO calendar

24th September 2008: Board meeting
and Plenary session in Stockholm
17th-18th April 2009: Plenary session in Rome

The ERO Board

President: Dr Patrick HESCOT
President-Elect: Dr Gerhard SEEBERGER
General Secretary: Dr Philippe RUSCA
Board: Dr Bartolomeo GRIFFA & Dr Vladimir SADOWSKI
Scientific Advisor: Prof. Alex MERSEL