



ESCMID EUROPEAN COUNCIL 2007

Meeting during the 17th ECCMID, Munich, on 1 April 2007 at 12:15 h

MINUTES

Ragnar Norrby, ESCMID President, welcomed the 67 participants to the second meeting of the European Council in its new composition and especially greeted Bernard Maillet, UEMS Secretary General, and John Degener, Chair of the UEMS Microbiology Commission, as a special guests.

1 Approval of the Minutes of the European Council Meeting 2006

The minutes from the European Council meeting 2006 as included with the Agenda were approved without comments.

2 ESCMID Progress Report 2006

Ragnar Norrby gave a brief assessment of the current status of ESCMID:

- i) During the past years the Society has consolidated its activity profile in the field of education and research and established its recognition as a leading society in the field of clinical microbiology and infectious diseases.
- ii) The financial situation of ESCMID has stabilized. With current funds the Society would now be able continue its usual activities for at least two years with only the income from membership fees. This fortunate situation allows the Executive Committee to increase spending in 2007 for activities from which the membership will directly benefit.
- iii) In 2006 the EU activities further increased. ESCMID actively participates in EU projects, e.g. GRACE and EUCAST, and the ESCMID Study Groups, e.g. ESGCD, have been noted by ECDC as source of expertise.

The term of the current *CMI* Editor-in-Chief, Kevin Towner, will expire at the end of 2008. In view of the long transition period, the Publications Committee already started to look for a successor in early 2007. Ragnar Norrby was pleased to announce that the Executive could commit a very prominent ESCMID member, Professor Didier Raoult from Marseille, to become the 4th Editor-in-Chief of our journal.

3 Update on the Affiliation Process

Since Patrick Francioli, Secretary General, could not attend the Council meeting, the report on affiliation was given by Giuseppe Cornaglia, President-elect. The current European Council meeting is the second in its new format if the meeting during the transition period in 2005 is not counted. A total of 48 societies, most national societies across Europe in the field of clinical microbiology and infectious diseases, have by now joined ESCMID as affiliated societies. One of their main benefits is the receipt of information through ESCMID Online News and the cooperation on educational and scientific activities. Furthermore, ESCMID is planning a European Workshop on Professional Affairs in the autumn of 2008 in Rome, in which the European Council members will play an important role. For details see item 8 below.

4 ESCMID Online Training and Career Centre

Robert Read, Professional Affairs Officer for Infectious Diseases, presented the new ESCMID webpage for advertising open positions and posting individual profiles of those seeking a job in clinical

laboratories, research facilities and hospital wards in the infection field. An emphasis of this new service is the promotion of professional opportunities for trainees which includes the possibility to search for exchange visits. The online forms also address language skills as they are important, especially if patient contacts are involved. Robert Read expressed his wish that the platform is extensively used and especially called on the institutions to list their openings on the ESCMID website in order to make it a success.

5 Development of European Medical Practice Guidelines

The objective of this initiative, presented by Robert Read and H el ene Aubry-Damon, Professional Affairs Officers for Infectious Diseases and Clinical Microbiology, respectively, is the development of evidence-based ESCMID guidelines in the field of infectious diseases and laboratory diagnostics to promote Good Medical Practice across Europe. They must obviously be relevant for all European countries by providing different options for varying premises in different parts of Europe. Topics include: Management of adult lower respiratory tract infections (with ERS, ongoing), Management of tuberculosis (with ERS), and Management of catheter-related urinary tract infections (with IDSA). The European Council will play an important role in guiding the Society to select further topics and to provide national guidelines as a starting basis.

6 Pending Proposal for an Independent UEMS Section of Clinical Microbiology

Elisabeth Nagy as former Professional Affairs Officer for Clinical Microbiology informed the Council about the recent formal submission by various countries to the UEMS Council for the establishment of an independent Section of Clinical Microbiology. Surveys conducted by ESCMID indicated that 20 out of 27 member countries of UEMS recognize Clinical Microbiology as specialty. But at the level of UEMS the specialty of Clinical Microbiology is still represented only by a Commission of Microbiology as part of the UEMS Section of Medical Biopathology. Most national societies for Clinical Microbiology as well as ESCMID members consider this inappropriate and requested that ESCMID deals with this issue. ESCMID, however, is not in the position to file a request for a new Section but it supported and coordinated the formal submissions by various national medical associations to this end.

Comments from the floor:

John Degener, Chair of the Microbiology Commission, confirmed that the specialty of Clinical Microbiology is not adequately represented by the current bodies. When UEMS was founded in 1958, only a minority of the founding members recognized Clinical Microbiology as a medical specialty. By now, this situation has drastically changed, rendering the formation of an independent Section of Clinical Microbiology a necessity. Only through this separation from the UEMS Section of Medical Biopathology can the inter-mingling of professional affairs issues related to different medical laboratory specialists, polyvalent specialists, and clinical microbiologists be resolved.

Bernard Maillet, UEMS Secretary General, pointed out that two-thirds of the UEMS member countries must recognize a specialty in their home territories to warrant the formation of a new UEMS Section. This condition is fulfilled by Clinical Microbiology. In addition, the specialty in question must be listed by the EU, which is also the case for Clinical Microbiology. The third requirement for the formation of a new Section is the approval by the UEMS Council. The existing Sections have the formal right to be heard before a decision is made. In the case of Clinical Microbiology not all Sections' opinions have been received. If the schedule continues as planned the issue might be decided at the Council meeting in October in Bratislava.

Roger Finch, Nottingham, supported the formation of a new Section of Clinical Microbiology. This specialty exists in simply too many countries to not be represented by an independent Section. Not

only training and education but also issues of professional migration require a separate Section devoted to this specialty.

Guijs Ruijs from Zwolle and Giorgio Palù from Padua, pointed out that the process of forming a new Section takes too long. UEMS should realize that essentially all clinical microbiologists in Europe support the formation of a separate Section. Bernard Mailliet responded that all interested are free to lobby the national associations to vote 'yes' on this issue at the upcoming Council meeting.

John Degener repeated that the issue must be resolved quickly. The Microbiology Commission rests until a decision is made. The current situation cannot persist much longer.

7 ESCMID and GRACE

Roger Finch, former ESCMID President and Co-leader of the GRACE Curriculum and Education Committee (Workpackage 12), gave a brief overview of the ESCMID activities within the GRACE project. GRACE is a Network of Excellence, funded by the EU and running from 1 Mar 2006 to 28 Feb 2011. It is devoted to research and dissemination of knowledge in the field of lower respiratory tract infections with the goal of reducing antibiotic resistance. The specific goal of Workpackage 12 is the translation of research into clinical practice. To this end a curriculum of basic knowledge for researchers, clinical microbiologists and clinical practitioners has been developed. It has a modular format covering: host-pathogen interactions and the lung; the bacteriology of RTI; viruses and the respiratory tract; basic and applied aspects of antimicrobial chemotherapy; molecular and genetic tools for research; LRTI – epidemiology, economic and social impact; community LRTI syndromes; definition of the high risk patient; current approaches to investigations and severity assessment; antibiotic resistance impact on management and outcomes; and LRTI policies and guidelines. In this context several postgraduate courses and educational workshops are organized by ESCMID and ERS during the 5-year period of the project. In addition, an e-learning portal is established to further help disseminate the knowledge. Roger Finch called on the represented societies to promote ESCMID's educational activities among their membership, including those running under the GRACE umbrella.

8 Plans for a Professional Affairs Conference in 2008

The development of the Professional Affairs portfolio will be a major objective for Giuseppe Cornaglia during his forthcoming presidency. He announced that to this end a Professional Affairs Workshop will be organized in fall 2008 in Rome. The purpose will be to review the status of our professions across Europe and discuss initiatives to improve the organizational basis for medical practice in our disciplines. In preparing the workshop an extraordinary meeting of the European Council will take place in early December. The members of the ESCMID European Council will receive personal invitations for the meeting. The affiliated societies will play an important role in this undertaking.

9 European CME Accreditation

The European system for CME accreditation has many flaws as pointed out by Peter Schoch, ESCMID Managing Director. EACCME, the European Accreditation Council for CME, is operated by UEMS. It acts as a clearing house in which European accreditation is based on the accreditation by the national accreditation boards of the host country and the accreditation by the respective UEMS Section. This need for dual accreditation renders accreditation cumbersome. Worse, however, is the fact that the accreditation criteria applied by the many national accreditation authorities and the European specialty accreditation boards of the UEMS Sections are not harmonized. The number of CME credits awarded for the same conference or workshop can therefore differ depending on the country where the event is held. This situation is not convenient for a European CME provider such as ESCMID. Peter Schoch thus called on UEMS to establish a simpler system in which Europe-wide events are accredited

by a European body applying the same quality criteria irrespective of where an educational event takes place.

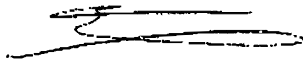
Bernard Maillet, UEMS Secretary General, agreed in principle. At the same time he referred to the difficulty of depriving the national accreditation boards of their competence. In his view any European accreditation system must therefore, at least in the near future, include the national accreditation authorities of the host country.

10 Issues Raised by the European Council Members

No request to speak.

Ragnar Norrby thanked the participants for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 13:25 h.

Basel, 20 November 2007



Ragnar Norrby
ESCMID President



Peter Schoch
Managing Director