

# FLOREAT EuSEM

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I last wrote an editorial eighteen months ago under the title “Whither EuSEM?” but failed then to explain the meaning of this Old English word which was intended to convey the sense of asking in which direction EuSEM was travelling. Unfortunately, however, ‘whither’ sounds the same as the very different word ‘wither’ which can describe a plant or organ that has lost its vitality and is falling into decay. This was a good example of failure in linguistic communication and I now choose instead to link EuSEM with the language which once united the medical profession in Europe. Those of you familiar with Latin will know that the title translates literally as ‘May EuSEM flourish’ and it is intended to confirm that the Society is indeed growing and thriving and is most certainly not withering.

## EuSEM Website

This misuse of language was but one example of communication failure and I am very aware that EuSEM still does not communicate effectively with the large community of Emergency Physicians across Europe. However, there has been significant improvement in the website ([www.eusem.org](http://www.eusem.org)) in recent months and it both could and should be further improved to provide a source of information, a forum for interchange and so much more. Hopefully there is someone or several ones in Europe who have the ability and experience and most especially the enthusiasm to accept this challenge.

## EuSEM Council

The most recent meeting of the EuSEM Council was held in early July and took place on the top floor of the main terminal building at Brussels International airport. The venue was chosen to enable members to attend without requiring the further expense of overnight accommodation. This was the most nationally comprehensive Council meeting that has been held since the constitution was changed last year to include countries which have a minimum number (15) of full members of EuSEM or which have more than a minimum number (1000) of medical national society members. Council thus now has representatives from Belgium, France, Ireland, Italy, Switzerland, Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Poland (co-opted) as well as Officers who are able to represent also Greece, Sweden and Turkey.

## Council Agenda

The latest Council meeting lasted for six hours and I think it is worth making brief reference to some of the many items arising from an extensive agenda. We approved the Minutes of the previous meeting held in London in April and noted the need to elect a second Vice-President in accordance with the Constitution. A call for nominations has since been sent to all members and a postal ballot will be held in advance of the Annual General Meeting in Crete if more than one name is proposed. We also agreed to support the proposal to establish a section on Paediatric Emergency Medicine and recommended that this should be a Task Force in the first instance and that the Chairman should be invited to attend meetings of Council.

## Finances and Membership

Council heard from the Honorary Treasurer that the financial accounts of the Society show a positive balance and include a small but very welcome surplus from the successful Congress held in Leuven early last year. We were also informed by the Honorary Secretary that the number of individual members of EuSEM now exceeds 300 and the President reported that 12 national societies have thus far joined the new Federation. This means that EuSEM now has more than 6000 Affiliate members, a number which appropriately reflects the increasing interest in our specialty across Europe.

## **The European Journal of Emergency Medicine**

The Editor of EJEM was pleased to report an increase in the number and quality of papers submitted for publication and there was considerable discussion about a proposal from the President of one National Society that the publishers of the Journal should be asked to consider the possibility of creating editions which include not only papers in English but also papers in a specific national language. It was recognised that this could pose problems which prove not to be surmountable but it was agreed that further informal discussions should be held.

## **International Federation for Emergency Medicine**

I reported on a meeting of the Board of the International Federation for Emergency Medicine (IFEM) which had been held in Halifax, Nova Scotia, the previous month. Several European national societies are already full or affiliate members and there was discussion about the contribution of EuSEM to this more global organisation. The Constitution of IFEM has recently been amended to recognise that bodies such as EuSEM already have a trans-national responsibility and Council agreed that the Society should apply to become a member in this new non-voting 'ex-officio' category.

## **UEMS Multi-Disciplinary Joint Committee on Emergency Medicine**

I reported also on the most recent meeting of this Committee which I chaired in Brussels at the end of May when the main agenda item was review of the European Core Curriculum for Emergency Medicine. Council agreed in general discussion that this should not be too proscriptive but should recognise the breadth of Emergency Medicine whilst acknowledging that there are many local national variations in the practice of the specialty. A Working Group under the direction of Roberta Petrino continues to address this important but very major task.

## **Educational Programmes and Workshops**

The Vice-President, Ulkumen Rodoplu, presented a discussion paper which outlined the principles that should be borne in mind by Council when asked to approve and endorse the increasing number of educational programmes and workshops. It was recognised by members that this is one of the most important contributions that EuSEM can make in seeking to promote education in different and emerging aspects of Emergency Medicine and it was agreed that a Task Force should be established to give this matter further detailed consideration. Indeed, I was pleased to note that training courses and workshops were the theme of a thoughtful contribution by the Editor in the most recent issue of The Journal.

## **European Partnership for Acute Care Safety (EPACS)**

I reminded Council that I had recently been involved on behalf of EuSEM in detailed negotiation with the European Society for Intensive Care Medicine and had agreed that EuSEM should be a partner in an application to the European Union for major funding for a three year research project on the care of acutely ill and emergency patients. This proposal, known as EPACS, already has the support of the World Health Organisation's World Alliance for Patient Safety and I have been informally invited to represent EuSEM at a Technical Workshop on 'Patient Safety and Care of Acutely Ill Patients' which is being held in Barcelona in September under the auspices of WHO.

## **EuSEM Congresses**

### **(i) Heraklion, Crete, 4-8 October 2006**

Helen Askitopoulou told the members of Council that arrangements were well advanced for the next EuSEM Congress which will be held in Crete in early October. Many distinguished speakers have accepted an invitation to contribute and more than 500 abstracts had been submitted and reviewed. The best fifty of these abstracts are being published in this same edition of the EJEM and they and many others are being presented in oral or poster form during the Congress. Council agreed that this was a most encouraging response and hoped that many members of all categories will be present in Crete to share and contribute to 'The European Vision for Emergency Medicine'.

**(ii) EuSEM Congress in 2008 and beyond**

Council approved a detailed document prepared by Helen Askitopoulou which establishes guidelines for the organisation of EuSEM congresses. It was agreed that these guidelines should be made available on the website and that they should be accompanied by a request for expressions of interest in organising future EuSEM congresses in 2008 and beyond.

**(iii) Sorrento, Italy, September 2007**

Council was informed that negotiations for a fourth Mediterranean Emergency Medicine Congress (MEMC) were continuing and it was currently planned that this should be held in Sorrento, Italy, in mid-September 2007. It was recognised that the last MEMC held in Nice in September 2005 had been a successful meeting which had greatly contributed to the developing interest in Emergency Medicine in Europe. However, it was also noted by Council that the meeting had resulted in a significant financial loss (borne by AAEM) and that it is very important to seek to ensure tighter budgetary control of future such congresses.

**Next Meeting of Council and AGM**

I hope that these brief extracts from the latest Council meeting help to confirm that EuSEM is indeed flourishing. The next meeting of Council is being held at the start of the Congress and the Annual General Meeting will be held three days later on Saturday 7 October. This will be but one of many opportunities during the Congress for EuSEM members to contribute to discussion and debate. I urge you to seize each of these days of opportunity and, as the poet Horace implored, 'Carpe diem'.

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