

## **President report**

**Presented at the General Assembly of the EAPC, Palermo, Italy, 1 April 2001**

There has been a great deal of activity during the last year since the General Assembly was held in Jerusalem, in March 2000.

Most of the activity has been reported regularly in the EAPC Newsletter and on various sites on the EAPC Web site—[www.eapcnet.org](http://www.eapcnet.org).

EAPC has been fast growing, and is essentially a federation of national and regional societies, plus individual members. The organization represents more than 25,000 individuals.

At the start of this board period we identified some priorities, which are as follows: Communication with the members, improve as an open and creative forum for the development and improvement of all aspects of palliative care; be a partner in the development of palliative care in Eastern Europe, organize the biennial EAPC conference and other smaller conferences and meetings.

### **Head office**

The head office of the EAPC has been based in the National Cancer Institute of Milan since 1998. I will thank Dr. Franco De Conno—the Director of the Division of Pain, Palliative Care and Rehabilitation at the Institute—for hosting the Head Office and constantly participating in the day-to-day running of the organization.

Heidi Blumhuber has led the head office staff for several years. During the last period, Yvonne El Masri and Amelia Giordano have finalized their employment within EAPC. I would like to thank them both for their substantial contributions to the EAPC. For quite some time, Heidi Blumhuber has been the only employee at the Head Office. Without her enthusiasm, tireless work ethic and dedication to EAPC, we would have been in a chaotic state. I would personally like to thank her.

Recently, we have employed a new secretary, Franseca Salati, at the Head Office, who has started her work in collaboration with the remaining staff.

### **Finances**

The EAPC is financially healthy, but with limited economical resources. Thanks to the regular income from the biennial conferences, we have covered the minimum running costs. Thanks to the Head Office, we have also been able to attract major sponsors to support the EAPC. For more details, I will refer to the financial reports.

### **Communication with the members**

**[www.eapcnet.org](http://www.eapcnet.org).**

The web site has become a crucial communication tool, and I will encourage all members to regularly visit the site in order to keep updated on the latest development in the Association.

### **The European Journal of Palliative Care**

The Journal is the Association's own journal—having a unique place in the field of palliative care.

It is published six times a year, in both English and French, and is a multidisciplinary journal. As a review Journal, it has a unique place in palliative care.

I would like to thank the chief Editor Andrew Hoy, and the French Editor Philippe Poulain, for their hard work with the journal.

We are also grateful to our publisher, Hayward Medical Communication.

### **EAPC Newsletter**

The EAPC Newsletter has been distributed regularly to the members through their national/regional organizations, individual mailings, or as a supplement to the journal. For several reasons this procedure has not been working optimally. The distribution from the national/regional organization has not always been successful, allowing a lapse between the time of the actual news and the time the journal reaches the members (they receive “old news”). The costs related to this procedure is substantial.

Taking all these factors and other reasons into consideration – and the fact that the EAPC web site is running well, the Board decided to only distribute the news on our web – including pages for direct input from the members.

### **EAPC Networks and Task Forces**

The strength and the influence of the EAPC depend upon on the contribution and activity of its members. Every second year, the congress provides important opportunities for the members to come together.

Four Networks—Research, Ethics, Education and Policy, were established to provide activity on specified areas of palliative care.

Recently the Board has proposed that the activity within the focused areas of the networks will be better organized by the establishment of time limited – focused – Task Forces.

(For more details on internal rules, I refer to the EAPC web).

Members and collective members may make proposals for topics or projects to be covered by a task force, which will be considered by the Board.

With regard to the Research Network, the Board proposes that this structure remain in place.

The steering committee of the Research Network has created a Network of more than 20 collaborating centres around Europe, and all recently completed a major cross sectional study. For more details, I refer to the updated reports on the various networks and Task Forces.

### **Congress**

The first EAPC congress on Research and Development of Palliative Care was held in Berlin on December 7-10, 2000. The congress was organized by the Research Steering Committee. More than 350 delegates from 40 countries participated in the conference.

A detailed report is to be found on the EAPC web site under the Research Steering Committee. I would like to thank Lukas Radbruch for organizing the conference, and Franco De Conno for his work with the scientific program.

The Research Steering Committee and the Board propose to hold the second conference in France next year.

The 7<sup>th</sup> EAPC conference is taking place in Palermo during these days.

The organization of such an event is a major workload—especially on the local organization and the scientific committee.

I will thank Dr. Giorgia Tizino and Dr. Sebastiano Mercadante for their major contribution of many years in the planning of the conference.

“Now—it is up to us.”

K&K congress has been our professional Congress organizer (PCO) for the Berlin Congress and the Palermo Conference. Negotiation and future collaboration with our PCO will take place after this conference.

### **Eastern Europe**

Palliative Care in Eastern Europe has been identified as one of several aims of priority. In collaboration with the Open Society Institute (OSI), New York, USA, the EAPC has established a coordinating centre at Stockholm Sjukhem, the Karolinska Institute with Dr. Carl Johan Fürst as the centre leader, and Sylvia Sauter as the centre coordinator. The hiring of Sylvia Sauter has been made possible through a grant from the OSI.

For more details, look up the EAPC web site.

### **Future**

The changes to the organization will, I believe, result in a more cost-effective organization. By establishing Task Forces, all members will have opportunities on their own initiative to work within the context of EAPC.

Major recourses have been put into a structure giving EAPC a possibility to facilitate development of palliative care in Eastern Europe, in close collaboration with our colleges of ECEPT. News will be found in the EAPC web site – and I look forward to seeing major activities on this page, as a communication tool between the members and the Board of directors. Palliative care in the elderly will be in focus, through an expert group meeting hosted by the Floriani Foundation. An EAPC Task force is applied for by Marilene Filbet.

The next EAPC conference will take place in Holland, April 2-5, 2003, and the next Research Conference in (Lyon) France, in 2002.

I believe that we now have meeting places online and places to facilitate a growing EAPC—to the best for Palliative Care in Europe.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you who have supported me during the first two of my four years as the President of EAPC.