

One voice – one vision

“The EAPC, with its primary goal of developing and disseminating palliative care at a scientific, clinical and social level, is more important within Europe than ever before. Population distribution in the developing world is evolving towards a higher proportion of elderly people, while at the same time, new developments in medicine have improved survival for many patients, without necessarily improving cure rates. Consequently, a greater number of people will be in need of palliative care.”

Europe is changing; borders are disappearing and new economic collaboration is being established, both inside and outside the European Union (EU). Nations once part of Eastern Europe are now an integral part of Europe and the EAPC.

How best to develop palliative care across Europe remains a challenge, but professionals within each country need to collaborate, as new developments and initiatives are easier to put into practice through such collaboration. The EAPC is in the process of developing this further, aiming for ‘one voice – one vision for palliative care’ throughout Europe. We need you as a member and as a professional collaborator, now and in the future. You will find information on how to join the EAPC on the relevant section of our website (www.eapcnet.org).

The EU is a major source of funding for research and development of new healthcare programmes. Millions of euros are available every year for high-quality projects, depending on whether they fit the EU profile, but there are too few grants for palliative care projects. Over the next few years, we aim to campaign for major changes in EU grants regarding palliation. Through this vision and by talking with ‘one voice’ to our national representatives in the relevant parliaments, we can achieve these goals, and when we do, it will make it easier for you to apply for EU funding.

The EAPC congress is the largest and most comprehensive of its kind in the world, and can be considered as the meeting point for all healthcare providers in our field. The main congresses to date have been a great success. The final stages of planning the 2003 congress at The

Hague have now been completed. A broad and challenging scientific programme has been organised, with content ranging from the molecular biology of pain through to symptom control, bereavement, ethics and much more. Delegates will also have the opportunity of visiting local palliative care services and nursing homes during the congress.

Research in palliative care is increasing and two highly successful EAPC research forums have been held in Berlin and Lyon. The next EAPC Research Forum is scheduled to be held in Stressa, Italy in 2004. So that this forum remains focused, we have limited the number of participants to a maximum of 500, so please keep yourself updated by visiting the relevant section of the website at regular intervals.

Research projects and abstracts are published in peer-review journals, and for some time, we have been aware of the need for the association to have close links to such a journal. Recently, *Palliative Medicine* has become the EAPC's research journal. As you know, the *European Journal of Palliative Care (EJPC)* was founded by the EAPC and has for ten years successfully brought important multidisciplinary information to our members and to those who subscribe to the journal; the new collaboration with *Palliative Medicine* will not change this. *EJPC* will continue to be the journal of the EAPC, but the association is in need of both a research journal and a multidisciplinary journal, both of which need your input. Therefore, we are looking forward to hearing from you as a contributor and having you as a reader in the future.

Via the process of collaboration we hope to reach one of our main goals, that of achieving optimal palliative care for all in need of it. The EAPC will soon be able to support you in this by providing minimum standards for palliative care (including under- and postgraduate training) and the core requirement for palliative care services. All of these and many other subjects will be presented and discussed during the congress in The Hague in 2003; I hope to see you all in April.

Stein Kaasa, President of the EAPC

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