

Report of the President of the EAPC 2005. Part 1

Board of Directors

The board of directors has met six times during the last two years and consists of Stein Kaasa (President), Marilène Filbet (Vice-President), Philip Larkin (Vice-President), André Rhebergen (Secretary), Silvio Necchi (Treasurer), Augusto Caraceni, Carlos Centeno, Françoise Porchet, Katalin Hegedus, Lucie Hacpille, Lukas Radbruch, Pam Firth and Tine De Vlieger. Heidi Blumhuber, Executive Officer, Franco De Conno, Honorary Director and Geoffrey Hanks, Honorary President, have participated actively in most of the Board Meetings and have been active advisers to me as president.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee consists of the following elected members: André Rhebergen, Marilène Filbet, Philip Larkin, Stein Kaasa. Heidi Blumhuber and Franco De Conno have also participated actively in the running and strategic planning of our organisation.

Communication with members

The EAPC website has changed somewhat after we established collaboration with Effetti. Augusto Caraceni is responsible for the website, together with Heidi Blumhuber. There is still a need to receive more professional input from our members and people responsible for the various task forces. The euthanasia task force and the work of Lars Johan Materstvedt is a model on how an update should be done.

Journals

The EAPC has two official journals: the *European Journal of Palliative Care (EJPC)* and *Palliative Medicine*. The *EJPC* has been our main journal since 1994. The

editor is Dr Andrew Hoy, with Dr Philippe Poulain as Deputy Editor (France). We are pleased to welcome Dr Carol Davis as the new Deputy Editor (UK). The remaining editorial board will be revised in due course to include members of the task forces of the EAPC and the Research Network. The aim is to ensure active contributions to the journal from the editorial board.

I would like to thank the publisher, Hayward Medical Communications, and Dr Andrew Hoy, for their enthusiasm in producing this excellent journal. Since 2001, abstracts from every EAPC congress, plus a supplement containing the planned lectures of the congresses have been published as part of the *EJPC*. The journal also contains the EAPC news and views and these are published as PDF files on the EAPC website.

Palliative Medicine is the scientific journal of the EAPC, with Geoffrey Hanks as the editor. The abstracts of the EAPC Research Forum are published in *Palliative Medicine* (Stresa 2004, and in the planning stages for Venice 2006). A special thanks goes to Geoffrey Hanks and the publisher, Arnold.

EAPC projects

Ethics task force on palliative care and euthanasia

After the phenomenal success of the debate raised by the publication in the research journal of the EAPC, this task force is still active. The paper 'Euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide: a view from an EAPC Ethics Task Force' was published in English and French in the EAPC journals and was also translated into Italian, German, Hungarian and Greek. The paper and translations can be downloaded from: www.eapcnet.org/projects/ethics

The EAPC board acknowledges this important work on a very complicated

and difficult issue and is grateful for the group's contribution for the benefit of its members.

Task force on nursing education

The task force of palliative nursing experts has completed a recommendation, endorsed by the EAPC, for the development of palliative nurse education in Europe. The report is available from the EAPC head office as a printed supplement and the recommendations can also be downloaded from our website at: www.eapcnet.org/projects/nursing_education.asp, together with an editorial published in *EJPC* and *Palliative Medicine*.

Task force on education for physicians

This task force first completed a survey on education for physicians in Europe. Based on this survey and the experiences of several countries, the EAPC recommendations for the development of medical curricula in palliative care are under way and will be published in due course.

Task force on palliative care development in Europe

This task force is a collaboration between three institutions: the EAPC, the International Observatory in End-of-Life Care and Help the Hospices. This is an optimal way to develop more information on palliative care by including several organisations in the same project. The objectives of the task force are to provide reliable information on the delivery of hospice and palliative care in Europe, to explain the current structure of hospice and palliative care, to facilitate communication between relevant institutions, and to identify key people who have started the process of hospice and palliative care development.

Questionnaires for data collection have been finalised, a document has been drafted, the literature review is almost complete, a plan for 2005 has been finalised and a report will hopefully be completed by the end of 2005.

Council of Europe

The EAPC is recognised as an NGO by the Council of Europe. Maurice Chausson (Director of the Association Pierre Clement based in Strasbourg, and Member of the board of the Société Française de Soins Palliatifs) represents the EAPC at the Council of Europe.

There has been huge debate within the Council of Europe in 2004 based on the so-called 'Marty' report. The EAPC has been heavily involved in requesting amendments to this report which promotes legalising euthanasia within Europe. Thanks to involvement by Maurice Chausson and our two board members, Lucie Hapille and Andre Rhebergen, the report has not yet been approved by the General Assembly of the Council of Europe. However, the issue of euthanasia is still on the agenda and the EAPC is actively promoting its view on the subject.

The Council of Europe published its recommendations for palliative care in 2004. Following an initiative by Carl Johan Fürst, the report has been published in 19 European languages. For more information, please visit www.eapcnet.org/membersonly.coe

New task forces

A new task force has been established on centres of excellence, with the aim of defining what is meant by centres of excellence and to facilitate a network of these centres within Europe.

EAPC East

One of the top priorities of the EAPC has been to encourage the development of palliative care programmes in Eastern European countries. This was possible through a grant from the Open Society Institute, supported by Kathy Foley and Mary Callaway. The EAPC co-ordination

centre at Stockholm was funded by this for two years. The centre has been very active in several Eastern European countries (see www.eapceast.org) and is now heavily involved in the planning of the next EAPC congress in Budapest in 2007. The structure of the EAPC co-ordination centres for Eastern Europe in the future is under development.

EAPC Research Network

The aim of the Research Network is to promote the quality and quantity of palliative care research in Europe. The network consists of a Steering Committee of international experts. There are several ongoing projects such as palliative assessment tools, computerised palliative assessment tools, European pharmacokinetics opioid-study (EPOS), validation of consciousness level in palliative care, and a cross-sectional survey.

Within the research network, there are also expert working groups. In 2004, a group on 'Prognostic factors in advanced cancer patients', chaired by Marco Maltony and Augusto Caraceni, produced a paper that was recently accepted for publication in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*. Another expert group had a meeting in 2003 on fatigue in palliative care patients and the report is currently under way.

The Research Network successfully organised the 3rd EAPC Forum on Research in Stresa in 2004. The forum was very well received and there is no doubt that it is the place to meet to present new research within the field of palliative care. Three hundred abstracts were submitted and 76 abstracts were selected to create 11 new research data sessions. A total of 637 participants from 38 different countries attended, 11 of which were from countries outside Europe.

The next EAPC Research Forum will take place in 2006 in Venice, Italy, 25–27 May 2006. The preliminary programme and call for abstracts has been distributed and the deadline for abstracts is 30 October 2005.

EAPC membership

EAPC has 242 individual members and 300 board member representatives of the 31 collective members associations (membership fees are paid by the associations). All members have the right to vote at the General Assembly.

10th EAPC Congress, 2007

The next EAPC Congress will be hosted by our Hungarian friends from Budapest. Planning has already begun. Dr Carl Johan Fürst from Stockholm has been nominated as chair of the scientific committee and Katalin Hegedus as chair of the local organising committee.

Thank you

I would like to thank all of the members that have been active within the EAPC during 2003 and 2004. A special thank you goes to the EAPC board, the leaders and participants in the EAPC task forces, the leaders of other projects, including organisation of congresses, and to the head office of the EAPC. Special thanks also goes to Silvio Necchi and Adelaide Scerrer, as well as the auditors of accounts, Silvio Ceretti, Bruno Giuffrè and Giuliana Converti for taking care of our finances, as well as the labour consultant Gianni Raimondi for assisting the EAPC free of charge.

I am proud to be a member of EAPC. I am proud to have been elected for a second term to the board and I am proud to be honoured to have been the president for six years. My successor Dr Marilène Filbet from Lyon, France, will carry on for the next two years and I am convinced that EAPC and palliative care in Europe will develop even further under her leadership. However, it is not only up to the EAPC president and the EAPC board, but also up to the members of the EAPC and every one of you who are working within the field of palliative care within Europe. I will discuss the future challenges facing palliative care in the next issue of the *EJPC* ■

Stein Kaasa, President of the EAPC