



ESPA

European Society for Paediatric Anaesthesiology

www.euroespa.org

President's Report 2010-2011

Dear members of ESPA,

The president's report is a longstanding tradition of medical societies such as ESPA. The report is of interest to many members who like to keep up-to-date with the activities of the Society. Members and others can, of course, also do this through the ESPA newsletter and website. However, the president's report is special in that it also serves as the statutory summary of the proceedings and actions of the Society over the previous year. The first few years of ESPA's existence are an exciting and challenging time as the Society endeavours to establish its position in European Anaesthesiology. The following is a short report of what we have done over the last 12 months and what we are planning to do in the next 1 – 2 years.

The Executive Board aims to establish ESPA on the European stage by both developing links to existing sister organizations in Europe and also by listening to and attending to the needs of our members. This means on the one hand encouraging scientific and educational cooperation with other European medical societies. On the other hand it means asking the members for feedback and getting a critical mass of individuals across the continent involved in ESPA's activities.

MEMBERSHIP AND MEMBERS' SURVEY

As of 6th September 2011 ESPA has over 200 fully registered active members as well as a number of affiliate and trainee members. It is a great pleasure to announce that three truly great paediatric anaesthesiologists - Professor Frans Frei, Professor Adrian Boseberg and Professor Isabelle Murat - will be admitted to the Society as honorary members at the Mallorca congress.

One of the main aims of setting up ESPA as a society was to create a direct link to the practising anaesthesiologist in Europe. To encourage dialogue the Executive Board sent out a survey to all members registered in 2010-2011 containing questions on the strategy to be followed in the coming years. This was coordinated by Dr Neil Morton and Dr Ton Schouten. The results suggest that there is broad support for a number of ESPA-projects including some which are up and running (such as the recording of congress sessions, holding one congress per year and access to educational materials via the ESPA-website) and other issues which we are actively pursuing (such as collating and developing guidelines on, amongst other things, competency-based education). Members also raised other issues in the survey which certainly deserve our attention such as facilitating exchanges and visiting professorships and developing a Wikipedia-style expert database on our website. Dr Morton will give a presentation on the results of the survey in Mallorca.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER EUROPEAN SOCIETIES AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS

In setting up ESPA we were careful not to lose our direct link with the national societies of paediatric anaesthesia through the Advisory Council of Representatives of National Societies (ACORNS). It is also our wish to create cooperative links to other societies at the European level. We have invited both the European Association of Cardiothoracic Anaesthesiologists (EACTA) and the European Resuscitation Council (ERC) to participate in joint sessions at our next congress in Stresa, Italy. We are also in discussion with the European Society of Paediatric and Neonatal Intensive Care (ESPNIC) about possible scientific cooperation, again probably in the form of a joint session at their congress. Dr Marcin Rawicz will also be making informal contact with the European Society of Regional Anaesthesia (ESRA).

We have also held discussions with representatives of the European Society of Anaesthesiology (ESA) about becoming a specialist society member of the ESA, which we are actively discussing within the Executive Board. We will also be cooperating with the American Society for Pediatric Anesthesiology (SPA) on two congresses in the coming years.

Also in the area of cooperation, ESPA was very pleased to see the launch this year of the Orphananaesthesia website on which peer-reviewed guidelines for the anaesthetic management of patients suffering from rare diseases are freely available. We are currently in discussion with the Orphananaesthesia team to see how we can lend further help to this project.

CONGRESSES

One of ESPA's main aims is to organize high-quality, modern congresses which meet the needs of anaesthesiologists who care for children throughout Europe. ESPA's year began with the final preparations for, and subsequent great success of the 2nd ESPA congress in Berlin under the direction of Professor Jochen Strauss and his team and the ESPA Scientific Committee chaired at that time by Professor Francis Veyckemans. The congress was attended by over 400 delegates and from their reactions it was clear that the scientific quality of the congress matched the expectations of the participants.

Drawing on the experience of Berlin and of previous ESPA/FEAPA congresses the ESPA Congress and Scientific Committees and the Spanish Local Organizing Committee have worked very hard to produce a modern and interesting programme for the third Annual Congress of the ESPA in Mallorca. Judging by the scientific and social programmes and the trade exhibition, this promises to be a great success. I would like to thank especially Dr Ignacio Galvèz, Dr Neil Morton, Dr Ehrenfried Schindler, Dr Ton Schouten and the professional congress organizer Mr Toni Triay and his team for their hard work in organizing this meeting, as well as for their infinite patience during the occasional technical problems during our many internet-conferences. The programme has a modern design with a variety of forms of presentation which aim to take account of the many different learning styles among anaesthesiologists, while still allowing for the exchange of scientific ideas at a high level. The number of submitted abstracts was 127, 98 of which were accepted by

peer review. The best ten free papers will be presented orally and, new this year, twelve case-based discussions will be held, mainly based on submitted case-reports.

ESPA is planning future congresses in Stresa, Italy in 2012, in Gevena, Switzerland in 2013 and in Prague in the Czech Republic in 2014. The meeting in Stresa will be held on 20th to 22nd September 2012 and will be organized in cooperation with the Italian Society for Paediatric and Neonatal Anaesthesia and Critical Care (SARNePI) with Dr Ida Salvo as chair of the Italian Local Organizing Committee. Dr Salvo will make a short presentation on the Stresa congress during the closing ceremony in Mallorca. The congress in Geneva in 2013 is being organized together with the Swiss Society of Paediatric Anaesthesia (SGKA) with Dr Walid Habre as chair of the Swiss Local Organizing Committee. The American Society for Pediatric Anesthesiology (SPA) will also be participating in this meeting on a scientific level.

As well as its own congresses ESPA will also be cooperating with both the SPA and the Association of Paediatric Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland (APA) at their meetings in Washington, DC in 2012 and Cambridge, UK in 2013. The meeting in the USA will be a World Assembly of Pediatric Anesthesiology sponsored by the SPA in celebration of its 25th anniversary, and will focus to a large extent on international issues. The meeting in Cambridge will be a joint meeting between ESPA and the APA.

The Executive Board and the Scientific Committee under Dr Neil Morton are actively preparing for all of these meetings. Each will have its own local flavour and will also be carefully structured in close cooperation with our international partners in order to maximize the educational and scientific value, while avoiding undesirable overlap.

COMMITTEE AND CORE OFFICERS STRUCTURE

During the initial two years of ESPA's existence it was a great advantage to the Society to have a fairly large, active Executive Board who met regularly. In the longer term, however, the Executive Board feels it would be more efficient to charge the four officers of ESPA with the day-to-day management of the Society and delegate specific projects to the committees. The officers have started to meet regularly using internet conferencing to speed up decision-making and reduce the costs.

Eight committees have been set up with the following portfolios and chairs: Guidelines: Peter Crean; Education: Kerstin Sandström; Patient Safety: Ehrenfried Schindler; Membership: Olli Meretoja; Pain: Andrea Messeri and Newsletter / PR / Communication: Ton Schouten; as well as the Scientific Committee under Dr Neil Morton and the Congress Committee chaired ad interim by the president.

All committees presented their plans to the Executive Board in February of this year and most are now hard at work. For instance, the Education Committee is drawing up competency-based guidelines for training in paediatric anaesthesiology, and the Guidelines Committee has started to collate evidence-based guidelines from European countries. From both within the Guidelines Committee and from the results of the members' survey it emerged that we in ESPA do not feel that the Society should involve itself in re-establishing clinical and organizational guidelines on issues for which current evidence-based guidelines already exist in Europe. It would be more appropriate for ESPA to concentrate on collating existing guidelines and making these available to all in Europe – and indeed, dissemination of information is

one of the ESPA's statutory aims. To do this we need to be kept informed by the members of the existence of these guidelines.

CORPORATE IDENTITY AND MANAGEMENT

ESPA exists for its members and cannot function without their support. The more anaesthesiologist we can contact the better we will be able to achieve our primary aim of improving the quality of anaesthetic services to children in Europe. It is therefore important to maintain the good name which ESPA now has and also to increase the exposure of the Society throughout the continent. This means raising our profile on the European medical stage and generating an appropriate corporate image.

An important means to this end is the website which has been revised and extended this year. The site contains useful educational materials for members such as videos of sessions at previous ESPA-congresses. We have also made an agreement with Faculty-1000 for free direct access to their website for ESPA-members. The website now proudly bears the new logo of ESPA which been deliberately designed to preserve the historical link to our predecessor by incorporating the main elements of FEAPA's logo, while at the same time radiating a fresh new look.

ESPA is a developing society with a growing membership and an active website resulting in an increasing amount of time-consuming, purely administrative work which is currently done mainly by the officers of the Society on a voluntary basis. We feel it is appropriate to delegate some of this work to a professional secretariat and we are gathering offers from various sources in different countries. A decision on this will be made at the Executive Board meeting in the spring of 2012. We are also exploring the option of engaging a permanent professional congress organizer for all ESPA-congresses.

PRESIDENCY

On 1st June 2011 I took over as president of the Society from Dr Marcin Rawicz who stepped down early in the run-up to the Mallorca congress, which he is unfortunately unable to attend. The reason for his absence is however a joyous one – at the time of the Mallorca meeting Dr Rawicz is to receive a special award from the Polish Society of Anaesthesiologists for his life's work in the specialty. I believe I speak for the whole Society when I congratulate Marcin on this well deserved recognition for his achievements.

As there was no provision in the ESPA statutes for a president to step down early a new by-law has been drawn up to allow for this, which will be put to the membership at the General Assembly in September.

On a personal note, I would like to end this report by expressing a word of thanks to Dr Marcin Rawicz and also to the present and past members of the ESPA Executive Board, especially Dr George Meakin, Professor Francis Veyckemans and Dr Ton Schouten, for their untiring work in setting up ESPA. I have learned a great deal from all of you. Finally, I should also like to mention Dr Nic de Zwaan of the Netherlands, who encouraged me to get involved in FEAPA several years ago. I am personally very thankful to all these colleagues, and many more unnamed, for their help, advice and support over the years.

I am looking forward to a fruitful collaboration of European anaesthesiologists in the coming years to jointly achieve ESPA's aim of further improving the quality of our anaesthetic care for children.

Nigel Turner,
Acting President of ESPA.

Utrecht, September 2011