

MINUTES

5th MEETING OF THE MULTI-DISCIPLINARY JOINT COMMITTEE (MJC) in HAND SURGERY

Brussels, June 13, 2009, 15:00 – 17:00

Present

Z. Magyari, Vice President of UEMS

T. Raatikainen, UEMS section of General Surgery and Chairman of Hand Surgery MJC

M. Ceruso, Secretary General FESSH

Z. Szabó, Chairman of Examination Committee FESSH

F. Schuind, European Accreditation Committee FESSH

1. Approval of minutes of 4th meeting (Budapest, Feb 7, 2009)

Approval without change.

2. Activation of Hand Surgery MJC

The participants recall that Hand surgery has been recognized by UEMS as a particular competence. The UEMS Multidisciplinary Joint Committee (MJC) in Hand Surgery has been activated, and the FESSH has been recognized as the representative of the European hand surgeons. T. Raatikainen (Chairman) and F. Schuind (FESSH representative) are the official officers elected. The MJC deals with hand surgery as an added qualification shared by different surgical specialities, including General Surgery, Orthopaedic Surgery and Plastic Surgery. This is the fifth meeting of the Hand Surgery MJC. These attainments have been acted in the official documents available on the UEMS website. On behalf of UEMS, Z. Magyari will in addition officially acknowledge in writing these decisions.

Z. Magyari recalls that the UEMS was founded in Brussels 51 years ago as a non-profit organization. It has been accepted in the European Parliament and is active in various discussions, including about harmonization. Z. Magyari explains that at the present stage the European Parliament has voted a resolution to limit the number of medical specialities: as an example, oncology has not been accepted as an independent speciality. According to UE laws, the national diploma has to be accepted in all other European countries, provided that the speciality exists (potential problems for those who have a national diploma of hand surgery, if they want to work in another country where this speciality does not exist). At the present time, there is no European harmonization, even for the general specialities (but some specialities as Anaesthesiology have decided that their national diploma is given based on a common European examination – same day, same questions; the neurologists tried to do the same but there was an opposition of the UK neurologists). The present policy is indeed still national: changes have to be accepted by the national medical associations and the national health authorities. Medicine is considered as a service, with application of various dispositions regarding concurrence etc. The UEMS of course organizes European Board Examinations, and believes that in the future these diplomas will be the ones accepted in Europe (like the CE mark for various devices), especially for those who wish to practice their speciality in another European country (concerning this point, Z. Magyari distributes to the participants a document on “Strategic direction for the establishment and operation of the European Council for Accreditation of Medical Specialist Qualifications - ECAMSQ”, a project for an harmonized European cursus for all medical specialities). Concerning hand surgery, M. Ceruso points out, that there are hand surgery departments in the hospitals, that the patients

ask for treatment by specialized hand surgeons, that other specialities refer cases to the hand surgeons, that in cases of a legal action it is becoming common to take into due consideration if the patient was treated by an accredited hand surgeon, and yet there is no official recognition of hand surgery. Z. Magyari believes that our present efforts to recognize hand surgery will help the young generation.

The MJC in Hand Surgery cooperates with various sections, including the sections of General, Orthopaedic and Plastic Surgery. T. Raatikainen represents the UEMS section of General Surgery. S. Sourmelis and G. Molea, representing respectively the Orthopaedic and the Plastic surgeons, attended one or several meetings of the MJC but could not attend the present meeting. But cooperation is not only with those sections : Paediatric Surgery, Neurosurgery, Traumatology, etc. are as well interested in the Hand Surgery MJC.

3. Examination

For the first time at the FESSH congress of Poznan the examination has been conducted under the FESSH and UEMS umbrellas and called “FESSH and European Board of Hand Surgery Examination” (M. Ceruso shows the official diploma as it was presented to those who succeeded). The next examination to be held in Bucharest in June 2010 will be called “European Board of Hand Surgery Examination”, keeping both logos (FESSH and UEMS). The examiners are carefully selected based on strict criteria: 10 years experience, European diploma, and recommendation by national society. UEMS observers are invited to participate in the two days examination (there were already invited in June 2009 in Poznan, but could not come due to other concomitant commitments). On the other hand FESSH is ready to send examiners to the Orthopaedic and Plastic Surgery European board exams. The problems of the costs are raised. For the FESSH examination, the costs are totally covered by the registration fees of the candidates.

Z. Szabó explains that the committee prepares now a book with about 500 multiple choice questions, which will allow the future candidates to review the whole hand surgery. T. Raatikainen insists on the practical problem represented by the language. Z. Szabó replies that FESSH makes sure that there is always an examiner of the language of each candidate. However, the book with the questions will obviously be in English, and this could pose a problem. Does it however make sense to translate this book in the various European languages, knowing that most books are in English, and that for some languages there is not even one book about hand surgery?

4. Accreditation of FESSH meetings

The UEMS has an important role in the accreditation of the meetings, at a supranational level, using standardized criteria. The UEMS points are broadly accepted, as the AMA credit points. FESSH tried to get official accreditation of its Poznan and Bucharest meetings, but could not pay. Z. Magyari explains that there has been some technical problems with the subcontractor, Arcadia, located in Slovenia, taking care of the payments. The problem should be very soon solved. For all practical problems, FESSH may contact the UEMS Brussels office (Mr Destrebecq and Mrs Reichler).

5. White book

M. Ceruso distributes the present version of the white book, with the annex “European Curriculum for Hand Surgery”, a document prepared by D. Warwick and not yet finalized, in response to the comments of S. Sourmelis during the last MJC meeting, to expand the training and qualification sections of the white book. M. Ceruso feels confident that the final white

book will be finalized within one month. It is decided to send the final version to all surgical sections, and to present the white book at the next UEMS meeting in Istanbul, 16-17/10/2009, which should be attended by at least one FESSH officer (5 min podium presentation). The white book has become a very important document and is indeed an UEMS document, with an appendix presenting FESSH.

6. Next MJC meetings

A meeting will be held in Istanbul, during the UEMS meeting. The next meeting could take place during the next Section and Boards meeting, to be organized in Brussels in the spring 2010 (the date has not yet been decided). It is also important that a FESSH officer participates in the 2010 CESMA meeting.