



EFC NEWS – AUGUST 2005

Dear Member Societies

As I write this letter halfway through my tenure as President of the EFC, I cannot help but reflect back to the origins of the society and the people that made this idea possible.

The thought was older, but it was at the European Colposcopy Meeting in Dublin, Ireland in 1998 when representatives from each of the European Colposcopy Societies met and agreed that a pan-European group should be established.

Then in 1999 at the IFCCP Meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the European Federation for Colposcopy (EFC) formally came into being and it then had its first official congress on the island of Rhodes, Greece in October 2001. At that meeting the National European Societies' Presidents met to elect officers for the European Federation and Joe Jordan was officially elected as the first EFC President. Joe provided clear leadership and vision and played an enormous role in moving our objectives forward.

There were many challenges against a background of limited resources but there was also a vision and commitment by many people from many European Countries who offered their knowledge and support to the new European Society.

Colposcopy Training Programmes in Europe

The first objective was to provide the best possible standards of Training in Colposcopy throughout Europe.

To this end a Committee under the Chairmanship of Charles Redman (UK) developed a competence based Colposcopy Curriculum using the Delphi Technique. Today there is a Consensus by all member societies for the introduction of a minimum Standard of Training and for a basic core curriculum as this was identified by the Delphi exercise. As there is greater opportunity today for doctors within the EFC to receive training in one country and to be employed in another, the need for uniformity in training and practice is obvious and the results of this effort I am sure will be apparent in the future.

European Treatment Quality Standards

The next priority, when I took over as President of the Society at the EFC Meeting in Paris 2004, was the development of standards of treatment.

A Committee under the chairmanship of Moody Shafi in Cambridge was set up and he did a wonderful job in providing evidence-based guidelines for the treatment of precancerous lesions of the uterine cervix in Europe and Katja Behrens from the University of Hamburg, Germany helped analyze the questionnaire from 31 centers in 16 European Countries. Using the Delphi technique a Consensus agreement for minimum standards of treatment of CIN in Europe will be reached soon and hopefully will be adapted by all Member Societies and corresponding European States in the future. I would like to congratulate them and thank them for their contribution.

In the next two years of my tenure as President of the EFC I shall try to consolidate the achievements of my predecessor mainly focusing upon education and training and pressing forward to implement the common standards of training and treatment for as many European Countries as possible, and in the process maintaining the momentum the society can be justly proud of.

That of course will be ultimately the responsibility of each individual Society/Country and the final programme will depend on local circumstances, needs and facilities.

A good example is the Spanish Society (AEPCC), which has already accepted the principle of the EFC guidelines and took the decision to implement them as they are presented in this Newsletter by Professor Javier Cortéz, who should also be congratulated.

EFC Website

Communication is obviously one of the highest priorities of our society and therefore a website (www.e-f-c.org) has been created for the EFC to disseminate information quickly and easily and to keep everyone up to date with the development of the society. The infrastructure of the EFC website has been designed so as to enable all members to potentially have the ability to add information, irrespective of their location, and has been developed with content flexibility in mind, in order to adapt to the EFC's future communications and training needs. I particularly should like to thank Alexander Diakomanolis for his contribution in creating this website on our behalf. Having done the first step we are now trying to find the best way to maintain and keep it updated.

Association with other Organizations

I am also very pleased to announce that we have recently been recognized by other European bodies, under the banner of gynaecological oncology. Joe Jordan and I were invited to Brussels in October 2004 for a meeting with EBCOG where we presented the history of the EFC and its objectives and the EFC was accepted as a member of the EBCOG Standing Committee on Training and Assessment (SCTA). An important step, which will greatly facilitate our aims in teaching and training issues.

The EFC has already been invited to organize a colposcopy training course during the works of the European Congress of Obstetrics and Gynaecology organized by EBCOG in Torino, Italy in April 2006. Joe Jordan has been assigned to prepare the course and the EFC has also been invited to Joint Meetings by the German Society in September 2005 in Freiberg, Germany and by the Spanish Society in Bilbao, Spain in November of this year.

Our Federation already has an affiliation with WHO and IFCPC and we are making efforts to be linked with other Scientific and Professional Organizations.

EFC Sub-committees

We would also like to get more people from other European Societies involved and I would like to invite nominations for membership in three main sub-committees, which we would like to establish in order to assist in the smooth running of the Federation. These sub-committees will be as follows:

- a) Quality Standards and Development Committee
- b) Scientific Advisory Committee (responsible for future Scientific Meetings)
- c) IT Committee (responsible for the website and Communication).

I think there is scope for the Society to collaborate with persons and groups who could offer their skills and support. If we can get more people involved then the future of the EFC is secure and bright.

EFC Training Courses

There has been a wide-ranging debate among the members of the Society for sometime now on the possibility of organizing EFC Courses for the two following reasons:

- a) Educational
- b) To raise income for the EFC.

Such courses if they are organized by the EFC in co-operation with an academic centre of a European Country could perhaps be financed by the EU with grants made available to sponsor speakers.

The idea was also put forward for a Colposcopy Diploma modeled on the Current European Diploma for Ultrasound. In other words, it would be possible for the EFC to take the initiative in introducing a European Diploma for Colposcopy. These two ideas are delicate matters which we are going to explore with caution.

EFC Future Meeting

The last European Congress organized by Christine Bergeron in Paris, France on 23rd January 2004 was a great success and was attended by more than 800 people from many European countries and elsewhere in the world. She deserves our warmest congratulations.

Our next European meeting is going to be in Belgrade, Serbia in September 19th –21st 2007 and Vesna Kesic is well into the organization of it, and Santiago Dexeus as President Elect has been invited to chair the Scientific Committee for this meeting. The next EFC Meeting after Belgrade will take place in Berlin, Germany in 2010. So the future is planned and exciting.

Dear friends, the European Federation for Colposcopy owes much of its achievements, which have been accomplished in the short time of its existence, to the individual efforts of many people who I would like to mention in this Newsletter.

Joe Jordan, as the first President, steered the EFC through the initial uncharted pathways with his vision, prestige and experience. The Society was also lucky to have a President Elect since the Paris Meeting in 2004 a person with the International Status of Santiago Dexeus, whose contribution to the running of the Society has been invaluable.

Thomas Loening and Jurgen Heinrich from Germany, Antoni Basta from Poland, Theo Helmerhorst from Holland and Tiziano Maggino from Italy, have also been with us from the beginning willingly advising and supporting our efforts.

I would like to express my sincerest thanks and appreciation for their help and to thank all of them for their efforts in helping accomplish the aims of the society.

Many thanks also to the British Society for Colposcopy & Cervical Pathology, who gave us a grant of 16,000 Euro to begin our work, and which from the outset provided clear leadership for the other European Societies and offered its expertise to see our objectives move forward.

I should also like to thank everyone who so willingly has given their time and knowledge to help realize the ideas of EFC.

Last, but not least, many thanks to Liz Dollery who has done a magnificent job keeping everything going.

I wish you all a very pleasant summer holiday and I am looking forward to working with all of you during the next two years.

*Professor E. Diakomanolis
President EFC*

(August 2005)