INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF PHYSICAL AND REHABILITATION MEDICINE

THE RESULT OF THE MERGER AND INTEGRATION OF IRMA AND IFPMR

NEWS & VIEWS – MARCH 2004

ISPRM WEBSITE UPDATE
By Tom and Andrew Haig

The ISPRM website will undergo a major renovation in the next few months, provided by Tom Haig Communications (http://thcommunications.tripod.com/).
Please provide any ideas on the current website or ideas for the future to Andrew Haig, M.D., andyhaig@umich.edu. Send web addresses for any national or international rehabilitation organizations that should be included in the new website, as well as any other useful websites.

Pictures for the Website:
The new website will include photographs reflecting our international mission and cultural diversity. Members are encouraged to submit their favorite digital photograph that reflects disability, their practice, their institution, country or culture. Please include your name, country, and a title or explanation. Only one photo per member, please submit to andyhaig@umich.edu.

8TH CONGRESS OF THE EUROPEAN FEDERATION FOR RESEARCH IN REHABILITATION
By Crt Marincek, Chairman of the Organising Committee

After congresses in Edinburgh (1983), Dusseldorf (1985) and Rotterdam (1988), the 4th Congress was held in Ljubljana in 1991. Unfortunately, due to the civil war raging at the time in regions of former Yugoslavia, the Congress had to be postponed and transferred to Newcastle (1992). Congresses in Helsinki (1995), Berlin (1998) and Madrid (2001) followed. In the meantime, Slovenia has become an independent democratic peaceful country and EU member state from May 1st 2004. Its capital, Ljubljana, is honoured by the privilege to host the 8th Congress of the European Federation for Research in Rehabilitation and I am cordially inviting you to participate and contribute to its success.

The 8th EFRR Congress will be a unique event, bringing together many professionals and researchers working in the field of comprehensive rehabilitation of people with disabilities.

The Preliminary Program with almost 200 oral presentations and about 50 posters will be available soon on the www.cd-cc.si/EFRR2004 website.

We expect about 700 participants from more than 40 countries, most of them already registered.

You are kindly invited to register through the above Web address. Also early booking of hotels is strongly advised, because there are more congresses in Ljubljana in the middle of June.
OPEN LETTER TO THE ISPRM MEMBERS
By Huseyin Ertunga, Cyprus

I am a physiatrist practising in Nicosia, North of Cyprus since 1995. I am sure that our speciality has more or less the same problems with physiotherapists in most of the countries. But in my country, the problem is more than the usual.

As physiatrists we are having great authority problems both in the rehabilitation teams in the hospitals and also at private practice. The main reason of this is the lack of appropriate laws defining the responsibility and duties of a physiatrist and a physiotherapist, and also the absence of the knowledge about our speciality even among our colleagues in other specialities.

In my country, the physiotherapists are refusing to cooperate with us and not obeying any prescription of electrotherapy or other rehabilitative applications written by a physiatrist. Due to the gaps in medical laws, they can work independently and can have a patient directly, without the referral of a physician competent in rehabilitation medicine. What they are claiming is that, the physician completes his/her duty with diagnosing the problem in need of rehabilitation, and all the program of rehabilitation can be planned and applied by the physiotherapist. And this physician can be of any speciality, no matter if he or she is competent in physical and rehabilitation medicine. This last matter is therefore well appreciated by our colleagues in other specialities, making them not to place another physician between themselves and their patients, if they think that this patient needs the intervention of physical and rehabilitation medicine. Therefore, additionally, physiotherapists are well supported by our colleagues in other specialities in this country.

This situation makes a physiatrist to practise as not more than a general practitioner, examining the patient only and prescribing pain killers and muscle relaxants. How can a physiatrist be useful to the patients if he/she can not use his/her skills of the speciality? How can a physiatrist use his/her skills if he/she can not take his/her position in a rehabilitation team? And who will be responsible from a rehabilitative malpractice if a physiatrist does not have the correct position in a rehabilitation team.

Nowadays my country is getting prepared for entering the EU. Therefore medical laws will also be gone over like all the others. As the scarce specialists in this country, with my colleagues, we think that this may be an opportunity for us to make our voice stronger and get our deserved position in the rehabilitation team as physiatrists.

To convince the politicians and also our medical association, we need examples to put forward and show them the situation in other countries. Therefore what I would ask from all my colleagues in different countries is, to kindly send me any document or law or at least their opinions concerning where the responsibility of a physiatrist and physiotherapist starts and ends, and that a physiotherapist can not treat the patients independently and practice like a physician.

Comment by Haim Ring: ISPRM President
"Dr. Ertunga’s letter rises the issue of the leadership function of the physical and rehabilitation medicine specialist (physiatrist) in the rehabilitation team. The physiatrist has been traditionally leader of the team conducting the rehabilitation and accountable for the rehabilitation plan and its results. As time passes by physiatrists may found themselves in such a situation as described by Dr. Ertunga in his letter. It is therefore imperative that present and future generations of physiatrists prepare themselves for the leadership role by adding knowledge to their clinical, academic and research skills and practice that will enable them to maintain this position."

Your comments
Any further reactions on this letter and the comment of Haim Ring are welcome and can be made through the discussion forum on our ISPRM website www.isprm.org
NEWS & VIEWS EDITORIAL BOARD

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Please feel free to submit articles for the News & Views and to take part in our Editorial Board.
UPCOMING MEETINGS AND CONGRESSES

• State of the art in Chronic Low Back Pain Symposium, 4-6 April 2004, Bodrum (Turkey) organized by the Erasmus MC. Info: h.j.stam@erasmusmc.nl

• Joint Conference of the American Society on Aging and National Council on Aging, 14-17 April, 2004, San Francisco, California, visit www.asaging.org/summer-series


• Combined Annual Scientific Meetings of the Australian Society for Geriatric Medicine (ASGM) and the Australasian Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine (AFRM), 27 – 30 April 2004, Esplanade Hotel, Fremantle Western Australia; Contact: AFRM@racp.edu.au

• Annual Scientific Session of the American Pain Society, May 6-9, 2004, Vancouver, B.C., Canada, visit www.aps.org


• The 14th European Congress of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, May 12-15, 2004, in Vienna, www.ecprm2004.org or Dr. Michael Quittan, michael.quittan@univie.ac.at

• SCI ASIA Meeting, Denver USA, May 14.-16. www.asia-spinalinjury.org

• 5th World Congress on Brian Injury (IBIA), 23 – 26 May, 2004. Stockholm, Sweden, contact: braininjury@congrex.se.

• 3rd International Shoulder Course 2004, Villach, Austria, June 2nd-5th, www.shoulder.org

8th Congress of the European Federation for Research in Rehabilitation (EFRR) June 13-17, 2004, Ljubljana, Slovenia. Visit www.cd-cc.si/EFRR2004/ or contact: crt.marincek@mail.ir-rs.si

• Annual Scientific Meeting of the Canadian Association of PM&R, June 16 – 20, Charlottetown, Pel, Canada. Visit www.capmr.medical.org/agm2004.htm

• Rehabilitation International Assembly and World Congress, June 21-24 (date changed), 2004; Oslo, Norway. www.RI-Norway.no

• Principles and Practice of Pain Medicine, June 23-27, 2004, The Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel, Boston, USA Visit www.med.harvard.edu/conted


• 11th World Congress of the International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics (ISPO), 1-6 August 2004 Hong Kong: ispo@pctourshk.com

• Conference for rehabilitation professionals Connecting the Pieces for Success, August 21-23, 2003. Buffalo Niagara Marriott, Amherst NY organised by Uniform Data System for Medical Rehabilitation Information: www.udsmr.org or info@udsmr.org


International Course in Management of Disability and Rehabilitation, 20 Sept – 15 Oct, Utrecht, The Netherlands. The course is focusing to a large extent on policy and management issues of rehabilitation programmes in developing countries. There is a strong emphasis on community based rehabilitation. – ISPRM members benefit of a 20% reduction. Information: www.enablement.nl and h.cornelje@enablement.nl

• 3rd World Congress of the World Institute of Pain, 22-25 September 2004, Barcelona, Spain info@clinicadeldolor.com or wipcongress@meet2.net

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• 3rd National Convention and scientific congress with International Participation of the Bangladesh Association of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (BAPMRCO2004), 5 - 6 October 2004, Hotel Sheraton, Dhaka, Bangladesh: Contact: Dr. Mohd Taslim Uddin: taslim@bdcom.com

• 5th Interdisciplinary World Congress n Low Back & Pelvic Pain, 10 – 13 November 2004, Melbourne, Australia – visit www.worldcongresslbp.com

• 6th World Congress on Brain Injury – IBIA, in conjunction with the 13th Annual Meeting of the Australasion Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine (AFRM), 5 – 8 May 2005, Melbourne, Australia – www.icms.com.au/braininjury


3rd ISPRM World Congress - April 10-14, 2005 in Sao Paolo, Brazil, www.isprm.org/brazil

4th ISPRM World Congress – October 8 - 12, 2007 in Seoul, Korea

Werner Van Cleemputte, Executive Director
Els Vertriest, Secretary to the Executive Director

Address Waalpoel 28 / 34 - B-9960, Assenede, Belgium
Phone +32 9 344 39 59 - Fax +32 9 344 40 10 - isprm@medicongress.com
5th ISPRM World Congress – May 9-13, 2009 in Istanbul, Turkey
Please feel free to announce your upcoming congresses in this agenda by sending an email with all relevant information to the Central Office.