

The 15th anniversary of the congress marks a new identity for the EAHP

The 2010 congress marks a turning point in the development of what is now a world-class congress, whose theme this year is 'Focus on pharmacotherapy – hospital pharmacists advancing patient care'. Three interactive workshops will contribute to the high scientific and educational content.

The annual congress of the EAHP draws participants from over 50 countries and the next takes place in Nice, France 24–26 March 2010. This year will be special because it marks not only the association's 15th Congress but also a renewed sense of self confidence on the part of the association. To mark the occasion Dr Roberto Frontini, President of EAHP, will formally unveil the new logo, website and educational activities of the organisation.

Growing and successful, the EAHP opened its first headquarters in Brussels, Belgium in 2006 and achieved its largest congress in 2009 with 2,689 participants in attendance at the Barcelona event. Mrs Jacqueline Surugue, Immediate Past President, writes: "The success of the EAHP and the congress stems from the outstanding increase in the power of our association in recent years. We now have 31 countries as regular members and spread beyond the present EU border lines. Our association is a strong and dynamic body that has always put educational activities – and especially our congress – at the top of its priorities. Together with the high scientific value supported by distinguished faculty and scientific committees, this has raised the profile of our congress to a world leader for hospital pharmacists and hospital pharmacy."

The establishment of an annual scientific congress, open to all hospital professionals is one of the three main strategies used by the association to advance the position and the role of pharmacists in hospitals.

Historical perspectives

The possibility of an association congress could not be considered until 1993, when English was adopted as the working language. Until that time, progress could only be made slowly, as everything had to be translated. Nevertheless, under the visionary presidency of Dr (now Professor) Kamal Sabra, Ireland, the Journal first saw the light of day in 1992. In the same year, the number of countries and members reached 16 countries and over 9,000 hospital pharmacists. Thus sufficient momentum was secured for The Netherlands, respected for their hospital pharmacy and their ability to speak English, to host the first congress in 1996. The theme in Amsterdam was appropriately: 'Hospital pharmacy services in Europe: current status and future directions'. Seven hundred and fifty people attended, more than had been expected. It contained many

elements that still work well today: a scientific committee as well as an organising committee (chaired by Mr Jan Carel Kutsch Lojenga) in the background, a combination of seminars and keynote addresses, a springtime setting, support from the pharmaceutical industry and a report on the first EAHP survey of hospital pharmacy in Europe.

EAHP board members of the time, including Professor Guisepppe Ostino, Professor Stephan Mühlebach, Mr Tim Delaney and Mrs Nicole de Dycker, some of whom are still active as pharmacists, were instrumental in the congress reaching a fruitful conclusion.

The congress has been held every year since then. From the second year other elements were established: a location in the warm south of Europe is preferred by many, and increasing numbers of countries, participants and exhibitors. Over the years many EAHP presidents and other leaders of hospital pharmacy have stamped their personality on the congress.

The following were Organising or Scientific committee chairmen for the first time in: 1997: Dr Kamal Sabra, Ireland; 1998: Dr Jochen Kotwas, Germany; 1999: Dr Patrick Rambourg, France; 2001: Dr Ged Lee, UK; 2002: Mr Robert McArtney, UK; 2003: Professor Arnold G Vulto, The Netherlands, Mr Bror-Lennart Mentzoni, Norway; 2007: Professor Vagn N Handlos, Denmark; 2008: Dr Roberto Frontini, Germany; 2010: Mr Tony West, UK. From the Seville congress (2004) onwards the numbers of participants and exhibitors grew substantially, reaching 60 exhibitors in Barcelona (2009).

2003 was the first conference recognised by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, the result of hard work by Mr Robert McArtney, Mr Peter Cooke and Mr Bill Zelmer from ASHP. 2004, Seville, was the first year EJHP reported the Congress in detail and EAHP produced the educational CD-ROM supported by Mayne Pharma: a great event. Videos were first put on the website in 2008.

The survey of hospital pharmaceutical services in Europe

A comprehensive survey of the state of hospital pharmacy was carried out in 18 countries in the autumn of 1995 after several years of preparatory work. The survey provides an important benchmark, which can be used in the future to objectively assess the progress being made in each country. It also furnishes nation-

al associations with a wealth of comparative data, for use by them to promote local development. The preliminary results of the survey formed a backdrop for the first EAHP Congress of Hospital Pharmacy. Detailed results were published in the official journal of EAHP, Delaney T. *EHP* 1996;2(3):92-108. The survey was repeated in 2000 by Mrs Jacqueline Surugue and the results were presented at the congress in March 2001.

In 2005 the survey grew to 25 countries under the direction of Board member Dr Tajda Miharija-Gala, of which 22 were included in the final analysis. The survey was conducted electronically and published as a separate book. The EAHP website will be used in 2010, when 31 member countries will be surveyed, some in greater detail than before.

The present: the new look to the Association



The board of directors decided the time had come to change the logo to reflect its growing status as a world-class association for hospital

pharmacists. The change was approved during the annual general assembly of June 2009 in Dubrovnik, Croatia. The traditional pharmaceutical emblem of a green cross represents horizontally the many members in different countries and vertically, with the dynamic of the European flag, how they combine to influence all levels of pharmacy, from our grass roots pharmacists to the policy makers of the EU. The wavy shape speaks of continual development and progress.

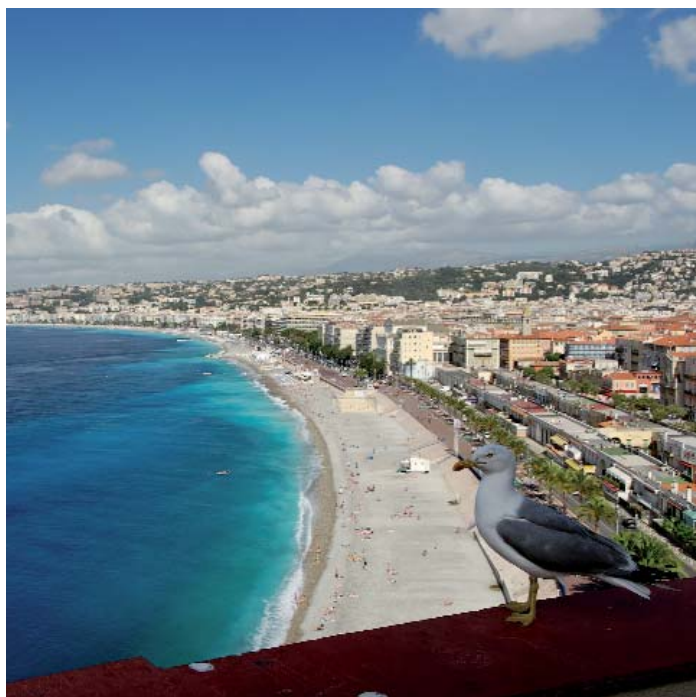
The congress has always placed great emphasis on its scientific and learning elements, and the system for recognising the learning has evolved over the years. In Barcelona, for the first time attendance at seminars was recorded electronically for ACPE continuing education certificates. The industry-sponsored satellite symposia contribute to the reputation of the congress, with eminent speakers. 2009 saw the first interactive workshop, which was so popular that 2010 will offer three separate workshops, each given twice. The congress and both the *EJHP Practice* and *EJHP Science* journals encourage hospital pharmacists to undertake research and publish the findings. The success of this policy is reflected in both the standard of posters at the congress and the number. Last year the number of posters was 50% higher than in the previous year. The solid foundation of the scientific programme is part of the bedrock on which the congress is built.

A further development in 2010 is that the congress will link with clinical pharmacists. "We are delighted that our sister association, the European Society of Clinical Pharmacy, will hold a seminar and provide one of the workshops and we look forward to a fruitful collaboration in future", former EAHP President, Mrs Jacqueline Surugue says, considering this an achievement for the EAHP.

Another achievement is that the congress, now considered the largest congress for hospital pharmacy in Europe, has since the Barcelona congress been run by the association itself, instead of by a conference organising company. This is a reflection of the Board's long-term vision to achieve professional organisation of the EAHP while expanding future goals and developments. A reflection of their success is the sponsorship achieved — in a time of recession. EAHP warmly thanks Amgen, the Platinum partner and Bayer HealthCare and Pfizer, the Gold partners.

Now in Nice

EAHP President, Dr Roberto Frontini, writes: "Nice is a jewel on the French Riviera, an elegant city, with history, tradition and cultural influences that have been magnificently illustrated by generations of painters and photographers. You will be enchanted by it and even more by the exciting scientific programme.



Thanks to the excellent work by my predecessor, Mrs Jacqueline Surugue, we are well positioned to continue growing as an organisation. The goal of this forward movement is to provide the necessary tools, education and EU representation of hospital pharmacists in Europe. We trust that the decision made to update our identity will not only make a statement as to our success but also increase EAHP's visibility and value to hospital pharmacists, not only in Europe but around the world."

