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Elections for the National Council of the French Regulatory Body for Nursing (Ordre des Infirmiers)

On the 25th of last November, the regional delegates of the French Regulatory Body for Nursing have elected the members of their National Council. The latter constitutes the most important body of the structure of the 'Ordre'.

The "Ordre"'s National Council is composed of 52 members (26 men and 26 women). 24 of them are nurses serving in the public sector, 16 in the private and 12 are liberal practitioners.

Participation in the vote has been very high (91.92% according to official sources) with 398 voters on 433 members called to vote.

However it is interesting to note that some of the persons who have been pioneers in the process for the establishment of a French Regulatory Body for Nursing have not been elected as members of the National Council. Among those Mr. Jean-Jacques Shaarf, spokesman of the 'Groupe St-Anne' (organisation representing around forty associations and unions aiming at the creation of the Order of Nurses) as well as Mrs. Brigitte Lecointre and Régine Clément. Both of them are very well known to FEPI members as they have been in contacts with us since the beginning of the process of the establishment of the "Ordre des Infirmiers".

The next step according to the agenda is now the election of its Executive Board by the members of the National Council. This election is going to take place on the 14th of January, in the premises of the French Ministry of Health. This crucial meeting will be chaired by the dean of the 52 members, Mrs. Kine Veyer, who is the President of the Regional Council of Ile-de-France (Paris). This meeting will

also give the opportunity to the members to choose which half of the National Council members is going to be elected for 2 years and which one is going to stay the full mandate (4 years).

After the 14th of January, the Executive Board is going to meet again in order to discuss notably:

- Internal procedures of the Order (collaboration between the different levels, budget and fees)
- The question of degrees (One of the projects the Order is going to deal with is the doctorate degree for Nursing, which is very interesting for FEPI (our own PhD in Nursing project) and could become an excellent basis for a start of a future collaboration between the French Order of Nurses and FEPI).
- Ethical Code (another point where FEPI could be of a great help for our French colleagues).

Following the election of the new Board, FEPI Secretariat will immediately establish contact with our French colleagues and keep you posted on the evolutions on the establishment of the French Regulatory Body of Nursing.

Priorities of the Czech Presidency for 2009 in the field of Health

On this 6 of January the Czech Republic has published, the programme and priorities of its policy for the 6 month of its Presidency of the European Union.

The work programme in question, entitled 'Europe without Barriers' draws the main lines of the priorities for the Czech Presidency that will last until the 30th of June 2009, when Sweden is going to begin chairing the EU Council.

Amongst the 36 pages of this essential document, the Health sector is of course one of the most important. The Czech Presidency is going to focus on the following points relating to Health:

1) Exercise of Patient's Rights in Cross-border healthcare:

According to the programme, "the Presidency will participate in the effort to set out an overall framework for the provision of cross-border healthcare. The Presidency considers this EU measure to be a benefit for patients and healthcare systems alike, especially with regard to increasing patient mobility. The future system of cross-border care provision must also take into account the quality and safety of healthcare, regardless of

which Member State it is provided in. In connection with this issue and with the high-level process of reflection on healthcare workers in Europe, the Presidency will also seek to address the growing mobility of healthcare workers”.

2) Quality and Safety of Organ Donation and Transplantation:

On this particular issue, the Czech Presidency declares that: “A new legislative initiative will include the principles providing a general framework for quality and safety in relation to the medical use of human organs; for the creation of a common set of quality and safety standards for organ transport and storage; and for reporting serious adverse events”.

3) Rare Diseases:

“The Czech Presidency will support the Commission initiative on rare diseases which seeks to improve the current situation of patients suffering from such diseases, and increase their chances of obtaining adequate care and available information”.

4) Patient Safety and the Control of Nosocomial Infections, with a Focus on Antimicrobial Resistance:

On this important issue for all the Nursing professionals and the hospital workers, the Czech Presidency foresees that: “the main objective of the initiative addressing patient safety and healthcare quality is to provide support to Member States in their effort to ensure safety and quality standards within the entire scope of the EU healthcare systems, namely as regards the continuous quality improvement (CQI) of healthcare and patient safety within national and regional systems. The Presidency will participate in the adoption of appropriate measures for infection control and the definition of relevant standards and preventive measures. Here, the prevention and control of antimicrobial resistance and healthcare-associated infections in healthcare settings with an emphasis on European hospitals will be a priority”.

5) Financial Sustainability of Healthcare systems:

According to the official document, “The Presidency will focus primarily on the definition of financial sustainability and its objectives, and on the analysis of the resources available for healthcare funding. In terms of long-term care funding, it will be necessary to draw attention to the

pressure it faces as a result of the growing demand for long-term care services, in relation to the negative demographic trends and the lack of providers of this type of care. The May 2009 high-level conference is to provide a forum for Member States to share experience and exchange information and best practices concerning healthcare systems and their financial sustainability”.

6) E-Health and Telemedecine:

“The Presidency will also be looking into the issue of improving cooperation between EU Member States, increasing the quality of healthcare provision with the help of telemedicine, and strengthening the interoperability of information systems in the healthcare sector. Attention will be paid to the individual (the citizen as a patient and the healthcare staff, including their mutual interactions), society (education, science and research and their importance for e-Health) and economic aspects (in close relation to the issue of financial sustainability)”.

7) The Pharmaceutical Package:

“Adequate regulation of the pharmaceuticals market may significantly contribute to the quality, safety and effectiveness of pharmaceuticals, which in turn significantly influences the health of patients. The Presidency is ready for a serious debate on legislative proposals contained in the Pharmaceutical Package. The proposals focus on three key issues: the aim is to improve the functioning of the pharmacovigilance system at European level, to strengthen the legal distribution chain for pharmaceuticals against illegal or counterfeit products and to provide the general public with information on prescription pharmaceuticals”.

As you can see, the programme covers a large scope of important issues; the most interesting for our profession is going to be patient safety and cross-border healthcare. In the continuation of 2008 and the adoption by the European Commission of a Directive’s proposal on the application of patient’s rights in cross-border healthcare, completed under the French Presidency, the mandate of the Czech Presidency will even more focus on this sensitive topic hoping to finalise the adoption process before the beginning of the Swedish Presidency, as from the 1st of this coming July.

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Meetings and Events to come:

- 20/01/09:
 - FEPI Policy Working Group
 - 21 Portland Place, London
 - 09.00 to 14.00

- 21/01/09:
 - European Parliament Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) Committee Meeting
 - European Parliament, PHS 1A02, Brussels
 - 09.00
 - FEPI Delegation: Mr. Laurent Louette

- 22/01/09:
 - European Health Management Association (EHMA) Roundtable on Patient Safety
 - Local Government Association premises, Square de Mêeus, 1, B-1000 Brussels
 - 12.15 to 14.30
 - FEPI Delegation: Mr. Laurent Louette
 - <http://www.ehma.org/index.php?q=node/145>