



(corresponding call for proposals open to all scientists in the volunteering member states).

The third level would be to pool resources in a common pot for certain areas of diabetes research. The proposals made today by the industry would contribute to that goal. This third level needed a lot of courage, political will and support, but it would mean a huge breakthrough in diabetes research.

Under FP5, 22 diabetes projects had been funded amounting to €56m (of which €42m were contributed by the EU). In FP6, two calls had already been processed resulting in funding of more than €40m from the EC. The objectives of the next Framework Programme would be to further promote collaborative research, to launch European Technological Initiatives and to be more driven by researchers.

Closing remarks

Mr John Bowis (*Member of the European Parliament, UK*) concluded the conference. He said how encouraged he was, particularly by the proposal made during the conference; he thought the Parliament would be happy to 'row in' and link it to what Parliament is already pushing for – the Diabetes Framework. Mr Bowis then said how important it was for him to receive letters from constituents, people outside Parliament, to put pressure on the politicians as this was the way in which to bring issues to the attention of the budget holders and to get things done.

The EC Health and Consumer Protection Directorate General (by way of the public health action programme) had opened the door to measures to promote good health; the budget was tiny – compared to

subsidies for growing tobacco. Because of the burden it represents, diabetes was now a named disease in FP6.

In 1989 the St Vincent Declaration was agreed – 10 years on in Istanbul there had been more words than action, more targets. Now in 2004 we should ask how far we have got. We have made progress, but we have many miles to travel and there must be no weakening of our collective resolve to meet the targets for the benefit of people with diabetes.

*Report by Sarah Hills, Editor
European Diabetes Nursing*

This conference can be heard in full in a webcast on: <http://www.easd-lectures.org/brussels>.

Diabetes nursing in Slovenia: implementation of EU and FEND guidelines

Activities of the Slovenian Society of Nurses in Endocrinology and a report of the Second Slovenian Congress of Endocrine Nursing, 21–23 October 2004, Bled, Slovenia

The Slovenian Society of Nurses in Endocrinology has organised two professional meetings each year for the past few years. These meetings are attended by members of the Society and individuals who are interested in the field of endocrinology and are involved in nursing care and health education of patients with endocrine disorders. The Society has now organised two successful Slovenian congresses with internationally recognised guest speakers.

Slovenian Society of Nurses in Endocrinology

The Slovenian Society of Nurses in Endocrinology was founded in 1988 on the initiative of Duska Vreg RN and Irena Poljsak RN. The proposal states:

'The development of medical science and technology over the past decade has brought about revolutionary changes in many fields of medicine, including endocrinology and diabetes care ... The Society intends to focus its activity on

patients who suffer from diabetes, as this is by far the most significant endocrine disorder in the world today, with grave economic and social consequences for the individual and society as a whole. Nurses are important members of the team providing care to persons with diabetes. We play an active part in strategic decisions that influence the development of diabetes care in Slovenia, and we share the responsibilities for the attainment of national goals in the field of endocrinology.'



Three other colleagues must also be given credit for this initiative: Anica Cotman Anzic RN, Bojana Zemljic RN, and Greta Gomboc RN.

Besides understanding the need for such a Society, the founding members also laid down its main aims:

- Development and evaluation of training programmes for nursing care in individual fields of endocrinology.
- Following scientific and technical advances in endocrinology.
- Formulating national guidelines for nursing care and health education in endocrinology.
- Setting standards for staff, procedures etc.
- Training of managerial personnel.
- Developing a uniform methodology for documentation of nurses' work (standardisation of records).
- Establishing criteria for proper valuation of nurses' work in individual fields.
- Research and publishing.
- Participation in projects of the Slovenian Nurses' Association.

Activities of the Society

In 1988, the first one-day seminar was organised, devoted to principles of diabetes care, nutrition and lifestyle of people with diabetes, and the social and medical problems they encounter. In 1989, a Yugoslav symposium was devoted to the topic of intensified conventional insulin therapy; a number of Slovene nurses actively participated. Over the following years, membership grew to 160; the Society has become an active forum for exchange of information.

Professional recognition

In many European countries, the professional title of educator, or health educator, is given to health workers engaged in patient education, especially in the field of dia-



Members of the Slovenian Society of Nurses in Endocrinology – chief organisers (left to right) Alenka Ros, Barbara Zargaj, Milena Bohnc, Mateja Tomazin-Sporar, Jana Klavs, Melita Hocevar

betes. Since patient education is an important part of our work, we feel that this aspect of our activity should be formally recognised and that these titles should be introduced also in Slovenia.

Specialist training in diabetes nursing was initially obtained at the Vuk Vrhovac Hospital in Zagreb and the Steno Diabetes Centre in Denmark. Slovenian nurses still visit those centres today, although training is now available also in Slovenia. Our Society has organised several one-day seminars covering a range of topics in diabetes care.

A joint meeting with the Slovenian Society of Nurses in Nephrology, Dialysis and Transplantation was devoted to particular problems experienced by diabetic patients before and after substitution treatment. In 1994, members of our Society took an active part in an international Alps-Adria meeting concerned with diabetes and its complications. In 1995, we participated in a national conference to mark the 50th anniversary of the opening of the first diabetic out-patient clinic in Slovenia.

A major step forward in the documentation and evaluation of our educational activities was the development of a standardised diabetes education chart. This was largely the

work of Majda Mori Lukancic RN, who generously shared with colleagues her wide experience in endocrinology nursing and patient education. Ms Mori organised the first postgraduate training courses for diabetes nurse educators in Slovenia.

Members of our Society attend meetings of FEND and the European Association for the Study of Diabetes. They disseminate the information learned at national professional meetings. Our members are also active in regional societies of patients with diabetes in Slovenia, and have close contacts with the Slovenian Diabetes Association.

Publications and proceedings

Our professional articles are published in *Utrip* (the Society's bulletin), *Zdravstveni obzornik* (journal of the Slovenian Nurses' Association), *Dita* (a magazine for patients with diabetes), *Sladkorna bolezen* (journal of the Slovenian Diabetes Association), and in Society proceedings of meetings and seminars. So far the proceedings of 10 meetings have been published. In addition, we have prepared a video on healthy nutrition and a manual on diabetes care for nurses. All our publications (available on request) are in the Slovene language.



Report from the 2nd Slovenian Congress of Endocrine Nursing with international participation

The Slovenian Society of Nurses in Endocrinology organises annually one or two short professional meetings. Every four years, the Society organises a congress, with a more extensive programme and number of participants. It provides an opportunity for health professionals and the public to be updated with advances in diabetes care and new European guidelines. The main objective is professional training and education of health workers and other professions who are in contact with endocrine patients (nurses, pharmacy staff, professionals working for societies of people with diabetes). The congress also serves as a forum for the exchange of experience, mainly in the field of patient education and counselling.

The motto of the Bled Congress was: 'Openness to changes – development of values, quality and appropriate treatment for endocrine patients.' More than 50 Slovenian and international speakers presented their views on effective management of diabetes, and there were 140 participants. The programme covered the following topics:

- Advances in diabetes care (use of oral hypoglycaemic agents and different types of insulin; self-monitoring of glucose; technical aids for quality management of diabetes).
- Nutrition (dietary habits; obesity; fashionable diets; eating disorders; diets for strengthening the immune system; coeliac disease and diabetes; hyperlipidaemia).
- Chronic complications of diabetes (periodontal disease; visual impairment – laser treatment of

retinopathy; erectile dysfunction).

- Psychological and mental health aspects of diabetes care (psychiatry and diabetes; quality of life).
- Patient–nurse counsellor relationship (personal qualities and competence in diabetes management).
- Day hospital, function and activities.
- Diabetes and cardiovascular risk, the importance of treating hypertension in patients with endocrine disorders.

On Slovenia's entry into the EU in 2004, the Slovenian Society of Nurses in Endocrinology accepted new obligations and adopted new working guidelines. Our guest speaker Mrs Anne-Marie Felton (*Chairman of FEND*) presented the FEND ENDCUP (European Nurses Diabetes Collaborative University Project) guidelines for the training of diabetes specialist nurses (DSNs). Owing to the work in diabetes education by nurses, the DSN – in the education of people with diabetes – has been recognised within the profession of nursing with a legally regulated status in many countries of the EU. Currently, nationally recognised graduate training programmes for DSNs, leading to national recognition, are offered in Spain, the UK and Sweden. The Slovenian Society of Nurses in Endocrinology is preparing a formal training programme for diabetes nurse educators, which would enable the profession to be officially recognised in Slovenia.

In Slovenia, 8% of the population have diabetes. Because of the growing prevalence of the disease, diabetology is a rapidly developing field, and patient counselling is an

increasingly demanding task. In order to keep abreast of advances, nurses and other personnel involved in diabetes care need continual intensive training in areas of nutrition, devices for self-glucose monitoring, new types of insulin, prevention of stress, healthy lifestyle etc.

For diabetes nurse educators, knowledge is the main asset and tool for their work. Professional seminars and meetings organised by the Slovenian Society of Nurses in Endocrinology provide an opportunity for nurses to acquire new knowledge, exchange opinions, overcome doubts and verify personal views on the content of advice to be offered to the patient.

An important aim of our Society is also to achieve appropriate evaluation of our educational work in terms of time and cost for individual class hours. A detailed programme was devised for patient counselling and education, which outlines the contents of individual sessions. However, more funding and staff are needed, and national guidelines are required. This is a priority for our Society, and we hope to report on its favourable progress in the future.

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Conference Notice

Partnerships for Health

5–8 October 2005 European Health Forum, Bad Hofgastein, Austria

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