

The following newsletter was published in '**Community Dental Health**' in December 2002

7th EADPH Congress, Athens, Greece 13-14 September 2002.

The rich history and cultural splendour of the city of Athens, Greece, provided a fitting setting for the seventh annual congress of the European Association for Dental Public Health. Hosted by the University of Athens, the local organising team was admirably led by Prof. Thessaly Athanassouli. In line with the spirit of Hippocrates, the father of prevention, the theme for this year's conference was "Prevention of Oral Disease for All Ages".

In the first oral session entitled "Implementing research evidence to prevent and control oral disease, Prof. A. Jokstad described the online database of dental guidelines developed by the FDI World Dental Federation. Prof. N.B. Pitts described the process in the U.K. for developing clinical guidelines, in particular the work of the Scottish Intecollegiate Guideline Network. He also, outlined the role of the AGREE Collaboration, a multidisciplinary group which has produced an appraisal instrument for clinical guidelines. Further details are available at www.agreecollaboration.org. Prof. A. Angelopoulos of the University of Athens then outlined approaches to the prevention of oral cancer.

The GABA lecture was give by Professor L. Stosser who described current research in caries risk assessment.

The second oral session covered a diverse range of topics. The President, Dr. E. Widstrom, gave an overview of black spots in European Dentistry and Professor M. Downer gave a very helpful presentation on the hurdles to be overcome in getting your research published in a peer reviewed journal.

The Chief Dental Officer of the World Health Organisation Prof. P.E. Petersen, described the work of the WHO and outlined its new policy document "Health 21", the successor to "Health for all", and outlined the new WHO oral health targets, namely that by 2020, 80% of children aged 6 should be caries free and the DMFT at age 12, 1.5. Further details are contained on the WHO web site.

The final session of the formal oral presentations comprised a round table discussion where contributors from five countries described education in dental public health across Europe.

In addition to the oral presentation sessions, four parallel poster sessions were given with 60 papers from 17 countries presented, an increase of 25% on the previous meeting in Marburg. These covered a range of topics and themes of relevance to community and dental public health practice.

Of course the meeting did not consist entirely of formal meetings and there was ample opportunity for informal networking and the renewal of old acquaintances. A number of delegates took the opportunity to visit the Acropolis and the Parthenon or have a final, late summer dip in the Gulf of Saronikos. In addition to a Greek Folklore dinner, the formal conference dinner was held in the imposing surroundings of the Yacht Club of Greece in Piraeus, a former royal palace, which provided some of us the opportunity to see how the other half live!

Presidential address

The president, Dr Widstrom, reflecting on the progress made by the Association addressed members as follows:

"The European Association of Dental Public Health was inaugurated in order to promote dental public health in Europe and, to facilitate this, to bring together people who work in this field. The main working form for us, as for many other international scientific associations has been the annual conferences, where we have the opportunity to hear prominent speakers from different countries, participate in discussions, attend presentations and evaluate scientific papers, and where we have the opportunity to meet colleagues, talk and get new ideas.

The possibly ambitious plans from the early years, to organise working groups which would harmonise methods used in caries epidemiology, or prepare guidelines for preventing oral diseases, might however have been premature in the short history of our Association. The concept of dental public health has different content in different parts of Europe and the practical implementations depend heavily on the systems of provision of oral health care in different countries, and we do not have much experience at working together in this field.

There has been criticism of the scientific level of papers presented at our meetings. Sometimes it is justified and we need to focus our efforts on quality improvement, but let it not be forgotten that we are one of the linguistically and culturally most diverse areas of the developed world. Quite apart from the fact that most people attending our meetings are working in their second or third language when they use English, our health care systems have evolved differently, determined by various cultural and historical idiosyncrasies, and we often know very little about the system of health care in our nearest neighbour country. There is thus a lot of learning to be done.

Our meetings have basically three categories of participants, university teaching staff, scientific researchers, and administrators and other users of the research results. Common for these groups is the need for good research. An idea that I would like to hear discussed during this meeting, is the possibility of devoting some of our meeting to advanced course in research methodology in public health - not only by those who produce research but also those who need to evaluate its usefulness.

This year our programme addresses the broad and important issue of the prevention of oral diseases within Europe and worldwide. Some recent reports indicate that the scientific evidence relating to preventive dentistry is not as solid as we would have liked and there is a clear need for reconsideration.

Our Co-President Professor Athanassouli and her team have been working hard to prepare for us an excellent meeting and at the same time have found space in the timetable for cultural highlights during our stay in Greece. I wish you all fruitful working days and enjoyable social get-togethers. I would like to thank all our hosts and their sponsors for preparing this meeting for us."

Officers of the Association

At the annual business meeting the following office bearers of the Association were elected (term of office):

President:	E. Widstrom (2003)
Vice President:	N.B. Pitts (2003)
Secretary:	A.R. Borutta (2005)
Treasurer:	K. Pieper (2005)
Associate Editor:	E. Honkala (2003)
Co-President:	P. Lukkonen (2003)
Executive Officer	

Working Groups/Network Development:	K. Eaton (2005)
Executive Officer Membership:	Z. Broukhal (2005)
Executive Officer Communication:	I. G. Chestnutt (2005)

2003 Conference

The 8th Annual Conference of the Association will be held in Jyvaskyla, Finland from the 21st - 23rd August 2003. The theme for the meeting will be "New Strategies for Dental Public Health". The deadline for receipt of abstracts is 1st April 2003. Further details are to be found at www.eadph.info.

EADPH Newpage - information sharing

This newpage is designed as a forum whereby members of the Association can share information, which may be of interest to those in other states. All contributions will be considered and should be forwarded to:

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