

## Newsletter number 9

Dear ENTOG friends,

Copenhagen was a real success. With 48 trainees participating in the exchange we broke all records. Another record we broke was that we had 2 American colleagues participating in the exchange. From the enthusiastic stories it could be distilled that once more the concept had been a good one: people critically looking at another health and training system, comparing it with back home and with the home situations of the other exchange participants. And they will take broader sope back home. If you have not participated in the ENTOG exchange yet, consider it for Austria the end next year or Portugal early 2008!

The meetings' topic proved to be good for many discussions and with an audience vividly interacting with the speakers, who came from all over Europe and from the States (!). Most people agreed research was a very useful component of training and it is compulsory in most countries to produce something during training whether it is a presentation or an article. But whereas in Denmark about a third of trainees does a PhD, and usually before starting speciality training, in Portugal people had a difficult time to do research up to their own satisfaction due to lack of time. Contrasts were still big with the more northern countries encountering less difficulties if only because of less working hours. We also had a lovely session about implementing research in the clinic where trainees explained e.g. about implementing medical abortions in their hospital and we also got a peep-view of the American situation.

The last session we had very interesting presentations about 360 degree assessment, and learned about the English and Danish situation, how people assess peers as critical as others and how people feel being assessed by nurses, supervisors and even patients... And this topic was the step up for the meeting in Vienna next year which is entirely dedicated to assessment. The discussions we had now make me look forward a lot already.

Of course, the following day, we had our council meeting where we were fortunate to welcome representatives of 17 out of our 25 member countries. We're getting bigger!

We discussed quite a few important topics during the meeting and I'll try to give a short reflection below.

### **JOINT EXCHANGE AND MEETINGS WITH EBCOG CONGRESS**

As discussed in the September newsletter this topic was raised during council. It was the start of a long and heated discussion. The main drawbacks mentioned were the long time away from home and clinic with the exchange before the congress and a less inspiring exchange if over the weekend. We were very happy to see a big majority of people voting in favour of the joint meeting afterwards. The formula chosen finally is the following:

Exchange from Monday to Thursday + Meeting on Friday + Council on Thursday afternoon or Saturday. The European congress will start on Tuesday and our exchange will run parallel to it.

There were 4(!) joint bids, (joint bid from trainees for exchange and meeting and from the national society for the congress); Berlin (Germany), Istanbul (Turkey), Oslo (Norway) and Antwerpen (Belgium). As the ENTOG council we voted for Turkey as the preferred venue for 2010. In this new system with the joint meetings we have 2 votes in the EBCOG council for our proposed venue. Democracy worked well, but not in favour of our choice and Belgium was elected as the definitive venue for 2010. We think the success of the exchange is protected by the support for the bid by the Belgian trainees. Other than that we hope it'll foment the interaction between trainers and trainees on a local level and give a win win situation for all of us participating. Amongst others the advantages will be; reduced costs for two events, use of the infrastructure of EBCOG congress, reduced costs for speakers and a bigger audience. In this way we also hope to present ourselves as a stronger partner for EBCOG.