European Academy of Paediatrics, Accreditation and Syllabus Sub-committee Report 2014-2015

At the European Academy of Pediatrics (EAP), a subsection of the European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS; formerly CESP), each paediatric subspecialty is represented by a liaison officer within the Tertiary Care Working Group (TCWG). The EAP has its own legislation/constitution (Belgian/EU law) representing the central unifying platform for paediatric training in Europe.

One of the major goals of the liaison officers is to update the current syllabus and accreditation procedures of their subspecialty, agreed with their organisation, aiming at harmonisation of paediatric training throughout Europe.

The former ESPE syllabus, prepared under the aegis of Peter Hindmarsh dates back to 1998. Similarly, a plan on accreditation of training centres based on this syllabus has been elaborated shortly thereafter. An update of the syllabus should revise, restructure, and amend the current guidelines according to present practice and new developments, check the feasibility of the current tutorial system approach in face of national differences in paediatric training, and focus on minimum but obligatory requirements.

Accreditation of centres, i.e. approval by a team of visiting specialists and official representatives, is ‘recommended’ by UEMS but has been performed by only a few so far. The centre seeking accreditation/certification has to apply and cover all costs. It has not been clarified yet how such a process can be executed within a big association like ESPE on a European level. It also has to be worked out if such an accreditation plan should apply only for centres where there is some doubt about qualification for centre status. Alternative methods of assessment may have to be discussed.

The sub-committee (‘Accreditation and Syllabus Sub-committee’) which was established under the umbrella of the ETC in 2011 was expanded by the inclusion of new members. Colleagues who have put an effort in these studies in the previous years were asked to join the group and finally Peter Hindmarsh, Chris Kelnar, Sten Drop and Jeremy Allgrove have accepted to join the group, also including Stefan Riedl and Feyza Darendeliler. George Chrousos joined the group in 2012. The goals of this group were to update the paediatric endocrinology syllabus and work on plans and actions for accreditation of paediatric endocrine centres in Europe.

After contacting several colleagues from several European countries and receiving feedback from questionnaires, a core group of the Accreditation and Syllabus Sub-committee, including Feyza Darendeliler, Sten Drop, Stefano Cianfarani, Wilma Oostdijk, Giorgio Radetti, Stefan Riedl, Jan Lebl, and Lars Sävendahl have worked on updating the training syllabus in Paediatric Endocrinology based on the recommendations of the EAP and the European Board of Paediatrics (EBP), with the aim to present it to the larger group and ESPE Council.

After its approval at the ESPE Meeting in 2014, the revised training program and the portfolio were submitted to the Tertiary Care Working Group of EAP. In December 2014, the revised syllabus and training program were finally approved at the General Assembly of EAP meeting in Brussels and put on the website of EAP. The last updated and approved version of the training syllabus is also available on the ESPE website.

The Accreditation and Syllabus Sub-committee decided at the ESPE Meeting in 2014 that the accreditation process can be postponed for a while until UEMS presents more specific guidelines on the accreditation of subspecialities in EU Countries.
Meanwhile we decided to contact presidents of all the National Pediatric Endocrine Societies or organizations in EU countries and ask them whether pediatric endocrine training is officially accepted as a subspeciality in their country and whether they will be or are using the revised ESPE training program and portfolio nationally. We did receive some answers from some European countries including Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Italy, Malta, Croatia, Portugal, Switzerland, Hungary, France, Slovenia, UK, Estonia, Ireland and Czech Republic.

We as the core group decided to meet with those colleagues who responded during the Annual ESPE 2015 Meeting and try to prepare some guidelines on how to advertise the ESPE training program and use of portfolio in EU Countries.

Feyza Darendeliler