



EUROPEAN UNION OF GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

Alment Praktiserende Lægers Europæiske Organisation – UEMO
European Union of General Practitioners – UEMO
Europäische Vereinigung der Allgemeinärzte – UEMO
Union Européenne des Médecins Omnipraticiens – UEMO
Unione Europea dei Medici di Medicina Generale – UEMO
Europese Huisartsen Vereniging - UEMO
Unión Europea de Médicos Generalistas – UEMO
Uniao Europeia de Clinicos Gerais – UEMO
Euroopan Yleislääkärijärjestö – UEMO
Europeiska Allmänläkarorganisationen – UEMO



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FUTURE UEMO LOBBYING AND PRESENCE IN BRUSSELS

At the UEMO General Assembly in Giardini Naxos on 10-11 May 2002 it was decided that the Swedish Presidency would, prior to the General Assembly in Florence 4-5 October 2002, produce a discussion document regarding future UEMO lobbying and presence in Brussels.

An organisation like UEMO depends on efficient lobbying in order to spread its policy. The Presidency takes the stand that UEMO is not going to be a discussion club for its members and that the issue of lobbying is a matter of priority. It is also firmly convinced that the UEMO lobbying should be done by doctors at the front. Without efficient lobbying, the *raison d'être* of the UEMO can be questioned.

Today, the efficient lobbying is mainly hampered by two factors. Firstly, the UEMO is not physically present in Brussels and, secondly, the lack of financial resources.

Presence in Brussels

In its vision for the future, presented when the Swedish Presidency was elected in October 2001 in Naples, the Presidency stated that it was necessary for the UEMO to establish itself in Brussels. Also This goal remains a priority for the Presidency. That may, however, take years to realise and it is therefore important to find a solution for the immediate future. It should also be noted that the Associated Organisations jointly has expressed a wish for a *Domus Medica* and the importance for the profession to speak with one voice in Europe.

In order to take a first step towards a permanent base in Brussels, it is possible for the UEMO to rent space within the CPME offices. The price for the second floor office (166 m²) quoted by CPME (February 2002) is € 161,13 per square metre which means 26747,71 per year. This alternative is certainly too expensive for the UEMO at the moment. Another alternative is to share the office of the AEMH. This option is currently being explored. In the long run, the UEMO could have a part-time secretary permanently based in its office (AEMH-model).

Lobbying

UEMO – PRESIDENCY

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This year, the UEMO is using an external lobbyist in order to receive information on ongoing activities in Brussels. The cost is today € 2,500 per quarter, i.e. an annual cost of € 10.000 is required for this service. On top of that UEMO also pays for the accomodation and travel in connection with the General Assemblies and other meetings where the presence of the lobbyist is required. The work load related to the UEMO of the external lobbyist amounts to one day a month.

There are disadvantages using this system. The main reason is that an external lobbyist is not 100 % connected with the organisation and, of course, has other clients. (Currently there are, however, no conflicting other clients.) To avoid this situation, however, the Presidency wishes to put forward a new model that can be used in the interim, until UEMO has established itself permanently in Brussels.

It is of major importance that UEMO lobbying is performed by doctors supported by other experts within the UEMO organisation. All of us doctors are working full time clinically and we do not always have the expertise regarding the Brussels environment. We need some kind of back-up by those who know. The Presidency would therefore like to put forward a model by which an expert/lawyer group continuously supports the work that is to be performed by the doctors. The group, chaired by the Secretary General, should meet 3-4 times a year depending on what is actually going on in Brussels. The group itself should consist of lawyers and experts already working within the member organisations of the UEMO. Apart from that, a person from the Presidency will liase once or twice per month with representatives from CPME, in order to receive updates about what is going on in the Brussels environment.

In order for this group to function, it could also be useful to liase with CPME in order to get updates on what is happening in Brussels, important meetings to attend, new legislative proposals etc. That could be done through regular meetings with representatives from the CPME secretariat.

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