



International Federation of Associations
of Pharmaceutical Physicians
————— *founded 1975* —————

**THE COUNCIL FOR EDUCATION IN
PHARMACEUTICAL MEDICINE**

Progress Report

July 2008

1. **Objectives**

When the International Federation of Associations of Pharmaceutical Physicians (IFAPP) created the Council for Education in Pharmaceutical Medicine (CEPM) in 2001, the Council was given 5 major objectives:

1. to assist IFAPP's national member associations to establish appropriate educational and training programmes in pharmaceutical medicine;
2. to support the development of structured Continued Medical Education/Continued Professional Development (CME/CPD) programmes in pharmaceutical medicine;
3. to contribute to the harmonisation of the existing Postgraduate Courses in Pharmaceutical Medicine;
4. to promote the mutual recognition of equivalent educational qualifications and CME/CPD requirements between countries;
5. to stimulate the recognition of Pharmaceutical Medicine as a distinct medical specialty.

2. **Period 2001 – 2004**

How did the Council address those objectives?

On objective 1, the Council felt that national member associations who wanted to establish a training programme in their country would benefit from the existence of an elaborated version of the IFAPP Syllabus for Pharmaceutical Medicine. A small working group established for each of the 12 modules of the Syllabus a list of "desirable" lectures, as well as a list of "essential" lectures. By essential lectures one should understand those subjects which have necessarily to be covered in the educational programme to allow accreditation by IFAPP (Core Curriculum). The two lists were integrated in a document issued by the CEPM on 8 October 2003 entitled "Programme for Education in Pharmaceutical Medicine". This programme was updated regularly and is now available on the IFAPP website (www.ifapp.org) in the section entitled "Education" subsection "about CEPM" under the title "IFAPP Syllabus for Postgraduate Courses in Pharmaceutical Medicine". Hard copies can be obtained upon request.

As part of the objective of promoting Pharmaceutical Medicine education, four grants to attend a postgraduate course in this discipline were granted to candidates from both IFAPP member (Sweden and Pakistan) and non-IFAPP member (Czech Republic and Ukraine) countries were provided, allowing these individuals to get suitable education in order to promote our specialty in these countries.

On objective 2, the Council is stimulating the establishment of structured CME/CPD programmes in all countries where postgraduate courses in pharmaceutical medicine exist. So far, only the United Kingdom, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland and The Netherlands are running programmes where the participants have to keep a diary of the collected credits and where these diaries are reviewed at regular intervals by a central body. This system of structured CME/CPD programmes was set up by the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Medicine and adopted by the Belgian College of

Pharmaceutical Medicine, the German Society of Pharmaceutical Medicine, the Dutch Foundation for Pharmaceutical Medicine and the Swiss Association of Pharmaceutical Physicians. A Working Group of the CEPM has prepared Guidance Notes for the establishment of structured CME/CPD programmes in order to assist national member associations in setting up local CME/CPD programmes (see section 3Ba page 5).

On objective 3 (the harmonisation of the Postgraduate courses in Pharmaceutical Medicine), the Council has worked in several phases:

1. the first phase consisted in the identification, on a worldwide basis, of the existing postgraduate courses in pharmaceutical medicine;
2. in the second phase, a questionnaire was developed and sent to the organisers of the various courses in order to collect details on the organisation of the courses, their content, the conditions for admission, methods of examination of the candidates and degree obtained;
3. in the third phase, data were collected from 11 Universities in Europe and 3 in Central and South America and integrated in a Data Base which is now available on the IFAPP web site in the section “Education”, subsection “courses”;
4. Phase four consisted in the drafting of a “Plan of Action”.
5. in the final phase an evaluation “Template” was drafted.

As the existing postgraduate courses were created in isolation i.e. without the assistance of a central coordinating body, variations in the content of the course curricula had to be expected. The Council felt that in order to detect important omissions or major deviations from the IFAPP syllabus, voluntary assessment visits to the sites of the courses were indispensable. Consequently, the Council established a list of Evaluators and Facilitators (one of each for each course) who should examine the documentation on each postgraduate course, meet the Course Director and his staff and evaluate whether the content of the programme and the technique of examination of the students are of a standard allowing accreditation of the course by IFAPP and mutual recognition of the diplomas between Universities.

It was decided to initiate the process in Europe first. A letter was sent to the Presidents of the national Member Associations of the seven countries where such courses were taught at local Universities (Belgium, France, Germany, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom) in order to inform them about the project and to request their support and assistance. The “Plan of Action” states that the document mentioned under “Objective 1” i.e. the IFAPP Syllabus for Postgraduate Courses in Pharmaceutical Medicine and the “Template” (see below) should be used to evaluate the adequacy of the content of the courses. Insufficiencies should be identified and corrected before accreditation by IFAPP can be awarded.

Finally, during phase five, the Council drafted a “Template” for the evaluation of the existing postgraduate courses leading to a diploma in pharmaceutical medicine. This template is now available and being used by the evaluators to test the standards of the

courses and examinations. The visits to the sites also provide an opportunity for keeping up to date our Data Base on postgraduate courses in pharmaceutical medicine.

This programme progressed quite satisfactorily. All course Directors approached agreed to undertake their assessment for accreditation. By the end of 2004, six postgraduate courses in pharmaceutical medicine had completed their harmonisation programme and were accredited by IFAPP upon proposal of the CEPM i.e. those taught at the Universities of Barcelona, Basel, Brussels, Cardiff, Stockholm and Surrey (London).

3. Period 2005 - 2006

The activities of the CEPM over the years 2005 and 2006 have mainly focused on the harmonisation of existing and assistance in the founding of additional Postgraduate Courses in Pharmaceutical Medicine, as well as on the setting up of a series of Working Groups with well defined tasks.

A) Postgraduate courses in Pharmaceutical Medicine

- The Postgraduate course in Pharmaceutical Medicine at the University of Madrid was visited and evaluated. As with the other courses evaluated previously, some deficiencies versus the IFAPP syllabus were identified and were brought to the attention of the course Director. The programme was modified and completed to the satisfaction of the CEPM reviewers. Accordingly, the Director was formally advised that the postgraduate course at the “Universidad Complutense de Madrid” was accredited by the CEPM. This was the 7th postgraduate course which was visited, evaluated and accredited by the CEPM (after those at the Universities of Barcelona, Basel, Brussels, Cardiff, London {Surrey} and Stockholm).
- An evaluation visit took place at the University of Mexico and supportive visits were planned at the Universities of Buenos Aires and Sao Paolo.
- Supportive/counselling visits by CEPM members took place at the Universities of Dublin and Belgrade. Both Universities initiated a postgraduate course in pharmaceutical medicine in 2005 using the IFAPP syllabus and approached the CEPM to organise evaluation visits in 2006 in order to obtain IFAPP’s accreditation.
- A course started at the University of Duisburg-Essen (Germany) in 2005 and a Master in Clinical Research and Pharmaceutical Medicine was launched at the University of Pisa (Italy) in January 2006.
- Contacts and exchange of information took place between the University of Teijin (China) and the CEPM. Some of the modules being taught at this University relate to pharmaceutical medicine.
- Projects for the establishment of further postgraduate courses in pharmaceutical medicine are in development at the Universities of Djakarta (Indonesia), Karachi

(Pakistan), Leiden (The Netherlands), Rome (Italy), Sao Paulo (Brazil), Seoul (South Korea), Singapore and Sydney (Australia). The CEPM is providing assistance and is closely watching the progress being made.

- The CEPM was approached for the evaluation and possibly the accreditation of a computerized interactive course in pharmaceutical medicine developed by Hibernia College in cooperation with Pfizer.

B) Working Groups

The Council has established several Working Groups and has allocated to them the following tasks:

a) Working Group on Guidelines for CME/CPD in Pharmaceutical Medicine

This working group was given the task to prepare a document which could be useful for those national Member Associations intending to set up in their country a Continued Medical Education/Continued Professional Development programme for their members. The Working Group produced in 2006 the “CEPM Guidance Notes for the establishment of structured National CME/CPD programmes for pharmaceutical physicians”. This document was approved by the CEPM and the IFAPP Board.. The approved version was circulated to all national Member Associations and is available on the IFAPP web site in the section “Education” subsection “about CEPM”. The Working Group completed its mission by the end of 2006.

b) Working Group on the IFAPP syllabus

The task of the working group is to keep the IFAPP syllabus updated according to the progress of science and knowledge in pharmaceutical medicine. An updated version was developed and approved by the CEPM Board.. The revised document was circulated to all national member associations. It is now available on the IFAPP web site in the section “Education” and should be used by the Universities intending to set up a course in Pharmaceutical Medicine. The Working Group has completed its mission. However, it will resume its activity at regular intervals in order to keep the Syllabus up to date.

c) Working Group on training of investigators

The objective of this working group was to screen the existing training courses for investigators and to select one of them to be used as a basis for the production of a computerized interactive training course for investigators that could be recommended by IFAPP for use worldwide. Most of the courses investigated appeared to be either incomplete or not yet fully operational. The best choice proved to be the training course developed by the faculty of the Postgraduate course in Pharmaceutical Medicine at the University of Brussels. This course was constructed on the basis of the syllabus developed under the sponsorship and leadership of the European Science Foundation and is now recommended by the Foundation for the production of training courses for investigators. It was therefore selected by the Working Group and was adapted to the international scene. This work was completed by the end of 2006.

d) Working Group on a Multilingual Glossary

This working group is attempting to produce a multilingual glossary of terms relating to clinical research and pharmaceutical medicine.

e) Communication

The CEPM has contributed to several IFAPP documents and maintains a section on the IFAPP website (see section “Education”). A number of communications on its activities were presented at ICPM meetings in Cancun, Basel and Seoul.

4. Period 2007 - 2008

During this period the CEPM has pursued its activity in the harmonisation and accreditation of Postgraduate courses in Pharmaceutical Medicine and has developed major efforts in the participation in the Innovative Medicines Initiative launched jointly by the European Commission and the European Federation of the Pharmaceutical Industry Associations (EFPIA). In view of the importance of this project and the financial resources it could possibly provide it was decided to create a “European chapter” of the CEPM which would include all CEPM members located in the European Community.

A) Harmonisation and accreditation of courses

- Evaluation visits took place at the Universities of Duisburg-Essen (Germany), Mexico and Sao Paulo (Brazil) to review the quality and content of the local postgraduate courses in pharmaceutical medicine and the technique of the assessments and examinations. The courses at the Universities of Duisburg-Essen, Mexico and Sao Paulo are now accredited by the CEPM.
- The evaluation of the interactive computerized course in pharmaceutical medicine developed by Hibernia College (Dublin) in collaboration with Pfizer was completed and the course is now accredited by the CEPM.
- New postgraduate courses in pharmaceutical medicine started at the Universities of Buenos Aires, Milan, Rome and Sydney. These courses comply with the IFAPP syllabus and will hopefully enter the accreditation process in the next period (2009-2010).
- The CEPM is assisting in a project of creating a Central East European course in pharmaceutical medicine in Budapest in collaboration with the Universities of Budapest, Belgrade, Prague and Vienna.

B) The European Chapter

After its creation in early 2008, the European chapter of the CEPM has focused its efforts on the foundation of a European Federation of Courses in Pharmaceutical Medicine (EFCPM) in collaboration with the Directors of the European accredited courses. This was considered as an indispensable step for the participation in the “Education and Training” project of the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI). The EFCPM was founded in June 2007 at a meeting organised in Brussels by the European Chapter of the CEPM. Further, the CEPM has prepared in collaboration with the Steering Committee of the EFCPM and the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Medicine

(FPM) a standard call which was submitted to the EFPIA for publication. The CEPM and EFCPM constitute the Public Consortium which has responded to the IMI Call no. 16 ‘Training in Pharmaceutical Medicine’ in July 2008.

5. Conclusion

All the activities described above are expected to contribute to reaching objectives 4 and 5 mentioned at the beginning of this progress report. There is no doubt that the existence of IFAPP accreditation and of mutual recognition, between Universities and IFAPP, of diplomas in pharmaceutical medicine, as well as that of structured CME/CPD programmes, will promote the recognition of pharmaceutical medicine as a distinct medical specialty in the countries concerned.

To achieve all this, the Council will need the full support of the whole IFAPP organisation i.e. its Executive Committee and its national Member Associations, but also the continued enthusiasm and dedication of the members of the Council, now representing all IFAPP member associations.

6. Information

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