New ‘European Association of Psychosomatic Medicine’ founded

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A R T I C L E   I N F O

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Two scientific European organizations in the field of consultation-liaison (C-L) psychiatry and psychosomatic medicine (PM), the European Association of Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry and Psychosomatics (EACLPP) and the European Network of Psychosomatic Medicine (ENPM) decided to merge and together create a new society, the European Association of Psychosomatic Medicine (EAPM).

The EACLPP was founded in 2000 as an organization for C-L psychiatrists and psychosomaticists following the collaboration of colleagues from different European countries in a series of European research projects funded by the European Community [1]. The ‘ECLW collaborative study’ was a large epidemiological study into C-L psychiatry including 56 hospitals in 13 European countries and over 15,000 patients [2]. In the framework of the ‘European Risk-factor Study’ instruments like the COMPRI and the INTERMED were developed to detect patients with complex care needs [3–6]. The EACLPP organized workshops on different topics concerning C-L psychiatry and Psychosomatic Medicine like workshops on C-L in primary care, on somatoform disorders and on cultural aspects in C-L. The EACLPP workshop on training published European Guidelines on training in C-L psychiatry and psychosomatics [7] and—together with the American Academy of Psychosomatic Medicine—a consensus statement for service delivery in the field of C-L psychiatry and psychosomatics [8].

The ENPM was a loose network of colleagues performing research in various fields of psychosomatic medicine. Members of the ENPM participated in the development of European guidelines on diagnosis and treatment of gastroenterological and cardiological diseases like the European Practice Guidelines on Prevention of Cardiovascular Diseases [9].

The two organizations have a long history of collaborations and have been organizing the European Conference on Psychosomatic Research every second year. Since 1998, this conference alternated with a standalone conference of the EACLPP [1]. Due to this collaboration it became obvious that the two organizations share very similar research interests, clinical tasks and ethical values. After a thorough discussion the two groups decided to unify their organizations and to name the new association European Association of Psychosomatic Medicine. During the joint EACLPP/ECPR Conference in Aarhus, Denmark, at the end of June this year, the first EAPM General Assembly took place. An executive council consisting of 10 members and an auditing committee (2 members) were elected. The European editor of the Journal of Psychosomatic Research is co-opted as an associate member to the EAPM executive council.

The new association ‘EAPM’ will be a multiprofessional scientific organization including researchers and clinicians with different professional backgrounds working in the field of C-L and PM (psychiatrists, psychosomaticists, internists, psychologists, social workers, nurses etc.). Membership is open to non-European colleagues as well (Fig. 1).

The aims of EAPM are

- to promote the collaborative treatment and integrated care of patients with concurrent medical and psychiatric disorders in general hospitals, medical clinics and primary care,
- to advance the scientific knowledge and clinical practice in the field of C-L psychiatry and psychosomatic medicine and to enhance research in the field of C-L and PM—with special emphasis on European multicentre studies;
- to develop European guidelines on important educational and clinical topics;
- to stimulate and support professional education and teaching in the areas of consultation-liaison psychiatry and psychosomatic medicine;
- to publish clinical monographs on important topics in the field in cooperation with the American Academy of Psychosomatic Medicine,
- to develop and promote standards for the training and practice of consultation-liaison psychiatry and psychosomatic medicine and for professional conduct within the field;
- to identify and reward outstanding achievement and/or service in C-L and PM and to provide a forum for the presentation, dissemination and discussion of scientific problems in C-L and PM through the organization of meetings, conferences, workshops and publications;
- to encourage and stimulate the formation of local, regional and national organizations which further the goals of the association.

The EAPM will organize an annual scientific meeting. The next conference will be in Cambridge, U.K. on July 4–7 2013. In June 2014, the conference will be held in Sibiu, Romania.

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Working groups (WG) and special interest groups (SIG) will be established to enhance the scientific discussion, to prepare multicentric research projects, and to develop guidelines and clinical monographs.

So far, working groups and special interest groups have been established (E) or are planned (P) in the following areas:

Working groups:

• Primary Care (E)
• Improving Services for Medically Unexplained Symptoms and Bodily Distress (E)
• The Child and Adolescent Working Party (E)
• Training in C-L and PM (E)
• Guidelines for cardiovascular disease prevention (E)

Special interest groups:

• Cultural aspects in C-L Psychiatry and Psychosomatics (E)
• Psychodynamic aspects in C-L (E)
• Transplantation medicine (E)
• Psychosocial aspects in irritable bowel syndrome and inflammatory bowel disease (E)
• Specific topics in research, patient care and training for C-L psychiatrists (P)
• Psychopharmaceutical applications in C-L Psychiatry and Psychosomatics (P)
• Emotional regulation and attachment (P)
• Psychodiagnostic methods (P)
• Methods of integrated care (P)

The Journal of Psychosomatic Research will be the official organ of the new association. The Journal will publish articles on actual scientific, educational and clinical topics as well as the abstracts of the annual scientific meeting in the ‘Pages of the EAPM’ on a regular basis.

We would like to encourage you to become a member of the EAPM and to take part in the activities of the association actively, especially in the WGs and SIGs. Please see the EAPM homepage (www.eapm.eu.com) or contact our administrator Lisa Albrecht (E-mail: contact@eapm.eu.com) for further information.

References