



Council of Members Meeting
21 September, 2014

AGENDA ITEM 2.1c: Regional reports (for information only)

IAPB EUROPE REGIONAL REPORT

Reporting regional progress in Europe against the three objectives of 'Universal Eye Health: A Global Action Plan 2014-2019'

Objective 1 - Evidence generated and used to advocate increased political and financial commitment of Member States for eye health

IAPB Europe focuses on two main eye diseases: retinopathy of prematurity and diabetic retinopathy; most of our activities were planned around these diseases in the target countries: Eastern European and some of the former Soviet Union countries.

The Black Sea Regional ROP Workshop was held on 13th – 14th June 2014 in Budapest, Hungary as a follow-up of the courses at the BSOS meeting last year in Tbilisi, Georgia, also supported by the Shreveport Sees Russia (SSR) funding.

The purpose of this workshop was to bring together ophthalmologists, neonatologists and nurses, the professionals who are involved in ROP management, to explore how to strengthen national ROP programmes and to draft national guidelines for ROP prevention, screening and treatment. A group of 23 ophthalmologists, 20 neonatologists, and 10 nurses from 6 countries gathered in the Department of Ophthalmology, Semmelweis University, Budapest, Hungary. Participants in teams of 3 from each NICU represented the following countries: Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Turkey, and Ukraine. Parent Information Leaflets from UK ROP guidelines were translated into different languages, were sent out to representatives from each country for review and correction, and their editing is now in progress.

We also plan to organize a Romanian national and an international workshop on ROP for the 18 SEEOS countries this year, at the annual congress of SEEOS in October 2014 in Bucharest, Romania in order to identify training needs and opportunities in this region.

Besides the ROP Session, the VISION2020 Symposium and the Diabetic Retinopathy Session will be held on 1st of October, organized with the help of IAPB Europe. A Hungarian ROP case study will be published in the World Sight Day Brochure and will be also uploaded to IAPB website.

We are planning to conduct RAAB surveys in the region in order to gain epidemiological data that will allow us to plan eye care services appropriately and help our efforts in advocacy for long-term funding and political support.

Concerning diabetic retinopathy, a proposal for the LCIF SightFirst Research Grant was submitted in order to get financial support to undertake a RAAB+DR study in Hungary.

Objective 2 - National eye health policies, plans and programmes for enhancing universal eye health developed and/or strengthened and implemented in line with WHO's framework for action for strengthening health systems in order to improve health outcomes

In an article, which was recently published in Ocular Surgery News, we presented the Hungarian actions and results of the Vision 2020 global initiative, and asked the Member States for support and active participation in the new WHO GAP.

The UK Vision Strategy continues the transformation of UK's eye health, eye care and sight loss services. As a part of the Strategy, The sixth annual Vision UK Conference took place on Thursday 12th of June 2014 at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London, which turned out to be a huge success with more than 500 delegates.

Objective 3 - Multisectoral engagement and effective partnerships for improved eye health strengthened

The European Coalition for Vision (ECV) held its launch event in the European Parliament in February 2014. At the same event, the publication of the vision and eye-health Manifesto was also announced.

ECV is an alliance made up of eye health and vision, ageing, and diabetes focused NGOs, disabled people's organisations, associations of health technology providers, and research bodies. The coalition was established to raise the profile of vision and eye health, to help prevent avoidable visual impairment and to support those with irreversible blindness or low vision in Europe.

On the 9th of July 2014, the 5th European Coalition for Vision meeting was held at the EPHA Offices, Brussels. The next meeting is planned in connection to the upcoming World Sight Day.

Budapest, 31 August 2014

Janos Nemeth MD, PhD, DSc - Chair of IAPB Europe