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doc. MUDr.Leoš Heger, CSc.
Minister of Health of the Czech Republic
Palackého nám. 4
128 01 Praha 2
Czech Republic

18 April 2012

Dear Dr Heger,

The European Society for Emergency Medicine strongly supports the Czech Society for Emergency and Disaster Medicine in its objective of establishing Emergency Medicine as a primary specialty with a five-year training programme.

Emergency Medicine is a medical specialty based on the knowledge and skills required for the prevention, diagnosis and management of the acute and urgent aspects of illness and injury affecting patients of all age groups with a full spectrum of undifferentiated physical and behavioural disorders. It is a specialty in which time is critical. The practice of Emergency Medicine encompasses the pre-hospital and in-hospital reception, resuscitation and management of undifferentiated urgent and emergency cases until discharge or transfer to the care of another physician. It also includes involvement in the development of pre-hospital and in-hospital emergency medical systems but it is a specialty which is hospital-based. To ensure these important goals the European Society for Emergency Medicine was created in 1994 as a forum of physicians delivering emergency care in Emergency Departments and/or in the pre-hospital setting. The European Society for Emergency Medicine incorporates a Federation of 28 national societies of Emergency Medicine and promotes and supports the creation of a 5-year primary specialty of Emergency Medicine. The Policy of the European Society for Emergency Medicine follows the principles detailed below:

The European Society for Emergency Medicine seeks to ensure:

- The highest quality of emergency care for all patients in need
- The delivery of such care in Emergency Departments by specialists trained in Emergency Medicine
- A comparable standard of clinical care in Emergency Departments across Europe

In order to achieve these objectives the European Society for Emergency Medicine has the following aims:

- European competency-based core curriculum to include: Patient Care; Medical Knowledge; Communication skills; Professionalism, ethical and legal issues; Organisational planning and service management skills; Academic activities – education and research; Education and training programmes to deliver this core curriculum
- Assessment and examination structure to confirm that the necessary training has been acquired
- Clinical standards and a robust audit programme to ensure that these standards are being achieved
- Research projects to contribute to the development of an international evidence base for the specialty
- Inclusion of Emergency Medicine as a core part of the medical undergraduate curriculum

The EU Doctors' Directive requires that training in Emergency Medicine should be for a minimum of five years. The European Society for Emergency Medicine has already published a European core curriculum for the specialty which was endorsed by the Union Européenne des Médecins Spécialistes (UEMS) in 2008. Within the UEMS, a Multidisciplinary Joint Committee (MJC) was created five years ago to seek to develop the establishment of the specialty of Emergency Medicine in Europe and the European Society for Emergency Medicine is actively involved in this committee. Last November the full Council of UEMS approved in plenary session the establishment of a Section of Emergency Medicine with representation from all EU countries. The first meeting of this new Section will be held in Brussels on 25 May 2012. The European Society for Emergency Medicine is currently involved with a Task Force on the creation of a European Diploma of Emergency Medicine with the aim to harmonise Emergency Medicine training through Europe and to enable emergency physicians to move from country to country.

The EU Doctors' Directive includes Emergency Medicine as a specialty which requires at least five years of training and which is recognised in nine member states of the European Union. In addition, four more European Union countries have created the 5-years primary specialty of Emergency Medicine since 2007 (Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg and Slovenia). France is in the process for the creation of the specialty in 2012. The Netherlands created a 3-year programme and have an objective to increase the duration to 5 years. The European Society for Emergency Medicine considers that the provision of high quality emergency care requires physicians with specialised training in Emergency Medicine because this is the most effective way (in both clinical and financial terms) to provide high quality care during the critical initial stages of emergency treatment. EuSEM believes that all EU countries should work towards the establishment of Emergency Medicine as a medical specialty.

I am aware that the Czech Republic has a high quality health care system and I very much hope that you will give further thought to the early implementation of EM as a primary specialty in your country.

Yours sincerely,

Abdelouahab Bellou
President, EuSEM

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