

Minutes OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE
ON THE EXCHANGE OF RESIDENTS

Royal College of Physicians, LONDON November 15, 2002.

Present : Andrew FRANKEL, Michael GLYNN, Alison JONES, Philippe LESAVRE, Jürg SCHIFFERLI, Alexander SO, Simone SCHIFFERLI (Secretary Steering Committee)

Excused, M. BUYSSCHAERT, Kevin DAVIES, Georg EISENBACH, Loic GUILLEVIN , Terence GIBSON, David HILLEN, Alain JUNOD, Claire NICHOLL, D. RODENSTEIN, Tariq SETHI.

Absent Johan FEVERY

1. Presentation by centres and countries

France: Loic Guillevin from Paris has accepted to join the Steering Committee. He is in charge with Philippe Lesavre of the programme "Internes des Hôpitaux de Paris". He couldn't come to our meeting. Philippe Lesavre will discuss the possibilities of improving the exchanges with Paris.

England: Kevin Davies - Hammersmith Hospital - has been appointed during this summer Professor of Medicine in Brighton. He is very busy for the time being setting up a new medical school. He expressed his interest to establish one exchange outside London in the future. We keep this possibility open.

Andrew Frankel - Charing Cross - is now in charge of both Hammersmith Hospital and Charing Cross for the exchange of residents.

Micheal Glynn - St-Bartholomew's - is active and will organise an exchange with Geneva.

Alison Jones (+ Terence Gibson) - Guy's and St Thomas – organise together very successful exchanges with many centres.

Claire Nicholl – Addenbroke's Cambridge – indicated by e.mail that the programme for SHO is improving at Addenbroke's and that it will be possible for her to rejoin the exchange in 2003.

Scotland : Tariq Sethi - Edinburgh - could'nt come because of local commitments . *Alison Jones knows the Edinburgh team very well ; she will contact Tariq Sethi during the next months with the aim to help Edinburgh to participate actively in the scheme.*

Germany : Georg Eisenbach – Hannover – certified by e-mail that Hannover will continue to participate in the exchange as in the past. The head of the Department of Medicine supports this exchange.

Belgium : Johan Fevery – Leuven - has not answered our e-mails and has not participated in the scheme recently. *Whether Leuven wants still to participate in the scheme will be clarified by Jurg Schifferli.*

Since the retirement of Charles van Ypersele there were no more exchanges with St Luc. First Jacques Melin, and now M Buyschaert and D Rodenstein have not been active. The two latter indicated by e-mail that they could not come to London. Jürg Schifferli has suggested to them that Dr. Lambert who might still be in St Luc and is himself a past-exchangee could take over the task of representing St Luc. There has been no answer to date. We decide as an alternative to contact Yves Pierson, head of Nephrology at St Luc to see whether exchanges are still possible. Indeed St Luc has always been a very attractive centre, and Philippe Lesavre is organising direct exchanges of junior doctors with Yves Pierson for years. *Philippe Lesavre indicated that he will contact Yves Pierson during the next 6 months directly to convince St Luc to participate actively in the exchange again.*

Holland : David Hillen – Maastricht -has been appointed Dean of his Faculty and will be replaced for our exchange by KML Leunissen. Maastricht has joined the exchange only one year ago and has already organised one exchange with Guy's KML Leunissen sent an e-mail indicating a strong willing of Maastricht to remain in the exchange but to have a better organised scheme so that the planning can be done two or three years in advance. *Jurg Schifferli will contact him directly to discuss how this could be implemented.*

Switzerland : Jurg Schifferli – Basel – confirms the activity of Basel. Alex So – Lausanne – has already organised two exchanges although Lausanne has joined the

scheme only recently. He had many difficulties, which are described below. Alain Junod – Geneva - is recovering from an operation and expressed by e-mail the renewed interest of many juniors to participate in the exchange.

2. Approval of the minutes of the meeting 2001

The minutes are approved

3. New regulations for Swiss Exchangees

Swiss citizen and individuals trained in Switzerland (with the swiss Diploma) are considered as EU Nationals starting July 02. All past restrictions have been dropped. This means no more PLAB test and no language test have to be taken. Alison Jones assures that with an approved medical degree the registration is made automatically (the swiss Diploma is now approved). This should facilitate the exchanges not only with the UK, but also with other countries, since the last swiss-belgian exchange was unsatisfactory for the same (now dropped) limitations.

4. New Centres through EFIM

Some centres didn't develop in the past 2-3 years (e.g. Vienna, Prague). Prof J Merino, president of EFIM, director of the european school of internal medicine (ESIM), and head of Internal Medicine has clearly expressed the interest of junior doctors in Spain to participate in the exchange scheme. Laura de Matias, a junior doctor of Spain is looking for a short time training job in the UK (in discussions with A Frankel, Charing Cross), and is coming with her own money for 3-6 months. Such one way exchanges are made possible thanks training grants provided by Spain to gifted junior doctors. We could help such « excellent » juniors to exchange to other european centres, and from a rapid discussion it may well be that today many juniors in our hospitals may be interested to work 6-12 months in Spain. *Jurg Schifferli will discuss these matters again with J Merino and D Reverte-Cejudo (Segovia) in order to include one or more spanish centres.*

5. Problems with exchangees

Hannover/Guy's:

Dr Weinkove from Guy's went to Hannover from April 2001 to March 2002. He enjoyed his time, has however some problems with finances : drop in salary, a loss of his pension scheme etc. He wrote an impressive report on his exchange,

which is added to these minutes as an attachment. *Jurg Schifferli will see whether it would be possible to publish it (at least in part) in an appropriate journal, e.g. the european journal of internal medicine (editor in Chief D Hillen).*

Alex So of Lausanne had many problems with the exchanges he has organised:

First, the exchange Hammersmith/Lausanne: in the last minutes before leaving the swiss exchangee cancelled her job in London : she found the working hours and the weekends « barbaric » and unacceptable. The consequence of this was that Lausanne had to pay the equivalent of 6 months salary to the Hammersmith Hospital (note from Jurg Schifferli : contrary to our usual way of organising the exchanges, the CHUV in Lausanne and the Hammersmith Hospital had decided to send the exchangees with the salary and employment from the starting hospital). Indeed the Hammersmith Hospital was paying the salary of the UK exchangee in Lausanne.

Second,, the UK SHO who went to Lausanne worked in a general internal medical clinic – the « Service de Médecine Interne A », where she was not welcomed, because of language problems and initial difficulties with the administrative work. The second period in Lausanne was easier when she was working in the clinic of Alex So. This point underlines one of the difficulties which are sometimes encountered with UK exchangees: they underestimate the language problem.

The next exchangee going to Lausanne is Dr Sarah White from Guy's. She is interviewed during our meeting. Alex So is convinced that there will be no problems with her if she takes seriously french courses to improve her basic knowledge of French. In general, exchangees would benefit from an initial visit to the place of exchange 3 to 6 months before the exchange. This would allow personal contacts, and settle many administrative problems.

Andrew Frankel explains that the « barbaric » working conditions have changed in the UK, and Hammersmith Hospital or Charing Cross have very acceptable working conditions now. He confirms that many SHO are interested in doing exchanges with french speaking centres.

6. Paris has a new model for exchanges

Philippe Lesavre explains that the « Internes » de Paris are limited in numbers and that any exchange has to take place with junior doctors almost fluent in French (so much has to be done on the phone). Because the Internes can choose themselves the centres in which they will work, the organisation has to be different from other european centres. In addition the Interne undergo very early a specialised training

after the initial 1-2 years of general internal medicine. Thus exchangees are mostly interested in specialised units, with jobs corresponding to « registrars » in specialised units in the UK. An exchange is thus more interesting at this level (nephrologists, cardiologists or internal medicine which is Paris may mean autoimmune diseases (e.g. Loic Guillevin) etc). Doing exchanges at the initial level of training would not be impossible but would require direct contact with Philippe, and is unlikely to be attractive for french juniors.

Because of the centralised system in Paris, one way exchanges are more likely to be successful and should be favoured. Thus it is possibly unwise to declare Paris as a partner in a fixed exchange but rather to have Paris as an open centre : The french partner (Loic and Philippe) should get candidates from Paris and propose them to given centres in Europe, and similarly candidates who would like to go to Paris (in a given centre or just in general) should be presented to the french partners by the european centres

An application for doctors who want to go to Paris should be given before end of November for May (6 month in advance), and April for November. They should be first class candidates (with good CVs – corresponding to their level of training) since the positions in Paris are somehow in competition with the Internes who rotate through the hospitals. They should have already two years of specialised training (or equivalent, - or 18 months).

Salaries in France are very low (Euros 1'500.- per months)

7. Finances

The scheme has still no finances. Any suggestion is welcome. The new foundation of EFIM could help to establish a basis for a financial support by third parties.

8. Exchange rounds (see tables)

Exchanges Rounds 23 (2001-2002)

The exchange from Charing Cross to Geneva with Dr Orr didn't take place.

Exchanges Round 24 (2002-2003)

The exchange between Charing Cross and Lausanne for Dr Comins didn't take place.

Exchanges Round 25 (2003-2004)

New plan :

UK-HH with Maastricht

UK-CX with Basel

UK-Guy's with Lausanne (triangulation with Basel) (White Sara / Kreienbuhl L)

UK-Bart's with Geneva

UK-Edinburg with Geneva (postponed to round 26)

Necker – Hannover (if possible)

Leuven...

(UK-Addenbrook's – St Luc)

Exchange Round 26 (2004-2005)

UK-HH with St Luc

UK-CX with Lausanne

UK-Guy's with Basel

and free one way exchange with Necker

UK-Bart's with Maastricht

UK-Edinburg with Geneva

UK-Addenbrooks with Hannover

And to and from France (Necker) : open one way exchanges...

Leuven...

All members are kindly asked to take directly contact with the corresponding centre to organise the exchanges. Exchanges outside the organised round are possible, particularly one way exchanges, and « emerging » exchanges.

Notes :

In addition, Andrew Frankel said that he has now one candidate interested for Spain or France : his CV is communicated directly to P Lesavre and J Schifferli (R Gupta August 2003), and a second candidate for Lausanne (or other french speaking centre : St Luc ? according to round 26 : 04-05, K Satkunam)

Professor Leunissen of Maastricht expressed his support for this exchange. He proposes a more formal exchange regimen over 3-4 years between the different partners to deal easier with logistic, financial and personal educational aspects. He suggests to have a new exchange (candidate Dr Wierema) with Guy's in 2003 (this has to be discussed directly with Leunissen since the exchange was planned to be with the Hammersmith Hospital – *Jurg Schifferl has to contact him directly*)

Varia

Mr. Barnwell will be replaced by Mr Paul Belcher in January 2003. Mr Belcher will be International Manager at the Royal College of Physicians of London (e-mail: paul.belcher@rcplondon.ac.uk)

NEXT MEETING

EUROPEAN EXCHANGE MEETING will take place on Friday November 21, 2003 (21.11.2003) From 12.00 to 17.00 At the Royal College of Physicians, 11 St Andrews Place Regent's Park, LONDON NW1 4LE