



FEDERATION OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSES WITHIN THE EUROPEAN UNION

PRESS RELEASE PARIS, FRANCE 2012

The 35th Board Meeting of The Federation of Occupational Health Nurses within the European Union (FOHNEU), was held in the France 3rd – 5th May 2012. The meeting was hosted by the French Occupational Health Nurses Association, the GIT, and held in the Défence area of Paris.

The meeting was again very well attended with 19 participants around the table.

In her opening address Julie Staun, President of FOHNEU thanked the GIT for organising the meeting and welcomed new member, Varérie Van Gluck from Belgium and observer, Margaret Morrissey from Ireland.

The President continued:

The 5th FOHNEU Congress, Tarragona 2012 is only 4 months away.

There are 4 main areas of focus.

- The number of delegates from Spain
- The number of International delegates i.e. from outside Spain
- Sponsors
- Exhibitors

Thanks were extended to Greece and Sweden who have already registered delegates in excess of the anticipated number.

Main points of activity since the Netherlands meeting:

- Revision of FOHNEU standard documents including the **Constitution** and the **Internal Procedures**
- Revision of the entire contents of the FOHNEU Website
- Creation of the new position of Independent Webmaster
- Application for official Partnership of the new EU-OSHA Campaign on Prevention

Elections

During this meeting the Executive position of Secretary was renewed by election. Pilvi Österman (Finland) starts a 3 year term, taking over from Susan Pierrot (France).

Highlights from the National Update reports

Denmark

The National Work Environment Inspection is practising a new method when they inspect workplaces. The Inspection is based on the specific risks and the efforts made to prevent the risks.

The National Research Center on Cancer has issued guidelines for night work

The recommendation is for 2 nights per week.

The international researcher who has been leading this project will be a keynote speaker on Shift work at the Tarragona Congress

Finland

The minister Risikko has pointed out that the harassment at workplaces shouldn't be tolerated at all. It's major riskfactor for workrelated depression and reteriorates the experiences of wellness at work. Finland also officially launches the European Year for active Aging and Solidarity.

The employer and employee unions made in March 2012 an agreement of lengthening working careers in Finland.

France

Two decrees of the Law of 20 July 2011 on the reform of occupational medicine will come into force on 1 July 2012. These laws set forth the guidelines of the law, notably by reinforcing the multidisciplinary services in health at work and by establishing a new mode of governance.

Greece

Unemployment rates are rising especially for women and young workers. The new list for occupations that encounter in everyday practice special health and safety hazards has been published. Some occupations were excluded a few more were added. Nurses and lab personnel working in the National Health Service are among those who were included; this means that they may have the opportunity to retire earlier than 65 and they will also gain a small increase in their diminished salaries.

Hungary

In Hungary there is a crisis in human resources for healthcare, so in response, the Council of the Hungarian Health Care Professionals fights for higher salaries and improvement of the working conditions. The result is that the Secretariat of State for Health at the Ministry of National Resources promised that in 2012 the money from the "chips tax" will be used for the health workers' wages.

Ireland

Ireland continues to be in recession. Throughout the recession Occupational Health Nurses are reporting an increasing in the numbers of employees suffering stress related illness. The New Nurse and Midwifery Act was passed into law in December 2011 this replaced the previous Nurses Act 1985. This aims to ensure greater safety for patients. It will require the Nursing Board to establish and operate a scheme to monitor professional competence of Nurses. The Board has been allocated one year to come up with proposals for this scheme.

The Netherlands

At the moment there is one important political issue: How can we survive the crisis and what is the best way to economize and stimulate the economy of the Netherlands. Last week our minister of Social Affairs introduced the Project 'sustainable employability'. This project motivates workers to invest in their health and lifestyle. The government made 4 million Euro for this project available.

Slovenia

In 2011, a new Health and Safety at Work Act was introduced. This act defines the rights and obligations of employers and employees with regard to health and safety at work and measures for providing it.

Sweden

The Swedish Work Environment Authority will do an evaluation of the 7 years old law "Medical Surveillance in working life" which is the basis for a big part of our OH-services. The National OH association is asked to give their opinion.

Spain

FEDEET¹ together with FOHNEU are organising the 5th FOHNEU Congress in Tarragona. September 2012

**The next FOHNEU Board Meeting will take place in
Tarragona, Spain, following the Congress
22nd September 2012.
0930-1300**

¹ Federación Española De Enfermería del Trabajo-Spanish Federation of OH Nurses