



FEDERATION OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSES WITHIN THE EUROPEAN UNION

PRESS RELEASE BOARD MEETING ATHENS, GREECE 2019

The 50th Board Meeting of The Federation of Occupational Health Nurses within the European Union (FOHNEU) was held at the Congo Palace Hotel in Athens on 12th-14th September 2019.

The biannual meeting was attended by representatives from 8 EU Member States.

Representing Italy, Dr. Walter de Caro and Dr. Lucia Mitello attended the meeting as Observers with the objective of obtaining FOHNEU membership.

In her opening address the President of FOHNEU, Dr. Henriett Hirdi, thanked Dr. Stiliany Tziafiri, for organising the FOHNEU meeting, which is the 4th to be held in the beautiful city of Athens. Dr. Hirdi also expressed appreciation to the Hellenic National Nurses' Association (NNA) who were unfortunately unable to attend the event.

A warm welcome was extended to all three new National Representatives who were introduced: Ms. Corry Jungbauer-Huistra from the Netherlands, Ms. Charlotte Bisgaard from Denmark, and Ms. Lorraine Begley, representing the Occupational Health Nurses of Ireland (OHNAI).

In memoriam: Dirk Vermeulen

It was with great sadness the FOHNEU Organisation received news of the death of our colleague Dirk Vermeulen on 15 July 2019, in Malle, Belgium.

Dirk was the long-serving President of the Flemish Association of Occupational Health Nurses (Vlaamse Vereniging Van én Voor Bedrijfsverpleegkundigen-VVVB).

Dirk Vermeulen was a Founding Member of FOHNEU and served as Executive Officer in the position of Treasurer.

Thoughts and condolences were extended to Dirk's family.

All present at the meeting observed a *moment of silence in his memory*.

Highlights of the meeting

During the meeting, initiatives to promote the role of Occupational Health Nurses and the health of the EU workforce, as stated in the FOHNEU Mission Statement.

Dr. Henriett Hirdi, emphasised the importance of an effective and continuous management of the Federation. The FOHNEU archives are essential documentation of 25 years of history and development. The archives are currently undergoing a restructuring process.

A proposal was tabled by the Spanish Association of Occupational Health Nurses (AET) for FOHNEU to support and lead a Journal specifically focused on Occupational Health Nursing. The journal was created by AET in 2011 as the *International Journal on Occupational Health Nursing (IJOHN)*.

The objective of the proposal corresponds to FOHNEU Constitution Article 3 point 4 :

To encourage research into areas of occupational health practice, education, management and service provision with appropriate dissemination and publication of results

The FOHNEU Board agreed by majority vote to accept the Spanish proposal to support and lead the Journal.

The President emphasised the importance of FOHNEU board members to continue involvement in the current and future EU OSHA campaigns as can be seen on [www.fohneu.org/about us/partnership with EU-OSHA](http://www.fohneu.org/about-us/partnership-with-EU-OSHA)

The President informed the Board that Dr Alfonso Meneses, represented FOHNEU, at the recent EU-OSHA event in Bilbao, Spain, and highlighted the upcoming EU-OSHA event which will take place in Bilbao on 12th-13rd of November.

Dr Henriett Hirdi, reiterated the necessity of maintaining information about the actions of 20 specialised standing committees of the European Union Parliament. An overview of newly elected National Members relevant for FOHNEU was presented.

A decision by the Finnish OHN Association to withdraw membership of FOHNEU ultimo 2019, impacts on the position of Vice President currently held by the representative of Finland, Mai Antilla. An election for Vice President for the remaining term of office 2020-2021 will be held at the Spring meeting. Call for candidates will be announced.

On behalf of the Board the FOHNEU President extended thanks to Ms. Antilla, for her positive contribution and support for the Federation.

Sincere thanks were also extended to the national representative from Denmark Ms. Lotte Falck, for her active support and collaboration since 2013. Charlotte Bisgaard current President of the Danish Society of Occupational and Environmental Nurses (FaSAM) will take her place.

New membership approval.

The formal application for FOHNEU membership presented by Italy was unanimously approved by the FOHNEU Board. The President of FOHNEU congratulated and welcomed Dr. Walter de Caro as National representative.

The next FOHNEU Board Meeting will take place in Rome, Italy.

When confirmed details will be posted on the FOHNEU website

Gema Arevalo /Julie Staun