

EUROPEAN BOARD AND COLLEGE OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY

Relationship with FIGO

The importance of regional federations

1.0 Background

- 1.1 FIGO (Fédération Internationale de Gynécologie et d'Obstétrique) was established in 1954. At that time, 42 national societies were represented. Currently there are 113. All members of FIGO are entitled to participate in its General Assembly, which meets once in every three years, at the time of the World Congress of Gynecology, organised by FIGO. There is an Executive Board, on which 24 member societies are represented. This meets once per year. Thus for most national societies, direct contact with FIGO is very infrequent.
- 1.2 EBCOG was established in 1996. It now has representation from 33 national societies (see Annex 1), all of which are also members of FIGO. This represents 29% of FIGO's total membership. In addition, EBCOG is an integral part of UEMS (Union Européenne Des Médecins Spécialistes) and therefore has representation from both professional and academic societies in each of its member states. Thus each country has two representatives on EBCOG's Council, which meets twice per year. In addition, EBCOG's Executive, elected from Council members (but not representative of national societies) meets on a further two occasions per year.
- 1.3 EBCOG also has important constitutional links with the four major European subspecialist societies (the European Association of Perinatal Medicine [EAPM], the European Society of Gynaecological Oncology [ESGO], the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology [ESHRE] and the European Urogynaecology Association [EUGA]) as well as with the European Network of Trainees in Obstetrics and Gynaecology [ENTOG] and the Permanent Working Group of European Junior Doctors [PWG]. All of these organisations send representatives to EBCOG's Council and Executive meetings.
- 1.4 FIGO's mission is 'to promote the well-being of women and to raise the standard of practice in obstetrics and gynecology'. EBCOG's objective is 'to improve the health of women and their babies by promoting the highest possible standards of care in all European countries'. There is therefore considerable overlap in the aspirations of the two organisations.
- 1.5 EBCOG has observer status on FIGO's Executive Board. Two other international confederations have similar status. These are FLASOG (Federación Latinoamericana de Obstetricia y Ginecología) and AOFOG (the Asia and Oceania Federation of Obstetrics and

Gynaecology). It has been suggested that these federations could form a valuable interface between national societies and FIGO. It is now time to consider in more detail the nature of these relationships.

2.0 The relationship between EBCOG, FIGO and national societies

2.1 EBCOG is in the process of defining more clearly its relationship to the national societies which it represents. A draft memorandum of understanding will be considered at the EBCOG Council meeting in November 2008. The details are presented in Annex 2.

2.2 The relationship between FIGO and its constituent national societies appears to be less clearly defined. In particular, there seem to be few examples of shared activities between individual national societies and FIGO nor of dissemination of information about their activities.

3.0 Possible roles for EBCOG

3.1 EBCOG can help to disseminate information between national societies and FIGO, thus ensuring that matters of mutual interest are brought to the attention of others.

3.2 Initiatives which are of importance to FIGO can be discussed at EBCOG's meetings, permitting feedback from European national societies to be transmitted to FIGO.

3.3 European initiatives, such as the harmonisation of training programmes, can be brought to the attention of other national societies represented within FIGO, so that more extensive harmonisation may be possible. Such initiatives may be incorporated into FIGO's strategic planning.

3.4 Relationships between individual European national societies and organisations outside Europe can be identified and brought to the attention of FIGO, thus helping to develop partnership programmes.

3.5 Topics for inclusion in FIGO's triennial World Congress can be discussed within EBCOG, helping to identify appropriate participants.

3.6 FIGO can be invited to participate regularly in EBCOG's meetings (including the biennial European Congress), thus ensuring that matters of mutual interest are explored.

4.0 Further action

4.1 These proposals will be discussed and refined at EBCOG's Council meeting in November 2008.

- 4.2 A revised document will be presented to FIGO for further discussion, involving other multinational federations.
- 4.3 After further refinement, a definitive memorandum of understanding will be agreed by FIGO and EBCOG.

**W Dunlop
November 2008**

ANNEX 1

Membership of EBCOG, 2008

Member Country	National Societies	Representatives
Albania*	Albanian Society of Perinatology	Dr Rubena Moisiu
Austria	Die Österreichische Gesellschaft für Gynäkologie und Geburtshilfe	Prof Norbert Pateisky & Prof Paul Speiser
Belgium	Vlaamse Vereniging voor Obstetrie en Gynaecologie (VVOG) Groupement des Gynécologues Obstétriciens de Langue Française de Belgique (GGOLFB)	Dr Johan Van Wiemeersch Prof Sophie Alexander
Bulgaria	Bulgarian Society of Obstetrics and Gynaecology	Prof Milko Sirakov & Prof Todor Chernev
Croatia	Croatian Society of Gynecologists and Obstetricians	Prof Ivan Kuvacic
Cyprus	Pancyprion Obstetrical and Gynaecological Society	Prof Panayistis Avanis & Prof Christos Riris
Czech Republic	Czech Society of Obstetrics and Gynaecology	Prof Jeroslav Feyereisl & Prof Vladimir Dvorak
Denmark	Danish Society of Obstetrics and Gynaecology	Dr Lone Hvidman & Prof Helle Meinertz
Estonia	Society of Estonian Gynaecologists	Prof Helle Karro & Prof Kadri Liina Vahula
Finland	Finnish Gynaecological Association	Prof Juha Mäkinen & Prof Juha Tapaneinen
France	Collège National des Gynécologues et Obstétriciens Français (CNGOF)	Dr Jacky Nizard & Prof Jacques Horovitz Section: Prof Guy Schlaeder
Germany	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Gynäkologie und Geburtshilfe (DGGG) Berufsverband der Frauenärzte (BVF)	Prof Klaus Diedrich Prof Klaus König
Greece	Union of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Greece Hellenic Obstetrical and Gynaecological Society	Dr Nicolas Lindaros Prof Ioannis Messinis Section: Dr Nicolas Tsatsaris
Hungary	Hungarian Society of Obstetrics and Gynaecology	Prof Josef Bodis & Prof Zoltan Toth
Iceland	Félag Íslenskra Fæðinga- og Kvensjúkdómalækna (FÍK)	Prof Reynir T Geirsson
Ireland	Institute of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCPI)	Dr Michael O'Hare
Italy	Società Italiana di Ginecologia e Ostetricia (SIGO)	Prof Vincenzo Giambanco, Prof Felice Petraglia
Kosovo*	Kosovo Obstetrics and Gynaecology Association (KOGA)	Dr Albert Lila & Prof Sheqet Lulaj
Latvia	Latvian Association of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists	Prof Dace Rezeberga
Lithuania	Lithuanian Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists	Prof Audrone Arlauskiene & Prof Ruta Nadisauskiene

Malta	Malta College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists	Prof Mark Brincat & Dr Donald Felice
Netherlands	Nederlandse Vereniging voor Obstetrie en Gynaecologie (NVOG)	Dr Angelique Goverde & Prof T Helmerhorst
Norway	Norwegian Society of Gynaecology and Obstetrics	Dr Rolf Kirschner & Dr Runa Sigrud Aabo
Poland	Polish Society of Gynaecology and Obstetrics	Prof Jan Kotarski & Prof Ryszard Poreba
Portugal	Portuguese Federation of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Ordem dos Medicos	Prof Carlos Freire de Oliveira Prof José Martinez de Oliveira
Romania	Romanian College of Physicians	Prof Vlad Tica
Russia	Russian Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists	Prof Gennady Sukhikh
Slovakia	Slovak Society of Obstetrics and Gynaecology	Prof Jan Stencl & Prof Igor Rusnak
Slovenia	Gynecologic Association of the Slovenian Medical Society	Prof Helena Meden Vrtovec
Spain	Sociedad Española de Ginecología y Obstetricia (SEGO)	Prof Luis Cabero Roura & Prof Eduardo Cabrillo
Sweden	The Swedish Society of Obstetrics and Gynaecology	Prof Göran Berg & Dr Charlotte Grunewald
Switzerland	Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Gynäkologie & Geburtshilfe	Prof Mario Litschgi
Turkey	Turkish Society of Gynecology and Obstetrics	Dr Ali Baloglu & Prof Bulent Tyras
Ukraine*	Ukrainian Perinatal Medicine Association	Prof Andreii V Tkachenko, Dr Olena Gopchuk
United Kingdom	Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG)	Professor Sabaratnam Arulkumaran & Dr Tahir Mahmood

*Observer status

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**between****The European Board and College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (EBCOG)****and****The National Society of**

Whereas the roles of the EBCOG and national societies may overlap, the following principles are agreed in order to avoid potential misunderstanding in the future:

Primary activities of EBCOG

- Working for the benefit of women throughout Europe
- Supporting national societies in professional and academic work in their own countries
- Progressing initiatives suggested by national societies
- Monitoring policy issues and informing national societies about developments at European level
- Facilitating the exchange of information between its constituent members
- Receiving reports from national societies
- Disseminating information via newsletters, annual reports and the EBCOG website
- Collaborating with European subspecialist organisations
- Supporting the European Network of Trainees in Obstetrics and Gynaecology (ENTOG)
- Organising the European Congress of Obstetrics and Gynaecology
- Harmonising the principles of postgraduate training in Europe
- Training European trainers
- Encouraging the development of hospital visiting by national societies
- Representing the specialty within European institutions such as UEMS
- Liaising with European politicians
- Developing and recognising programmes of continuing professional development
- Enhancing the collection of relevant European health data
- Advising in the development of European clinical performance indicators

Primary activities of a national society

- Working for the benefit of women in its country
- Working with relevant national political leaders
- Collaborating with other national specialist societies
- Collaborating with national subspecialist organisations
- Liaising with national societies in other clinical disciplines
- Facilitating postgraduate training
- Contributing to the professional development of its members
- Liaising with other European specialist societies

Shared activities

- Disseminating information about the development and organisation of specialist activities
- Encouraging effective postgraduate training
- Encouraging effective clinical practice
- Enhancing the collection and dissemination of clinical services and their outcomes
- Developing clinical, professional and scientific networks

Information about EBCOG's activities, including copies of the minutes of Council, the Executive and the Standing Committees will be placed on the EBCOG website and will be disseminated to national societies.

It is agreed that EBCOG and individual national societies will share information which could usefully be disseminated to all constituent members of EBCOG.

EBCOG will provide links from its own website to the websites of national societies if requested to do so.

Collaboration between individual national societies is encouraged by EBCOG. Relevant information about the outcomes of such collaboration will be reported to EBCOG Council.

Decisions taken by EBCOG Council will usually be by consensus. When a national society is in disagreement with a decision of Council, that disagreement will be noted in the minutes of the meeting.