

President's Message

On behalf of the Board of IDF Europe, I hope you all had a good start to 2008. I am writing to update you about recent activities and developments within IDF Europe. First of all, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my predecessor Tony O'Sullivan for having handed us over an organisation in excellent condition. The office in Brussels is functioning well and the new board has already had several meetings and an internal workshop for setting priorities. The new board members and their respective portfolios are:



President

Eberhard Standl

Vice-President

Chris Delicata

Treasurer / Secretary

Chris Delicata; Alojz Rudolf has agreed to become a co-opted member. He will assist Chris Delicata with the execution of the finances.

Sub Region CEC and DEPAC

Laszlo Madacsy and Soteris Yiangou

Sub Region EEC

Alexander Mayorov and Elena Shelestova

Public Affairs

Michael Hall, Eberhard Standl and Joao Nabais, who has agreed to become co-opted member of the Board.

Member Associations Relations

Sehnaz Karadeniz and Eberhard Standl

Medical Development & Technical

Helmut Henrichs and Eberhard Standl

Meetings

Children and Adolescents

Vida Augustiniene and Laszlo Madacsy

Discrimination

Elena Shelestova and Vida Augustiniene

The new board will focus in particular on 1) providing support for all member organisations (e.g. by offering opportunities for further development and education); 2) working at the EU level in close cooperation with other diabetes stakeholders (e.g. by trying to ensure that a new directive for transparent food labelling gets through, which addresses the need of people with diabetes to receive appropriate information on carbohydrates and sugars; and 3) optimizing our services and structures for Central and Eastern European Countries. In addition, we will look into the possibility of longer term independent fund-raising.

IDF Europe, together with the Federation of European Nurses in Diabetes (FEND), will soon be releasing a new Audit Report on Diabetes. Some countries seem to have managed to keep their diabetes numbers stable, while others appear to continue to experience an unmitigated increase. Thirteen out of 27 EU Member Countries report the

existence of a National Action Plan for Diabetes endorsed by parliament and/or government. The details of the Audit Report will be discussed during our next Annual Meeting in Malta.

In closing, it gives me great pleasure to invite you all to this meeting on the splendid island of Malta from September 19 to 21. Training courses will run from September 17 to 19. By now, all member organisations should have received the documents for registration. I can rest assured that board member and Treasurer Chris Delicata, now Vice-President of IDF Europe, will be a superb host to you and to all of us!

I look forward to seeing you all there!

Prof Eberhard Standl – President IDF Europe, 2007-2009

IDF EUROPE ASSOCIATION NEWS

In **Belarus**, the Belarus 'Children with Diabetes' Association celebrated its 15th anniversary in 2007. On 14 November, a national diabetes day was held in Minsk, involving health professionals, government and United Nations' representatives, and media. A large concert took place with a variety of local singers, which included performances by the regional affiliates of the association.

In **Kazakhstan**, the Diabetes Association of Kazakhstan (DARK) marked World Diabetes Day 2007 with several activities. On 23 November, the association, in conjunction with the department of education of Astana, coordinated lessons for high school students in the city on the topic 'Young people and diabetes.' The lessons addressed all aspects of diabetes in children and adolescents. The students were also shown a film about diabetes, produced by DARK with financial support from Exxon Mobil Kazakhstan. The association plans to extend these lessons and the showing of the film to other schools in the country.

On 24 November and 9 December, DARK organised a large awareness-raising event - 'Check for Diabetes' - in Astana and Almaty respectively. Over 100 promotional posters and 3000 booklets about diabetes and World Diabetes Day were distributed, and some 1800 visitors attended the events.

In **Latvia**, a variety of events were organized by the Latvian Diabetes Association in November to mark World Diabetes Day 2007. The main event was held at Riga Town Hall on 3 November, during which participants were able to have their blood glucose, cholesterol, blood pressure, bone density, and body mass index checked, and receive advice on the prevention and management of diabetes. Over 2500 people attended, a substantial increase compared to 2006. Other events took place in various areas throughout the country.

In December, the association organised the 10th edition of the 'Diabetes Opera', a cultural initiative aimed at bringing together representatives from the entire national diabetes community (people with diabetes, health professionals, and government officials). The opera performed was Madame Butterfly by Giacomo Puccini, who apparently developed diabetes while composing it.

In **Malta**, IDF Europe Vice-President Chris Delicata presented (picture right) Dr. Stephen Fava, Head of the Diabetes and Endocrine Centre, with a commemorative plaque with the text of the United Nations Resolution on diabetes. The presentation was made during a ceremony at the inauguration of the new Mater Dei Hospital in Malta. Dr Fava also received an educational DVD for children with diabetes and their parents.



In **Serbia**, the Diabetes Association of Serbia marked World Diabetes Day with an event at Belgrade City Hall, in collaboration with the Serbian Ministry of Health and the National Committee for Diabetes. In addition, the National Parliament (picture right) and the Kalemegdan Monument were lit in blue.



The association has started an SMS-based nutrition information service, in collaboration with the Belgrade Diabetes Association. People with diabetes will be able to receive nutrition advice by sending a query by SMS. The aim of the initiative is to promote better food choices and improve carbohydrate counting among people with diabetes.

The annual diabetes exhibition DiaBeta 2008 will take place on 12 April. The 11th edition will include a workshop for young people with type 1 diabetes.

In **Slovenia**, the Association of Endocrinologists of Slovenia, Diabetes Forum, and the Endocrinology and Diabetes Department of the University Clinical Centre Ljubljana launched the Slovenian Clinical Guidelines for type 2 Diabetes in January 2008. The guidelines have been well received in professional and public spheres and present a significant contribution to the National Policy for the Prevention, Treatment and Care of Diabetes, which is currently in preparation.

In February, the Ministry of Health publicly announced a proposed Resolution on the National Health Strategy 2008 – 2013. The Slovenian Diabetes Association (SLODA) has discussed the proposal and sent comments to the Ministry and published them in the press. The main remarks were that the time allowed for public debate of the proposal was too short (this was subsequently extended), and that non-communicable diseases like diabetes were not sufficiently addressed by the Resolution.

In March 2008, the SLODA general assembly will vote on the working programme for 2008. The main emphasis will be on educating youth about diabetes, raising public awareness of diabetes and its complications, and on the importance of healthy nutrition and physical activity.

In **Sweden**, the Swedish Diabetes Association (SDA) marked World Diabetes Day with a press conference on 14 November. Speakers included children with diabetes, who addressed the problems faced by children with diabetes in school. The SDA is currently carrying out a study of this issue, the results of which will be published on 14 November 2008.



World Diabetes Day was also marked with the lighting of four landmarks around the country. These were: The Globe in Stockholm, The Svampen Water Tower in Örebro (picture right), the Scandinavium arena in Gothenburg, and the House of Dunkers in Helsingborg.

In **Uzbekistan**, the association of endocrinologists and people with diabetes of Fergana region and a medical college of Kokand city organized an event (picture right) in December 2007 to mark the United Nations Resolution on diabetes. A diabetes competition was held between two groups of college students, who appeared on stage to the sounds of a cheerful march, wearing distinctive uniforms. Each team was asked medical questions related to diabetes, with the team providing the most exact answers declared the winner.



One member of the jury commented that, "I would never have thought it possible to talk about diabetes in such an interesting way!"

The competition was followed by a stage performance during which each team tried to explain the development, management, and prevention of diabetes, by acting out scenes taken from real life and taking into account national traditions and customs.

In the **United Kingdom**, Diabetes UK was very active in promoting World Diabetes Day 2007. Media coverage of the day was led by two major stories: the ever-ticking diabetes time bomb and the lack of support faced by children with diabetes in schools. Column inches were achieved in The Times, The Daily Telegraph, The Sun, Daily Mirror, The Guardian Online and BBC Online, as well as air time on Sky News, UTV Life (Ulster Television), STV (Scotland Today) and BBC Radio Wales. Numerous pieces also appeared in local and regional media across the country. World Diabetes Day was also marked by the lighting in blue of the London Eye and Shell Tower, which joined the over 270 landmarks around the world that lit in blue to mark the day.

Diabetes UK also urged the Government to take action to defuse the diabetes time bomb, as new figures revealed that three million people in the UK now have the condition, mainly due to soaring rates of type 2 diabetes. The association also called on government, Local Education Authorities and schools to implement effective policies to support children and young people with diabetes in all English schools.

OTHER NEWS

In **Finland**, the 5th World Congress on the Prevention of Diabetes and its Complications (WCPD) 2008 will welcome guests from over 60 countries. The event will take place in Helsinki on June 1-4. The Congress President is Professor Pekka Puska, the father of the world-famous North Karelia Project and President of the World Heart Federation (WHF). The scientific programme includes four tracks and over one hundred top lectures.



The WCPD 2008 is organized by the National Public Health Institute, Finland and the Finnish Diabetes Association, and supported by the International Diabetes Federation and WHF. For more information, visit www.wcpd2008.fi.

On World Diabetes Day, 14 November, IDF Europe Board Member **Michael Hall** and his wife found themselves crossing the Atlantic in a small cruise ship, heading for the Brazilian coast. Not being able to join in the many land based World Diabetes Day celebrations, they decided to celebrate at sea.



The ship's newspaper carried headlines about the first United Nations observed World Diabetes Day, and in particular drew attention to the threat to children (partly due to increasing childhood obesity) and to the very real problem of the diabetes epidemic in developing countries like Brazil.

The officers and crew wore the Blue Circle as did many of the passengers. By raising awareness to the issues, passengers were able to reflect on their shipboard diet and they took up the many opportunities for exercise in the ship's gym and the walking circuits.

Over the next week many passengers came up to Michael to discuss diabetes, including a certain Mrs Banting, "a distant relative of?!"



For over 30 years, Servier has been a leading partner in the field of diabetes research, with partnerships with leading diabetes associations such as:

IDF, IDF-Europe, EASD, The Diabetes Education Study Group, The Mediterranean Group for the Study of Diabetes, The European Union Geriatric Medicine Society and the International Group of Insulin Secretion.

In addition, Servier collaborates with the European Foundation for the Study of Diabetes (EFSD) in a Research Grant Programme, and with the University of Padova for the Morgagni Prize.

Servier also endows the Robert Turner Professorship in Diabetic Medicine at Oxford University.

If you have any diabetes related news that you would like to share with IDF Europe, please send us the information by e-mail (newsletter@idf-europe.org) or Fax (+32-2-5371981) and we shall be pleased to include it in our next newsletters.

Regional Office Manager: Lex Herrebrugh | Newsletter Editor: Lorenzo Piemonte