

ESPN Newsletter, September 1st, 2014

Dear ESPN Member,

The next Meeting of our Society, in Porto, September 18-20 is approaching and I am pleased to inform all of you about the ongoing activities and achievements over the last year. ESPN has recently undergone a process of development and expansion, improving the network through specific working groups and establishing tighter connections with the IPNA, as well as the ERA-EDTA.

ESPN-IPNA; to increase the international interactions with other Pediatric Nephrologists, Pierre Cochat launched in 2012 the combined ESPN and IPNA membership, including the subscription to Pediatric Nephrology Journal. Thanks to this idea, the active membership significantly increased up to 383 members in 2014, of which 279 combined membership from 42 European Countries and 12 non-European countries. Another significant achievement was to gather more than 2000 mail addresses of doctors working or having scientific interest in Pediatric Nephrology for advertisements on congresses, courses, grants, fellowships, educational material available.

ESPN-ERA/EDTA; to increase the scientific interaction of European Scientists in specific fields we opened collaboration at the European level with the ERA-EDTA. An agreement between ESPN and ERA-EDTA has been started in 2014 on common activities, including a support to the ESPN Registry, mutual exchange in Symposia at both ERA-EDTA and ESPN Congresses. Moreover, we established a collaboration between ESPN and ERA-EDTA in specific areas of Working Groups, development of guidelines of common interest, communication between young doctors working in care of kidney disease at any patient's age (the Young Nephrologists Platform).

ESPN-Working Groups (WG); These WGs have been established in 2013, to encourage research, communication and education in the field of Paediatric Nephrology. Among other tasks, these WG are asked to organize CME Courses and lectures at Congresses and ESPN Meetings, provide educational material on the Website, develop new studies and promote registry activities linking with the ESPN –ERA-EDTA Registry.The 7 Working Groups are dedicated to unify and promote activities related to the subjects of 1) Transplantation, 2) Dialysis, 3) CKD-MBD, 4) CAKUT/UTI/Bladder Disorders, 5) Inherited Kidney Diseases, 6) Nephrotic Syndrome and 7) Immune Mediated Disorders .The major activities started in 2014 include:

- Transplantation WG : Extension of Certain Registry. Preparation of European Best Practice (ERA-EDTA/ESPN) on pre-emptive transplantation
- Dialysis WG: Hemodiafiltration in children (in collaboration with ERA-EDTA WG)
- CKD and metabolic bone disease WG: Effect of vitamin D supplementation on bone/mineral metabolism and immune system in children in early CKD (stage 2-3)
- Inherited kidney disorders WG: Cystinosis. Polycystic KD (In collaboration with ERA-EDTA WG)
- CAKUT/UTI/bladder dysfunction WG: Progression of CKD in children with CAKUT (with ESPN Registry)
- Nephrotic syndrome WG: Survey on NS treatment modalities adopted in European Centers
- Immune mediated renal diseases WG: Renal biopsy survey on indications to renal biopsy and technical modalities

ESPN Research grant; In 2014 ESPN launched for the first time a call for projects proposed by the working groups or by individual researchers, sponsored by ESPN and by industry as non-restricted grants. We received 14 applications, which went through a peer review process, by 2 external reviewers. Moreover, three ESPN highly appreciated Members (who will be officially thanked at the end of the process) reviewed all the applications, suggesting a rank for priority. The selection is made on a competitive basis and will have the final approval by the ESPN Council. Results of this selection will be presented in Porto, at the ESPN General Assembly Meeting.

Educational policy

- The ESPN has distributed several educational supports:
- 10 training grants to attend the Congress in Porto,
- 10 best presentations awarded at the Congress
- free membership to ERA-EDTA with access to NDT and JCK journals to the best presentations of young ESPN members (<40 year-old)
- Moreover, 2 medium-term fellowships are granted for young doctors willing experience in other Hospitals providing higher level of care.

Junior classes in collaboration with IPNA have been organized over two days before the opening of the ESPN Congress. The program is planned over three consecutive years, and attendants of the whole program will receive a Master recognition.

A list of Training Centers has been produced after a call for training centers that agree to accept fellows, answered by several specialized centers in Pediatric Nephrology.

International collaborations between ESPN and oversee Institutions have been launched, including the Columbia University for genetic studies of IgA nephropathy and Henoch Schoenlein Purpura and a survey and correlated investigations on minimal change nephrotic syndrome (CNOS study).

Moreover the website posts the most interesting Congresses /Courses in Pediatric Nephrology.

Economical balance

On December 2013 the balance of the ESPN bank account amounted to 94.167 € (2012: 112.807 €) including a reserve for the ESPN Registry of 15.700 €. In 2014 we expect a total income of approx. 39.000 € including ESPN membership fees (9.000 €) and ESPN congress Porto (approx. 30.000 €). The expected total expenses will be approx. 49.000 € including 5.600 € for tax counseling and council meeting in Leuven, 2.400 € for the secretary of the treasurer, 5.000 € for travel grants Porto meeting, 5.000 € for best abstract awards Porto meeting, and 6.000 € for ESPN training grants. In addition, the ESPN Working groups will be supported with approx. 50.000 € of which 25.000 € will be provided by pharmaceutical companies by unrestricted grants to the ESPN (Alexion, 10.000 €, Raptor 10.000 €, Novartis 5.000 €). Thus the expected bank account balance on December 2014 will be approx. 84.000 €. This is just about the bank account balance in 2008 and in line with tax requirements. Indeed, a substantial reduction of our balance was set by the tax government since we are a charity organization and therefore not allowed to increase our bank account balance over time.

Renewal of ESPN council

In September 2014 six ESPN council members (Detlef Bockenbauer, Erik Girardin, Giovanni Montini, Marjan Saraga, Anna Bierre, Johan Vande Walle) will leave the board because of the end of the 3-year term and will be replaced by new council members. The positions of the Assistant Secretary (Elena Levtchenko) and of the Treasurer (Dieter Haffner) will have to be re-elected. ESPN launched a call for new council members and received 7 applications that will be voted during the ESPN General Assembly Meeting in Porto

Honorary members

As Honorary Members 2014, ESPN elected two most distinguished pediatric nephrologists who made significant contribution in building up pediatric nephrology in their own country, in Europe and world-wide. Christer Holmberg (Finland) and Aysin Bakkaloglu (Turkey) will be celebrated during the ESPN meeting in Porto.

We look forward to seeing you in Porto!

Rosanna Coppo, Secretary General
Elena Levtchenko, Assistant Secretary
Dieter Haffner, Secretary Treasurer