

# THE TIMES

## Congress Newspaper 2015

### SCIENCE FIRST IN COPENHAGEN

**New submission categories, rigorous quality management standards and prestigious awards have yielded a record number of abstracts – and our strongest scientific programme to date.**

### EUROSPINE 2015: A MILESTONE IN OUR WAY FORWARD STRATEGY

Meeting activities are at the core of our educational and scientific offering, and we're working hard to continuously improve content quality. This year we've refined our abstract selection process and expanded discussions on research and innovation.

We're delighted with this year's programme and the outstanding level of scientific content we are able to offer. The response from both delegates and presenters has been overwhelmingly positive. And most importantly, the themes addressed this year will be valuable to members, meeting participants, and stakeholders – but most importantly – to patients.

### RECORD NUMBER OF ABSTRACT SUBMISSIONS

The annual EUROSPINE Congress is considered the leading platform for sharing innovation and the latest research in the treatment of spinal disorders. This year has proved to be the most successful on record with 949 abstracts received! This is an increase of over 70% from last year's meeting in Lyon.

Furthermore, we introduced a new scientific category: "New Techniques and Patient Safety", which prompted the submission of more than 200 abstracts for this topic alone.

This high level of interest confirms that we are on the right track, and inspires us to introduce further new topics and other original elements to our meeting set-up.

### DIVERSE THEMES FOR ANNUAL MEETING AND SPRING SPECIALTY MEETINGS

To address the interests of all spine specialists, we will be varying the themes of our Annual and Spring Specialty Meetings. While this year will focus on adult thoracolumbar degenerative conditions and deformity, growing spine, cervical spine and on basic science, next year in Berlin we anticipate including even more

## EUROSPINE WAY FORWARD STRATEGY – ON TRACK FOR THE FUTURE

scientific presentations on the topic of "New Techniques and Patient Safety". Preparations for our 3rd EUROSPINE Spring Speciality Meeting in Kraków, Poland (May 12-13, 2016) are underway, where Trauma and Emergency Spine Surgery will be key themes.

### HIGHER QUALITY MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

As part of our Way Forward strategy – and to ensure our Annual Meeting remains the foremost scientific gathering in Europe for spine specialists – we've introduced certain changes to our Annual Meeting. For the Copenhagen event, formal requirements for abstract submissions have been strictly enforced. Furthermore, the declaration of interests from every abstract co-author has been made mandatory throughout the review process and upon presentation of accepted abstracts during the conference. (Over 60 submissions were refused due to insufficient or invalid disclosures, and the authors notified accordingly.)

The integration of basic science presentations into clinical sessions – which has proved highly successful – will be continued. National representatives from leading basic research centres have been invited to an informal meeting on 'future concepts of cooperation' during the Copenhagen conference.

### NEW AWARD: BEST OF OUTSIDE-EUROPE PRESENTATIONS

A new scientific award category has been introduced: the Best of Outside-Europe Presentations to be presented at the Annual Meeting. This award serves to illustrate the fact that interest in our Annual Meeting extends far beyond the borders of Europe!



*Thomas Blattert  
Head of Meeting Council 2015*

### DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS

**2015 has been a year of action and further positive change for EUROSPINE, moving us ever closer to achieving our vision – to be the driving force and the primary and preferred partner in Europe for all spinal care issues. We have made steady progress on all fronts, firmly establishing EUROSPINE at the forefront of spine societies.**



*Haluk Berk, MD  
President of EUROSPINE*

When I took over as President of EUROSPINE last year, I had big shoes to fill. My predecessors, Ferran Pellisé and Phil Sell, and colleagues – members of the Executive Committee and Society Committees – had been working for two years on the Way Forward strategy, defining a new mission and vision for the Society. From that we had developed a concrete action plan. As incoming president, I made a commitment to continue to drive that plan forward on four fronts:

1. Members - Expand our membership base and establish the EuSSAB
2. Stakeholders - Formalise stakeholder relationship management and sponsorships
3. Activities – Improve meetings, education and research services
4. Organisation – Align the organisational structure to deliver on our promises

### TREMENDOUS MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

Since implementing two new membership categories eight months ago, "Young Members" and "Institutional Members", the number of new applications has almost doubled from last year to 177. With over 915 individual members (5622 including associate members), EUROSPINE now has a membership base that is larger and more diverse than ever before, positioning us as a truly international society.

### EUROPEAN SPINE SOCIETIES ADVISORY BOARD (EuSSAB): A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

Our first two EuSSAB meetings (in Lyon and in Barcelona) set the right tone for providing a neutral communication platform for all spine-related societies – who have joined EUROSPINE as "Institutional Members" – to meet and connect on a regular basis. Since October 2014, a total of 17 societies have joined EUROSPINE as Institutional Members, representing approximately 4707 Associate Members from across Europe.

The Barcelona EuSSAB meeting was well received, producing a strong commitment to focus on education topics. Our next EuSSAB meeting will be taking place right here in Copenhagen and will focus on our plan to jointly develop a pan-European and compatible Spine Diploma.

### STRUCTURED STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT AND SPONSORSHIP

In order to support, coordinate and prioritise stakeholder-related matters, EUROSPINE has set up a new, dedicated Stakeholder Management Council. The council's mandate is to take a targeted approach in addressing the individual needs of our eight stakeholder groups. We have intensified our dialogue with our stakeholders and MedTechs to strengthen our relationship, with a view to establishing mutually-beneficial partnerships and ensure ongoing financial support for our current and future projects.

### IMPROVEMENTS TO MEETINGS AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

This year in Barcelona we held our second spring meeting, "Spinal Deformity from Early Childhood to Adulthood", in cooperation with SRS. Ferran Pellisé, Marinus De Kluever, Ahmet Alanay and I were Chairs and Programme Organisers. Nineteen faculty members from both societies representing 12 countries played a role in making the meeting a success, bringing together 1607 spine specialists interested in spinal deformity. The EUROSPINE team has again put considerable effort into making this year's Annual Meeting in Copenhagen a success. From a scientific point of view, we are happy to say that we received a record number of high-quality abstracts, from

which we were able to develop a rich scientific programme.

We have taken great strides in the development of a comprehensive new "Education Week" which will be delivered for the first time this coming October and are cooperating closely with national societies in our pursuit of establishing an accredited "European Spine Certification".

### REALIGNED ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

This year we restructured our Executive Committee (ExCom) to make it more effective in focussing on EUROSPINE's strategic priorities. The new organisation chart is structured to make each ExCom member responsible for a Council. This system helps the ExCom to define high-level priorities and provides each Council with a voice at the ExCom, where priorities are then set democratically.

We have further streamlined our organisation and processes to deliver services to members, spine professionals, patients and stakeholders in the most efficient way. In addition, all educational activities have been moved back under the umbrella of EUROSPINE, offering greater control over content, quality and cost.



### SETTING UP FOR LONGTERM SUCCESS

Each of these accomplishments is helping to lay a solid foundation for EUROSPINE's future success. With the unwavering commitment of the Executive Committee and Committee Members, we are building a strong international Society that puts patient care in the spotlight. I am proud to have had this opportunity to serve as EUROSPINE's president and look forward to continuing our efforts in making EUROSPINE the leading spine society in Europe.