EuroDURG bulletin

No. 25 **March 2015**

NEWSLETTER OF THE EUROPEAN CHAPTER OF THE SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP OF DRUG UTILSATION RESEARCH (SIG-DUR) OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF PHARMACOEPIDEMIOLOGY (ISPE)

Editors

The Bulletin was prepared by the EuroDURG board and the ISPE DUR/HSR SIG chair. See also contributors on behalf of national groups. Send reactions to: benkoria@gmail.com

The Chair's message

Dear Drug Utilization researchers,

A new year has arrived bringing new opportunities. The year that passed, 2014, was a very special year for Drug Utilization research and it is likely that, in the future, it will be seen as a milestone in the development of DUR.

The history of EuroDURG dates back to the 70ies. In 1976, a small group of scientists established the first European DURG. From 1993, WHO became unable to provide secretarial functions which led to the formation of an independent European Drug Utilisation Research Group (EuroDURG) interim committee and, in 1996, at a meeting at Lake Balaton in Hungary, EuroDURG was formally established. Our mission stated that drug utilization research should not only provide descriptive information on sales of medicines but also facilitate exploration of various questions related to the safe and effective use of medicines such as:

- Why drugs are prescribed?
- Who prescribes drugs and for whom?
- Do patients take drugs correctly?
- What are the benefits and risks of prescribed drugs?

Drug utilization research developed rapidly and spread to other continents. Until today, a number of successful conferences have been held, with EuroDURG alone or jointly with other organizations, and in 2014, we had the pleasure to have our large meeting in Groningen, the Netherlands, jointly celebrating the fantastic career of Flora Haaijer-Ruskamp. Read more about the meeting in this bulletin.

At the general assembly in Groningen, we elected a new board to lead the organization during the coming period. Many new people raised their interest in joining the board and, in order to have a strong foothold across Europe we elected five new board members.

The board members are now:

Bjorn Wettermark (Sweden) – chair

Ria Benko (Hungary) – secretary

Brian Godman (UK) – treasurer

Elisabetta Poluzzi (Italy) – webmaster

Robert Vander Stichele (Belgium) – liason with ISPE

Monique Elseviers (Belgium)

Vera Vlahović-Palčevski (Croatia)

Begler Begovic (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Marion Bennie (Scotland)

Janet Krska (England)

Katja Taxis (The Netherlands)

Annabirna Almarsdottir (Denmark)

And the new members:

Cathrine Sermet (France)

Gabriel Sanfélix-Gimeno (Spain)

Paraskevi Voula Papaioannidou (Greece)

Gisbert Selke (Germany)

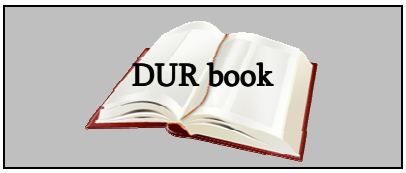
Jolanta Gulbinovic (Lithuania)

During 2014, our society was also active in many other conferences including the 30th ISPE conference in Taipei, Taiwan, the 17th World Congress on Basic & Clinical Pharmacology in Cape Town, South Africa, the 17th ESPACOMP in Lausanne, Switzerland and the 9th CEESTAHC Symposium on Evidence-Based Health Care in Krakow, Poland. Reports of some these meeting are found in the bulletin.

Besides these conferences, most of us have been heavily engaged in the preparation of the handbook "Drug Utilization research – methods and applications". Already during the 1976 DURG meeting in Copenhagen it was proposed that the WHO should sponsor a publication on guidelines for performing basic drug utilization studies. At the DURG meeting in 1977, the WHO Regional Office in Copenhagen reaffirmed its interest in publishing such guidelines and in 1979 the first book was published. Over the years, many of us have lacked a good teaching book. Consequently, at the ISPE-meeting in Barcelona in 2012, we decided to produce a book. During the year that passed, the editorial committee has met in Rotterdam, Groningen, Stockholm, Antwerpen and Kapellen. And we have spent several hours writing and reading in between those meetings. Overall, producing a book has been quite time-consuming, but it has also facilitated new connections and learnings, which will be beneficial for the future of our society. The outcome will be presented during 2015.

I would like express my gratitude to Monique Elseviers, for the marvellous job chairing the editorial committee of the book, and to Katja Taxis and Petra Denig for the organization of the EuroDURG conference in Groningen. All other members of the board should also be acknowledged for active contribution in all our activities. And, finally, I want to thank all of you DU researchers across the world for contributing as book authors, book reviewers and/or participating in the Groningen meeting and our other activities. I look forward to future collaboration!

Björn Wettermark
Chair of EuroDURG, European chapter of ISPE SIG DUR/HSR



It is with great pleasure that we announce the publication of our DUR book, titled "***Drug Utilization Research: Methods and Application***".

In summary, the aim of this textbook is to provide the reader with a comprehensive resource toolkit of the methods used in the science of drug utilization research, their application in key populations and to demonstrate how these approaches shape health policy and clinical practice internationally.

The methods section provides guidance to the wide range of methodologies used in the research field. Basic requirement to perform DUR are handled in chapters focusing on study design, data sources, classification and measurement systems, basic statistics and visualization of DUR data. More advanced topics focus on multilevel analysis and the development of quality indicators for DUR. The section ends with a chapter on qualitative research.

The applied sections in this book have been designed to illustrate recent developments in drug utilization research from different perspectives.

The chapters are grouped under the headings:

- Comparative drug utilization research
- Drug utilization and health policy
- Drug utilization in specific populations
- Drug utilization in specific therapeutic areas
- Determinants of drug utilization
- Adherence and drug utilization research
- The role of drug utilization within the field of pharmacoepidemiology
- Assessment and improvement of the quality of prescribing, dispensing and using medicines

It took the Editorial Board (EB – consisting of 13 ExCo members of EuroDURG) about 3 years of hard voluntary work to organize the preparation of the 48 chapters of the book.

Up to 2015 March the Editorial Board met at a distance during 18 teleconferences and in reality during five EB weekends. Each of the editors was responsible for one section of the book and took care about selecting and contacting authors, leading them throughout the whole production process. When a chapter was ready, it went to a rigorous review process. First the chapter was read by two internal reviewers (two other EB members) and the comments were addressed by the authors. Then, the chapter was sent to two external reviewers selected on the base of their expertise and their location (trying to have at least one non-European reviewer). As yet, the final version of all (except 4) chapters are delivered to Wiley, our publisher.
We hope to launch the book during the ISPE conference in August 2015 in Boston.

Monique Elseviers

Guideline on multimedication

The General Practitioners Guideline Group of the German region of Hesse has developed, together with representatives of the German College of General Practitioners and Family Physicians, a guideline on multimedication. The guideline focuses on the general medication process and gives recommendations how to prioritize medication jointly with the patient. EuroDURG members have been involved in the process: Dr. Ingrid Schubert moderated the meetings of the guideline group and compiled the guideline. Prof. Sebastian Harder supported the process with his expertise as a clinical pharmacologist. The guideline was awarded the VdEK Zukunftspreis 2012 (the "Future Award" of one of the major sickness fund organisations) and has by now been implemented in different programmes. The guideline has been published in English in the International Journal of

Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics 2014; 52 (S1) and is available for free downloading from the website of the PMV for schungsgruppe. (http://www.pmvforschungsgruppe.de/pdf/03_publikationen/multimedication_ll.pdf).

Literature research and publication were financed by the Association for the Support of Drug Utilisation Research, headed by Liselotte von Ferber, a former active representative of EuroDURG.

Ingrid Schubert

Held on 27-29 August 2014 at the University Medical Center Groningen (Groningen, the Netherlands), the EuroDURG 2014 meeting jointly organized by the European branch of ISPE SIG DUR (EuroDURG) and the University of Groningen, was a successful event that brought together over 300 participants from academia, healthcare, payer organizations, regulatory agencies and other policy makers from 40 countries.

Prior to the conference, several educational sessions were held, covering DU methodology (data sources, classification systems and measurement units, methods for assessing drug use and outcomes in longitudinal datasets, statistical methods (multilevel and longitudinal analysis), visualization) as well as applications (adherence, prescribing quality indicators, variability in DU).

The meeting opened with a plenary session on Europe's Role in the Globalization of Drug Utilisation Research with keynote speakers Aukje Mantel-Teeuwisse and Björn Wettermark discussing present challenges in drug therapy and innovation and potential solutions for the future. The closing plenary session, logically focused on the Challenges and Opportunities for Future Drug Utilization Research and offered keynote lectures on the perspectives of policymakers (Bert Leufkens), healthcare providers (Frank May) and patients (Nicky Britten).

A great variety of papers (32 oral and over 250 poster presentations) addressing various aspects of drug utilization research were presented. These papers were divided into 8 sessions relating to adherence, health policy, hospital use, cross national comparison, trend and cohort studies, elderly, children and pharmacovigilance.

The number of research questions highlighted the eclectic nature of drug utilization research and the strong links both with pharmacoepidemiology and health services research. The meeting also included three workshops (Evaluating Impact of Interventions; Patient Perspective on Adverse Drug Reactions; DU in the Introduction of New Drugs).

The EuroDURG 2014 also celebrated the remarkable career of Flora Haaijer-Ruskamp, Professor in Drug Utilisation Studies at the university of Groningen. The dedicated symposium included lectures from Bob Vander Stichele, Bert Leufkens, Niek Klazinga, Petra Denig and, of course, Flora herself showing the width and depth of her research during the years.

A thank you goes to the Scientific Committee (chaired by Björn Wettermark) and the Local Organizing Committee in Groningen (chaired by Petra Denig). The meeting was also made possible by the generous support from the University of Groningen, the Municipality of Groningen and the Province of Groningen (the Netherlands), the University of Antwerp (Belgium), the University of Bologna (Italy), Karolinska Institutet (Sweden), the EuroDURG and the International Society for Pharmacoepidemiology (ISPE).

More information about the different sessions may be found on the conference website available at: www.eurodurg2014.com or the EuroDURG website: www.pharmacoepi.org/eurodurg

Based on the executive summary edited by Irene Eriksson

Poster price winners

During the Groningen conference, 9 separate poster sessions were organised. As a new approach, best posters were selected for each of these sessions and listed below:

.

Adherence
AK Wright et al.
University of Manchester, UK
"Adherence to first-line antidiabetic medication in newly-diagnosed type 2 diabetes: retrospective analysis of the Clinical Practise Research Database."

Cardiovascular diseases/Diabetes
P Martono et al.
Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, NL
"Predictors of treatment response in initial users of metformin and sulfonylurea derivatives."

Elderly
JJGT van Summeren et al.
Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, NL
"Medication review in elderly patients with polipharmacy:effects of teh use of a tool to Rank Patient Preferences."

Psychotropics/pain medication
JM Hoebert et al.
Bilthoven, Utrecht, NL
"Variability in market uptake of psychotropic medicines in Europe reflects cultural diversity."

Breadth & depths of DUR:
PC Souverein et al.
Utrecht University, NL
"(Non)availability of dosage instructions in electronic health care databases and exposure (mis)classification : the example of antidepressants."

DU in children/during pregnancy
C. D'Amore et al.
National Institute of Health, Rome/I
"Patterns of antihypertensive medication use during pregnancy: a population-based study."

Infectious Diseases
I Bazargani et al.
University of Utrecht, NL
"Endocrine therapy for breast cancer patients in middle income country (South Africa)."

Pharmacovigilance
MVL Laursen et al.
Copenhagen, DK
"Drug utilisation studies as a tool for regulatory drug safety surveillance."

DU and Health Policy
E van Beveren et al.
University of Ghent, BE
"50 Shades of prescriptions: diversity of prescribing regulations in Europe."

Congratulation!

EuroDURG General Assembly

Overall 40 people attended the EuroDURG General Assembly in Groningen. After welcoming the audience, our chair, Björn Wettermark delineated the mission of EuroDURG and mentioned the two most important achievements: the organisation of the conference and the production of the 'DUR book'. Katja Taxis, member of the conference's scientific committee and of the local organizer team in Groningen highlighted the main steps of the 1,5 year organization process needed for this meeting. Björn emphasized that the conference program was set up according to opinion of DUR people which was collected via a web-based questionnaire beforehand.
Monique Elsevier presented the 'DUR book' initiative. She introduced the editorial board, the aim and structure of the book. She gave insight into the content (number of chapters, status of each chapter) and the review process.
Then communication channels of EuroDURG and its challenges were briefly mentioned by Elisabetta Poluzzi and Ria Benko. During the meeting national contacts persons (responsible persons for distributing EuroDURG news within their own country and sending country news for the annual Bulletin) were recruited for four more European countries (Austria, Estonia, Slovakia and Portugal). Afterwards Lisa Pont, chair of DUR/HSR SIG presented herself and told some words about the special interest group (SIG).
The last agenda point was the election of the new board. Beside the personal invitation of the chair, three more candidates expressed their

willingness to join. The new EuroDURG board with the 5 new and 12 old members (see complete list on the first page of the Bulletin) was elected during an informal election.
The short CV of new members can be found later on in this Bulletin. Our chair closed the meeting mentioning some future plans (e.g. EuroDURG educational meeting in Prague) and invitation to the ISPE meeting in Taipei.

Ria Benko

30th Anniversary ICPE 2014

General summary

The 30th International Conference of Pharmaco-epidemiology & Therapeutic Risk Management (ICPE) was held in Taipei, Taiwan, in October. Although there have been a number of successful Asian ISPE conferences, this was the first time the global conference was held in Asia. The meeting took place at the Taipei International Convention Center and was jointly sponsored by the ISPE, the National Cheng Kung University, and the Pharmaceutical Society of Taiwan.
As usually, the meeting contained a mix of inspiring symposia, workshops, free presentations and posters. Since it was the 30th conference, the keynote session were dedicated at this celebration. In the introductory session, "Pharmacoepidemiology – The Next 30 Years From Where Have We Come, Where Are We Going in the Next 30 Years?", Byung-Joo Park, South Korea, Judith K Jones, US and Hubert GM Leufkens, the Netherlands, presented their views on the development of the science until today and some predicted future directions. In another plenary session named "Development in Pharmaco-epidemiological Methods: Current Status and Future Direction", key methodology experts Ken Rothman, Alec Walker, Miguel Hernan, Robert Glynn and Olaf Klungel, presented and discussed the development of advanced epidemiologic methods over the years and which challenges we still have to meet.
Fewer DU researchers than normally from Europe participated, but the conference instead brought new perspectives with a large number of abstracts and attendants from countries not normally attending ISPE meetings. It was also impressive to see the rapid development taking place in pharmacoepi and DU in Asia, with the growth of databases and adoption of advanced methods in several countries. The organizers should also be specifically acknowledged for the excellent organization of the meeting and, not at least, the Gala Dinner held at the old Grand Hotel of Taipei, where we were served delicious Chinese food and enjoyed traditional culture.

Björn Wettermark

SIGDUR NEWS

Drug utilization / Health Service research Special Interest group.

It was wonderful to celebrate the 30th International Conference in Pharmacoepidemiology in Taipei with so many fellow DUR/HSR researchers.

Once again DUR/HSR research has a strong focus at ICPE with a variety of workshops, symposia, oral and poster presentations.
Pre-conference education sessions: Two SIGDUR pre-conference sessions were held: Introduction to Drug Utilisation Research and Advanced Drug utilisation research. Both these sessions were well attended and received great feedback from participants. Thank you to all DURSIG Faculty (Hege Salvesen Blix, Bjorn Wettermark, Andy Gilbert, Libby Roughead, Nicole Pratt, Petra Denig and Jerry Avorn) for your wonderful input into making these sessions so successful. Thank you to Andy Gilbert for organising these sessions. A special extra thank you to Bjorn who presented his session within minutes of arriving in Taipei after having his flights delayed!

SIG DUR annual meeting: As always the SIGDUR meeting was the largest SIG meeting at ICPE, and this year was no exception. The SIG meeting was attended by approximately 30 participants.
This year saw a change in structure to the SIG DUR meeting. Since executive positions are now biennial positions and our executive positions saw no change from last year we were able to include time for discussion and planning for future project in this meeting.
There was great support for a global SIG project and a number of promising projects including antibiotic drug utilisation, patient perspectives, psychotropic and analgesic utilisation were discussed. Following this discussion, a SIG endorsed abstract has been submitted for the 31st ICPE proposing a workshop on establishing a joint project on opioid analgesics. Thanks you to SIG member Gillian Caughey from Australia for her work coordinating this. All workshop abstracts must be reviewed by the scientific committee so hopefully the SIGDUR abstract will be accepted and part of the 2015 ICPE program.

We now have SIGDUR regional network liaison members from every continent (except Antarctica but volunteers are always welcome). Our SIGDUR executive and regional network liaison members for 2014/15 are:

Executive Committee:

Chair: Lisa Pont (Australia)
Past Chair: Morten Andersen (Sweden)
Chair Elect: Katja Taxis (Netherlands)
Educational Program: Douglas Steinke (UK)
Communications and web liaison: Gillian Caughey (Australia)

Regional network liaison
EURODURG-Björn Wettermark (Sweden)
MURA -Lisa Pont (Australia)
NORTH AMERICA - Ingrid Sketris (Canada)
AFRICA IlseTruter (South Africa)
LATIN AMERICA - Marcela Jiron (Chile)
ASIA – Jason Hsu (Taiwan)

I will be representing the SIG at the mid-year ISPE meeting in Bordeaux and handing over the position of SIG chair to Katja Taxis at the Boston ICPE later this year. I look forward to seeing many old DUR friends as well as meeting new ones in 2015 at these meetings.

Lisa Pont: lisa.pont@mq.edu.au
DUR/HSR SIG Chair

Report on the 17th ESPACOMP meeting

ESPACOMP, the European Society for patient adherence, compliance and persistence, had their annual meeting 2014 in Lausanne, Switzerland, 20-22 November. During the pre-conference day, two workshops were organized, one on implementation strategies and one on statistics. New this year was a one-hour session at the end of the pre-conference day presenting a review of the past 12-month literature on medication adherence. The organizers received about 100 abstracts, 20 of them were selected for oral presentations. The remaining was presented in a well-attended poster session. During the scientific meeting, the 150 participants particularly appreciated the Jean-Michel Métry Memorial Lecture, presented by Prof. Sabina de Geest on *A multilevel perspective of health behavior in transplantation.* The other sessions handled interventions, determinants, new care models, translation to clinical practice and combined measurement of adherence.

Monique Elseviers

Workshop on geriatric pharmacotherapy

On June 12-14, 2014, 15 experts from 8 European countries assembled in Ghent, Belgium, for the European Science Foundation's (ESF) workshop. The international multidisciplinary team of experts focused on the quality and safety of pharmacotherapy in old age aiming to define the requirements for an electronic assessment tool based on the European lists of Potentially Inappropriate Medications (PIMs). All participants actively contributed by presenting the state-of-the-art in their particular field of expertise or by sharing their experiences of the use of PIMs to evaluate the quality of pharmacotherapy at the individual as well as at the population level. Presentations were alternated with workshops and panel discussions introduced by literature reviews or by clearly defined discussion points. As a direct result of the workshop, participants decided to start up four working groups to partly work out the recommendations formulated during the workshop:

a) A working group to clarify the conceptual framework and terminology

b) A working group to compose the International catalogue of PIMs and Quality Indicators

c) A working group on methodology to collect, synthesize, and present safety information

d) A collaboration with the interRAI group (InterRAI is the international tool for the assessment of physical and mental health in older people) to explore the congruence of the interRAI clinical dataset with the requirements of the lists of PIMs.

Several of the experts of this ESF workshop were closely related to EuroDURG as current board members (Katja Taxis, Robert Vander Stichele, Monique Elseviers), past board members or scientific committee members (Petra Denig, Flora Haaijer-Ruskamp, Hege Salvesen-Blix). Not surprising that the results of the ESF meeting were presented at the next TC of the EuroDURG board. The board decided that EuroDURG will serve as umbrella organization for the further activities of the working groups of this ESF meeting.

Monique Elseviers

ISPE
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR PHARMACOEPIDEMIOLOGY

International Conference on Pharmacoepidemiology & Therapeutic Risk Management
August 23-26, 2015, BOSTON, MA, USA

Report on CEESTAHC conference

The 9th International EBHC (Evidence-Based Health Care) Symposium titled Health technology assessment (HTA) for Healthcare Quality Assurance was held in Krakow on December 15th and 16th, 2014. The meeting was arranged by Central and Eastern European Society of Technology Assessment in Health Care CEESTAHC, an organization established in Poland in 2003 to develop standards and methods of health technology assessment in central and Eastern Europe.

The conference was built up around seven sessions:

- guidelines for HTA – developments
- legacy in health care system
- how does funding translate into improvement
- multi-criteria decision making - new approach in decision making
- quality standards in clinical practice - paediatrics, drug programmes
- aspects of quality in oncology care
- Quality assurance in system – indicator, databases and other tools

Presentations were given by Polish researchers and international specially invited speakers. From EuroDURG Brian Godman, presented European models to optimize the introduction of new medicines, and Björn Wettermark, presented challenges and opportunities around prescribing quality indicators in Europe.

The largest surprise was probably the conference party that was held at the Polish Aviation Museum in Krakow. The dinner was served in a large hangar filled with old planes and many conference participants were dressed up with various aviation costumes.

Björn Wettermark

Below we list all forthcoming international or European, English language conferences and their abstract submission deadlines that may interest people engaged in DU research. For national conferences please see country specific news below.

ISPE 2015 MID YEAR MEETING

The ISPE Mid-Year Meeting (April 12-14, 2015) will be organized in conjunction with the 5th Bordeaux Pharmacoepi Festival (April 14-16, 2015) in Bordeaux, France.

Abstract submission deadline has passed.

Beside the educational session and student abstract oral presentation, the main topic is inappropriate drug prescription in the elderly.

For more information visit: http://www.pharmacoepi.org/meetings/midyear15/

ISPE 2015 ANNUAL MEETING

The 31st International Conference on Pharmacoepidemiology and Therapeutic Risk Management will be in held between August 22-26,2015 at Hynes

Convention Center, Boston, Massachusetts, USA.
Abstract submission deadline has passed.

The agenda will be available soon. For more information visit:
http://www.pharmacoepi.org/meetings/31ICPE/

International Society of Pharmacovigilance

The 15th Annual Meeting of the International Society of Pharmacovigilance will take place at the Clarion Congress Hotel in Prague, Czech Republic between October 27-30, 2015

Deadline for abstracts submission: June 1, 2015.

Among others, pharmaco-vigilance education, drug safety in special populations, including pharmacogenomics, the role of pharmacists in patient safety and direct patient reporting will be discussed.

For more information visit:
http://www.isop2015prague.org

European Society of Clinical Pharmacy

ECPS's international Workshop: "Acquisition of Pharmaceutical Skills: Simulation, Serious Games, Innovative Approach" will be organized in Nice, France between June 22-23, 2015 jointly with French Society of Clinical Pharmacy (SFPC).

Deadline for abstracts submission has passed.

The workshop is around how simulation can be used *within* the curriculum of pharmacy to improve student learning, *within* hospital and community settings to improve competencies of technicians, residents and pharmacists to ultimately improve patient care.

For more information visit:
http://www.escpweb.org/cms/node/369

The 44th ESCP Symposium on Clinical Pharmacy: Medicines Information – making better decision will be in October 28-30, 2015 in Lisbon, Portugal.

Deadline for abstracts submission: July 1, 2015

For more information visit:
http://www.escpweb.org/cms/node/370

European Society for Patient Adherence, COMpliance, and Persistence

The 2015 edition of the ESPACOMP meeting will be held in Prague, Czech Republic, on the 13th and 14th November 2015.

Topics such as determinants, clinical and economical consequences of non-adherence, policy & health care systems initiatives to support adherence, and teaching and practising adherence management will be discussed.

Abstract submission deadline 8th June, 2015

European Association for Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics

The 12th Congress of the European Association for Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics (EACPT 2015) will be organized between June 27-30, 2015 at Hotel Meliá Castilla, Madrid, Spain.

Parallel sessions on research, education, pharmacovigilance, medicines regulation (biosimilars, reimbursement policies) and clinical practise (e.g. pharmacotherapy in children and in the elderly, personalized medicines, etc.) will attract participants.

Deadline for abstract submission has passed.

For more information visit: http://www.eacpt2015.org

The 3rd PIPERSKA workshop co-organised with the Agency for HTA (Poland) and WHO Europe and entitled "The managed introduction of new medicines" will be in Warsaw, Poland between 11 – 13 May, 2015.

Managed entry practises in different countries, regulatory pathways for biologicals/ biosimilars, horizon scanning and forecasting, methodologies (e.g. Critical Drug Analysis) to enhance the rational use of medicines and development of formularies and/or priority medicines list will be discussed.

For more information please visit: http://www.piperska.org/

European projects

CODEMISUSED: Codeine Use, Misuse and Dependence

CODEMISUSED: Codeine Use, Misuse and Dependence

Contemporary research has underscored the need for '*increased pharmaco-vigilance'* around codeine dispensing. Codeine represents an interesting quandary in terms of its regulated status, individual variation in metabolism of codeine, patient estimation of safe dosage and self-medication, and potential for misuse, dependence and related harm. Misuse can be therapeutic and non therapeutic, and includes incorrect but legitimate use for medical purposes; use outside of acceptable medical guidelines when self-medicating at higher doses and for longer than advised; use other than for the instructions on the label or the intended purpose; recreational use for mind altering effects; and where risks and adverse consequences outweigh the benefits. Difficulties in estimating the scale of misuse centre on product availability in pharmacies and online, and the heterogeneous and hidden nature of misuse and dependent use. Gaps in knowledge centre on prevalence of misuse and dependence, therapeutic and non therapeutic pathways and trajectories to misuse and dependence, risk profiles and characteristics of users, poly pharming practices, adverse health and social consequences, and displacement between legitimate pharmacy supply and illicit sourcing. Evidence to contribute to our understanding of the issue, and inform law enforcement, drug surveillance, public health, harm reduction, pharmacy, clinical and treatment practice is warranted.

CODEMISUSED is an FP7 Marie Curie Industry Academia Partnership and Pathways funded project, (€2.04million and 36 months) investigating codeine use, misuse and dependence in Ireland, the United Kingdom and South Africa. CODEMISUSED project is accepted onto the Pharmacoepidemiology and Pharmacovigilance (ENCePP) registry of research projects approved by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) for research in the EU. Registered Number **ENCEPP/SDPP/4708.**Partners are Waterford Institute of Technology-Ireland (Co-ordinating Partner), Kings College London-UK, South African Medical Research Council, Cara Pharmacy Ireland, Weldricks Pharmacy UK, The Local Choice Pharmacy-South Africa.

It aims to investigate the extent and nature of codeine use, therapeutic and non therapeutic misuse and codeine dependence in three countries (Ireland, United Kingdom and South Africa) and from a variety of perspectives. Data from a systematic review of literature, national reports on prescribing and treatment trends, medical, pharmacist and addiction treatment provider surveys, customer sweep surveying to assess public awareness of harm and dependence potential, internet trend monitoring of user activity and online pharmacies, interviews with codeine dependents, and national key stakeholders will be used to inform the design of pharmacy based brief interventions, risk management and customer monitoring systems, continuing professional development training and design of specific clinical and community pharmacy treatment protocols.

Van Hout, MC
Principal Investigator,
Waterford Institute of Technology, Ireland
mcvanhout@wit.ie

Protect project closing symposium

The final Symposium of IMI PROTECT project (Pharmaco-epidemiological Research on Outcomes of Therapeutics by a European ConsorTium) was organized by the European Medicines Agency in London, between 18-20 February, 2015.
PROTECT – a 5-year project funded by IMI (Innovative Medicines Initiative) – was initiated in 2009 aiming at enhancing safety monitoring of medicinal products and contributing to better evaluation of their benefit-risk profile throughout their lifecycle.

During the Final PROTECT Symposium the main results and recommendations of the project were presented and there was an interesting discussion on their implications, concerning both the methodological perspective and the evaluation of the benefits and risks of medicines.

PROTECT developed methodological standards and innovative tools to strengthen the monitoring of the benefit-risk profile of medicines in Europe and to enhance early detection and assessment of adverse drug reactions from different data sources. Some of the most interesting results were the quantitative methods developed to evaluate risk and benefit, providing algorithms useful in clinical practice, the patient-centered data collection, the statistical signal detection in pharmaco-vigilance, and the pro-active rather than re-active approach to pharmacoepidemiology.

Four parallel pre-symposium training courses provided in-depth training on methodology and specific aspects of the research work performed in PROTECT.
The main topics included methods to collect data directly from consumers, signal detection, methods to improve consistency between pharmacoepidemiological studies and benefit-risk integration and representation.

For more information on PROTECT, you may visit :
www.imi-protect.eu/

Paraskevi Papaioannidou

Protect project-CNC guideline

EuroDURG teamed up with PROTECT, the IMI project on Drug Utilisation Research from EMA, at the request of Luisa Ibanez, from Spain.
A mutual collaboration has been initiated around the two deliverables of the PROTECT Project and in finishing a EuroDURG systematic review on methodological aspects of Cross National Comparisons.
This builds on the results of the past 4 years of work in PROTECT and previous initiatives of EuroDURG (poster sessions on Cross National Comparison in Drug Utilization during various ISPE meetings).

Members of PROTECT and EuroDURG will publish together an overview of achievements in PROTECT, with comments on the methodological issues of measuring drug exposure, nationally and internationally.
EuroDURG will participate in drafting the PROTECT's Guideline for drug utilization research (to be expected by mid 2015).
Protect and EuroDURG members will participate in a review of methodological issues in Cross National Comparisons, with collaboration from the WHO Collaborating Centre for Phamacoepidemiology and Pharmaceutical Policy Analysis in Utrecht (expected by the end of 2015).

Robert Vander Stichele

Cross National Comparison (CNC) studies

This has been an active year for CNC research and publications among members of the EuroDURG group and their health authority colleagues. During 2014, we published our CNC studies on health authority activities and their implications following the launch of generic losartan and generic risperidone. Both studies included clustering health authority activities and their influence on subsequent utilisation patterns. The findings again demonstrated that multiple activities are needed to influence physician prescribing, with no spill over of effects between classes/ related classes to affect subsequent utilisation patterns. Health authority colleagues also contributed to drug utilisation data regarding ongoing research to examine the pro-arrhythmic potential of different medicines and the implications (ARITMO project). This included the antihistamines with the findings - 'Pro-arrhythmic potential of oral antihistamines (H1): combining adverse event reports with drug utilization data across Europe' due to be published in PloS One in March 2015. Similar research with the antidepressants is ongoing. Both research activities built on previous research with anti-psychotics. Our findings regarding the uptake of boceprevir and telaprevir across Europe combined with health authority activities and the resultant future implications are currently being collated and will be submitted for publication during Spring 2015.

Planned CNC DU studies for 2015 include further research regarding the uptake of new oral anti-coagulants following our recent publication as well as an EU-wide study evaluating potential links with PPI utilisation and campylobacteriosis.

Further details can be obtained from Brian Godman – email: Brian.Godman @ki.se or mail@briangodman.co.uk

Related publications:

Moon J, Godman B et al. Different initiatives across Europe to enhance losartan utilisation post generics: impact and implications Frontiers in pharmacology. 2014;5:1-10

Godman B, Petzold M et al. Can authorities appreciably enhance the prescribing of oral generic risperidone to conserve resources?: Findings from across Europe and their implications. BMC medicine. 2014;12:98.

Poluzzi E et al. Pro-Arrythmic potential of oral antihistamines (H1): Combining adverse event reports with drug utilization data across Europe. PloS One 2015; 10:e0119551

Raschi E, Poluzzi E, Godman B et al. Torsadogenic risk of antipsychotics: combining adverse event reports with drug utilization data across Europe. PloS One 2013;8:e81208.

Godman B, Malmstrom RE et al. Dabigatran - a continuing exemplar case history demonstrating the need for comprehensive models to optimize the utilization of new drugs. Frontiers in pharmacology. 2014;5:109

Brian Godman

News from NATIONAL DURGs

Germany

In November 2014, the German national DURG "Society for Drug Utilization Research and Drug Epidemiology (Gesellschaft für Arzneimittelanwendungs-forschung und Arzneimittelepidemiologie GAA) has held its 21st Annual Meeting in Bonn. Details of the meeting including the abstracts are given under : www.egms.de/dynamic/en/meetings/gaa2014/index.htm.

For 2015, the 22nd Annual Meeting of the GAA is planned to be held from December 3rd – 4th in Dresden.

Please contact Katrin Janhsen (Katrin.Janhsen@uni-wh.de) or see our website for further information: http://www.gaa-arzneiforschung.de.

Katrin Janhsen
Chair of German -DURG

Italy

On July 15th, the Report on 2013 drug utilization in Italy (Rapporto OsMED - Osservatorio dei Medicinali) was presented by the Italian Medicine Agency (AIFA – Agenzia Italiana del Farmaco). In summary, the Report revealed that: 1) each Italian inhabitant used, on average, 1.7 DDDs per day; 2) drug expenditure was 26 billion euros (+ 2.3% in comparison to 2012); 3) seventy percent of the volume was reimbursed by the national health insurance; 4) off-patent drugs represented 64% of doses and 42% of expenditure. Recent and past OSMED report issues are available at the following address: www.agenziafarmaco.gov.it/it/content/osservatoriosull'impiego-dei-medicinali-osmed.

The Italian Epidemiology Association (AIE – Associazione Italiana di Epidemiologia) is increasing its interest in Drug Utilisation. The 2014 AIE Annual Conference (held on November 5-7, in Naples) hosted many Drug Utilisation works in an ad-hoc session devoted to pharmaco-epidemiology and coordinated by Ursula Kirkmayer (Lazio Regional Health Service) and Giuseppe Traversa (National Institute of Health). Appropriateness of drug use in paediatrics (surgical antibiotic prophylaxis, psychotropic therapies and anti-hypertensive use in pregnancy.

On December 9th, the 23th Conference on Drug Utilisation and Drug Safety was organized in Rome by the Italian Institute of Health. As usual, a specific session focused on the evaluation of use of drugs in Italy and the strategies to assess their appropriateness: proton pump inhibitors (PPIs), new oral anticoagulants (NOACs) and cannabis preparations as analgesic represented the main topics discussed during this session, because of their key role in current drug policy and expenditure, the risk of misuse for PPIs and the still scarce knowledge of the NOAC risk-benefit profile. Agenda and presentations are available at the following address (in Italian language): http://www.epicentro.iss.it/farmaci.

Elisabetta Poluzzi

France

In 2014, several national or regional initiatives concerning drug utilization and pharmacovigilance were held in France. The fourth edition of the annual Pharmaco-epidemiology Festival took place in Bordeaux in April 2014.

We could hear conferences on Risk Management in Pharmacovigilance, on disease risk score in pharmaco-epidemiology, on the Observational Medical Outcomes partnership, on pharmacoepidemiology in the Nordic countries and on the prospective surveillance of newly approved medical products The program is

available at the following address: www.fondation.univ-bordeaux.fr/sites/default/files/pdf/2014-04-pharmaco-festival-program.pdf.

The pediatric clinical investigation Center of the Hospices Civils of Lyon, the regional pharmacovigilance center of Lyon and the pediatric health products investigation network organized on december 5th 2014 a Scientific Day entitled « Methodological Approaches to Paediatric Pharmaco-epidemiology & Pharmaco-vigilance: www.pharmacol-fr.org/index.php/congres-partenaires/341-methodological-approaches-to-paediatric-pharmacoepidemiology-pharmacovigilance).

The Regional Health Agency of the Region Auvergne organized a conference on the 'iatrogenic risk in the elderly' (May 2014). The program can be downloaded from: www.ars.auvergne.sante.fr/fileadmin/AUVERGNE/ARS_auvergne/actualites/2014/plaquette_colloque_version_mail.pdf.

This Year, the ISPE 2015 Mid-year meeting will take place in Bordeaux from April 11th to April 16th. The extended program including two discussion sessions on inappropriate drug prescription in the elderly and Fat Facts in Elders, and students abstract oral presentation is available at the ISPE webpage (see above)
The Fifth Bordeaux Pharmaco-epidemiology Festival will be held in April 2015 just after the ISPE 2015 Mid-year meeting. Over three days, five experts will come to Bordeaux to talk on five different topics: risk benefit assessment, drug safety, pharmacovigilance, pharmacoepidemiology in Asia, and outcomes of pregnancy. The program is available at this link: http://pharmacoepi.bordeaux-festival.eu

The 7th Pharmaco-epidemiology and Pharmacovigilance (PEP) symposium will be held in June 2015 in Paris. Three thematic sessions will be organized on public private partnerships, quality of pharmaco epidemiology and pharmacovigilance studies and big data/open data: www.afcros.com/images/ColloquePEP/programme_v1_03fev2015.pdf

The role for the pharmacist in improving adherence was discussed at a symposium organized by the pharmacists regional organization from the region Ile de France (January 2015)(www.urps-pharmaciens-idf.fr/index.php/accueil/173-ameliorer-lobservance-un-nouvel-enjeu-de-cooperation-quel-role-pour-le-pharmacien-).

International research cooperation involving French teams
Funded by the European Commission (FP7 Research Program), ASTRO-LAB is a prospective cohort study of persistent asthma patients. ASTRO-LAB aims to provide new information about the safety of inhaled therapy in asthma, more specifically Long-Acting β2 agonists (LABAs). To reach this objective, 3000 patients aged from 6 to 40 years, will be followed during 2 years in the United Kingdom and in France.

Three sets of data will be collected: medical data from general practitioners (GPs), claims data (in France) and patient-reported data. The ASTRO-LAB consortium includes 7 partners and is coordinated by the University Claude Bernard in Lyon. More information can be found at http://www.astrolab-project.eu/en/accueil.html.

Catherine Sermet

Scotland

The FARR Institute (established in 2013) of Health Informatics Research is now well established on the UK landscape. Within Scotland a key focus is pharmacoepidemiology research in which 5 universities (Strathclyde,

Dundee, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Edinburgh) and NHS Scotland are collaborating to: enhance our national primary care patient level prescribing dataset (nPIS), particularly in the use of natural linguistic processing to read dosage instructions and application of standardised drug coding (BNF, DM&D, ATC) across all drug tables (prescribed, dispensed and claimed data); deliver a series of clinical exemplar studies examining uptake, use and safety of a number of newer medicines being used in Scotland - anticoagulants, antiplatelets, antidiabetics. The Farr Institute will hold its second International Conference on 26th – 28th August 2015, St Andrews, Scotland – see website for details for abstract submission: www.farrinstitute.org/events

Progress continues with the evolving national Infection Intelligence Platform (IIP) which brings together key national datasets to support antimicrobial stewardship and infection control. Update on progress and clinical exemplar studies is available at: . (http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Health-and-Social-Community-Care/Infection-Intelligence-Platform).

A series of meetings and international visits have been held throughout 2014 focused national - to exploit nPIS for local health boards to drive new prescribing quality improvement and efficiency programmes - and internationally to design and conduct cross national studies and secure monies to support new collaboratives.

Marion Bennie

Denmark

The Danish Society for Pharmacoepidemiology promotes pharmaco-epidemiology and drug utilization research, mainly through networking and annual meetings. The society has increased its membership numbers in 2014 and now consists of approximately 137 members representing academia, healthcare, authorities and the pharmaceutical industry. In 2014, we had a new board member, Morten Schmidt (Department of Clinical Epidemiology, Aarhus University). I continued as chairman, Anton Pottegård (Department of Clinical Pharmacy, University of Southern Denmark), Espen Jimenez Solem (Department of Clinical Pharmacology, Bispebjerg Hospital) and Christian Fynbo Christiansen (Department of Clinical Epidemiology,Aarhus University) continued as board members.

Our main activity during 2014 was our two meetings. The annual meeting took place on the 10th of April, 2014. The theme was introduction of new medicine and the pharmaco-epidemiological challenges in assessing safety and efficacy, when limited data is available. It was a very successful meeting, where more than 50 people participated. For the first time we have to close registration. At the meeting a constructive discussion found place concerning the structural changes to the method by which Danish data is accessed.

Our autumn meeting took place the 9 October 2014. A number of great presentations were given about experience of multinational studies. Furthermore, the meeting included a session, where young researchers in pharmacoepidemiology presented their impressive research. In 2015, the Annual Meeting of The Danish Society for Pharmacoepidemiology is planned to be in May. For further information please see our website: http://www.farmakoepi.dk/

Anne-Marie Schjerning Olsen
Chairman of the Danish Society for Pharmacoepidemiology

Portugal

In Portugal research on drug utilization is mainly carried out by the Ministry of Health (MoH), academic institutions and private centers.

INFARMED (National Authority of Medicines and Health Products) is currently conducting studies on: 1) adoption of new oral anticoagulants by prescriber types; 2) patients and doctors characteristics associated with the long term use of benzodiazepines; 3) inter-hospital comparison of drug use in selected therapeutic areas - Antibiotics, Rheumatoid Arthritis and Oncology - and 4) evaluation of the effect on the use of medicines of policy measures implemented during economic recession. INFARMED also collaborates with ESAC-Net Project, OECD and other cross national comparison projects by providing consumption data. Regional Health Administration of Lisbon and Tagus Valley, another institution of the MoH, is analyzing prescription patterns and closely monitoring drug consumption in this region. The reports are available on the website.

The Faculty of Pharmacy of the University of Lisbonis, among other studies, currently undertaking a project that aims to characterize the therapeutic profile of type 2 diabetics followed in a tertiary care center and relate this with patients' characteristics and the effectiveness of the treatment, not only in terms of glycemic goals but also other cardiovascular risk factors.

CEFAR (Centre for Health Evaluation & Research), among other projects, is undertaking a cross national comparison of utilization patterns of ambulatory high expenditure therapeutic groups between Portugal and 6 European countries, which also aims to perform a cost-saving scenario analysis if more rational European prescribing patterns were undertaken in Portugal. Another project of CEFAR is focused on gathering post-authorization data, mainly patterns of utilization, safety and quality of life, since the first day of drug use, by pharmacy based tracking of patients and drug usage.

There is more work being done in this field in Portugal. However there is not yet an active communication between researchers. This is the year to make this happen!

Cláudia Furtado

Sweden

Drug Utilization research engages more people than ever in Sweden, but these people are not always that easy to find. There is a Swedish Society for Pharmacoepidemiology (SLEF) incorporating the national DURG, but DU-related activities are also arranged by other professional societies and conferences. Last year, SLEF arranged a course around study designs in pharmacoepi/drug utilization. At the meeting, the outcomes of the Swedish Prescribed Drug register, the nationwide register with patient-level data on all dispensed prescription that was created in 2005, was presented. A review prepared for the course found more than 250 scientific studies published between 2007 and August 2013. A majority of them were drug utilization studies focusing on a range of topics such as quality of prescribing, inappropriate drug use in the elderly, equity and patient adherence.

Other national activities have also been conducted to stimulate observational research using the rich national population-based registers. The Swedish Research Council has taken the initiative in providing a national focus on register-based research, through the "Swedish Initiative for research on Microdata in the Social and Medical sciences" (SIMSAM). Six designated SIMSAM research groups focus on social and medical research programs in the public interest. There have also been some attempts to improve data coverage for Drug Utilization with pilot studies on data extractions from medical records in inpatient care. The aim is to create a national register with patient-level data for these drugs. This is of specific importance since there

are difficulties today in monitoring the introduction of all new drugs introduced in specialist care. The pilot studies have been successful, but it will be a challenge to get complete and valid data from all hospitals using different medical records systems. Other data sources are therefore used in the national introduction programmes for new drugs that have been established. These include protocols for introduction and follow up of new medicines for hepatitis C, multiple sclerosis and oncology.

Björn Wettermark
Swedish Society for Pharmacoepidemiology

Norway

The main scientific activity of the Society is the annual meeting where invited speakers present their ongoing research in the field of pharmacoepidemiology. In 2014 the annual meeting was held in connection with the celebration of the 10-year anniversary of the Norwegian Prescription Database (NorPD) 7 May. Professor Jesper Hallas (Odense) talked about "Finding needles in a haystack; screening for adverse drug reactions in a pharmaco-epidemiological database", whereas professor Morten Andersen (Stockholm) talked about "Counting needles in a cornfield; how to make databases talk with each other". The title of professor Jørund Straand's talk was: "Use of data from NorPD to improve the quality of prescribing among general practitioners". Professor Sabine Ruths talked about projects in the city of Bergen, professor Svetlana Skurtveit about use of addictive drugs in Norway, senior researcher Randi Selmer about drug use in cardiovascular pharmaco-epidemiology in Norway and professor Hege Salvesen Blix about NorPD as a management tool for correct use of antibiotics. Senior researcher Kari Furu presented results from a Nordic collaboration in pharmaco-epidemiology.
Researcher Helle Endresen and section manager from The Norwegian Medicines Agency talked about practical use of data from NorPD. Finally we had the general assembly meeting. The society was also represented at the NorPEN (Nordic Pharmaco-epidemiological Network) meeting in Oslo 17-19 November 2014 including pre meeting course in DAGs. In addition to the NorPen research groups members of the Nordic Societies for pharmacoepidemiology and other. Nordic researchers working in the field of pharmacoepidemiology were invited. 61 researcher from all the Nordic countries participated.
The Norwegian Society of Pharmacoepidemiology had 60 members in 2014. The yearly membership fee is 200Norwegian krone (NOK).
Further information about the Society can be found on the home page: www.farmakoepi.no
The annual meeting 2015 will be held on May 4 in Frederik Holsts hus , Institute of health and society, University of Oslo. The main topic is "Drug use in children and adolescents".

Randi Selmer
Chair of the Norwegian Society for Parmacoepidemiology

United Kingdom & Ireland

Twenty-five years is an important milestone in the life of this organisation and our 2014 conference did not disappoint in terms of maintaining the high quality of our invited speakers and the submitted abstracts.
The 2014 *Hugh McGavock Bursary* was won (for the second time!) by Richard Keers from Manchester University, this time for his work on prescribing errors in mental health hospitals. The *best poster* was awarded to Dr Nde-Eshimuni Salema from Nottingham University for her study on patients' views of the New Medicines Service in England. Medicines Optimisation is the latest

buzzword here. MO incorporates medicines management (described as: prescribing of medicines, the impact on the prescribing and drugs budget, the access to high-risk & high-cost medicines and elements of safety) but is much wider. MO focuses on outcomes and patients rather than process and systems and has four guiding principles:

- understanding the patient experience,
- evidence-based choice of medicines,
- ensuring medicines use is as safe as possible, and
- making MO part of routine practice.

The 2015 PRIMM conference, held on 23rd January in London, provided an opportunity to explore MO from the perspectives of doctors, pharmacists, nurses and patients, with four speakers, one from each group. The conference theme was thus: "*One for all and all for one – different perspectives in Medicines Optimisation*".
Our speakers were Prof Tony Avery (general practice), Prof Sue Latter (nursing), Dr David Alldred (pharmacy) and Margaret Murphy (patient advocate). This year we had a significant increase in the number of abstracts submitted compared to recent years.
You can find out more about the 2015 Scientific Meeting on the PRIMM website: http://www.primm.eu.com/where there are also fuller reports of passed meetings, or by contacting the administration team (admin@primm.eu.com)

Janet Krska

We invite other national groups to report on their activities in the next years' Bulletin!

Introduction of new ExCo members

Jolanta Gulbinovič

Jolanta is a chief expert in safety of medicines, head of the Unit for Cooperation with the EMA and International Relations at the State Medicines Control Agency, and a member of Pharmacovigilance risk assessment committee (PRAC) at the European Medicines Agency. She also is an associate professor at Dept. of Pharmacology of Vilnius University, where she lectures in basic and clinical pharmacology.
After graduation from Vilnius University Medical faculty she finished her residency in pediatrics, defended PhD theses in a field of drug utilization. She got training in clinical pharmacology as a research fellow at Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden. Several research projects have been conducted in a field of drug utilization, antibiotics use and microbial resistance, rational drug use. She has been working as a clinical pharmacologist at Vilnius university hospital for more than ten years, and had established and chaired a drug committee at the hospital. She has been working at Swedish Medicines Control Agency as a clinical assessor for more than three years. Her main interest is rational drug use, drug safety and drug utilization.

Paraskevi (Voula) Papaioannidou

Paraskevi Papaioannidou is a professor of Pharmacology in Medical Faculty of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. Her research focuses on Antimicrobial Chemotherapy, Reproductive Pharmacology and Drug Utilization Research. She organise and coordinates medical and interdisciplinary institutional and inter-institutional post-graduate

programs. She has created and coordinates the European research network AntibioSurv http://antibiosurv.web.auth.gr/ She organized and participated in many European and international research projects. She is the organizer of ASPPOC (Antibiotic Surveillance Project on Perioperative Chemo-prophylaxis – a European project with the participation of 40 Surgery and Pharmacology Departments from 12 countries – aiming at improving the quality and establishing a successful and evidence-based perioperative chemo-prophylaxis). Paraskevi Papaioannidou is a member of the Executive Committee of The Greek Society of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology, and has recently been appointed as a Greek delegate to the Council of EACPT for the years 2015-17. She has been a member of ISPE/SIG-DUR/EuroDURG since 2008 and has participated in the special, Cross National Comparison, Poster Session of EuroDURG at ICPE 2008 in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Gabriel Sanfélix-Gimeno

Gabriel Sanfelix-Gimeo has graduated as a pharmacist and holds Msc degree in Health Economics and Pharmacoeconomics. He defended his PhD thesis in 2009. After several fellowships regarding medication adherence, Dr. Sanfélix-Gimeno worked as associate researcher (funded by INCLIVA) in the Valencian School of Health Studies in the Health Services Research Unit, where he participated in the creation of a research line studying musculoskeletal disorders. In 2009, he joined the Centre for Public Health Research (CSISP, recently incorporated to FISABIO) as a postdoctoral researcher in the Health Services Research Unit (to present). He did a postdoctoral research at Harvard School of Public Health (Epidemiology Department) and the Brigham and Women's Hospital Harvard Medical School (Division of Pharmaco-epidemiology and Pharmacoeconomics) between 2011 and 2012 (funded by Carlos III Health Institute and Harvard School of Public Health). His research is focused on improving the appropriateness of use of evidence-based medications for the treatment of common chronic conditions.
He is currently working on several national and international projects as principal investigator and co-investigator regarding medication adherence, appropriate medication use and clinical outcomes. He is also interested in variations in medical practice, appropriate health care utilization, quality measures and economic evaluation.

Catherine Sermet

Catherine Sermet is Research Director and Deputy Director at IRDES (Institute for Research and Information in Health Economics) in Paris, France. She holds an MD degree obtained from the University René Descartes in Paris in 1982.

Her research focuses on pharmaceutical regulation, drug utilization and drug prescription from international and national point of views. More specifically, her recent research interests include the impact of reimbursement and pricing policies on drug utilization or prescription, prescribing efficiency and prescribing quality, and polypharmacy in the elderly. She has a broad experience in working with numerous databases such as prescription surveys and administrative claim databases.

Her previous works encompass various fields in health economics including health status, inequalities in health especially among vulnerable populations such as immigrants or disabled people,and she has acquired a strong experience in building Health Interview Surveys with the constant concern to improve the quality of data collection on medical and pharmaceutical consumption.

Gisbert W. Selke

Gisbert W. Selke studied mathematics and philosophy at the universities of Bonn and Edinburgh. Since 1989, he has been working at WIdO (AOK Research Institute, part of Germany's biggest statutory health insurance funds group), currently situated in Berlin. His field of work is the empirical analysis of the pharmaceuticals market in Germany, with a special interest in cross-national issues, questions around the introduction of new drugs, and improving safety of therapy for multi-morbid patients. He has worked on several international projects and is a founding member of the Piperska Research Group aimed at promoting rational prescribing in Europe. He occasionally teaches secondary data analysis of drug prescription data at Berlin's Charité.

Until 2000, he headed the German Drug Index. He directs several projects to make the drugs market more transparent. Among these are an executive information system, a rapid-action report service on developments in the drugs market, and an academic detailing service on rational prescribing for physicians. He has repeatedly worked in projects to inform political processes for reforms in the health care sector both nationally and internationally. He firmly believes that transparency and information are cornerstones for fostering the rational use of medicines and improving the outcomes of therapy.

Contact addresses of ExCo members

Björn Wettermark (**chair**)
Centre for Pharmaco-epidemiology Karolinska Institutet and
Department of Healthcare Development Public Healthcare Services Committee
Stockholm County Council
Box 17533
SE-118 91 Stockholm
SWEDEN
Tel: +46 8-123 135 80
Tel: 070/558 56 41
Email: bjorn.wettermark@ki.se

Monique Elseviers
University of Antwerp
Campus drie Eiken
Universiteitsplein 1
B-2610 Wilrijk
BELGIUM
Tel: +32 473 98 56 14
Fax: +32 3664 84 59
Email: monique.elseviers@ua.ac.be

Robert Vander Stichele
Heymans Institute of Pharmacology, Ghent University
De Pintelaan, 185, B-9000 Gent
BELGIUM
Tel: +32 92269808
Email: robert.vanderstichele@rug.ac.be

Vera Vlahović-Palčevski
Unit for Clinical Pharmacology
University Hospital Rijeka
Kresimirova 42
51000 Rijeka
CROATIA
Tel: +385 51 658805
Fax: +385 51 337536
Email: vvlahovic@inet.hr

Anna Birna Almarsdóttir
Institute of Public Health, Research unit of Clinical Pharmacology
J.B. Winsløws Vej 19,
DK-5000 Odense C,
DENMARK
Tel: +45 6550 3089
Email: abalmars@health.sdu.dk

Begler Begovic
Department of Clinical Pharmacology Clinical Centre University of Sarajevo,
Bolnicka 25, 71 000 Sarajevo
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
Telephone: + 387 33 563 086
Fax: + 387 33 667 309
Email: bbegovic@bih.net.ba

Marion Bennie
Strathclyde Institute of Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences
University of Strathclyde
Room 501a Robertson Wing
Taylor Street
Glasgow, G4 0NR
SCOTLAND
Tel: +44 (0) 141 548 2113
Fax: +44 (0)141 552 2562
Email: marion.bennie@strath.ac.uk

Ria Benkő (secretary)
Dept. of Clinical Pharmacy
University of Szeged,
Szikra utca 8, Szeged H-6725
HUNGARY
Tel/Fax: +36 62 544 921
E-mail: benkoria@gmail.com

Gabriel Sanfélix-Gimeno
Health Services Research Unit
Center for Public Health
Research (CSISP-FISABIO)
Av. Catalunya 21, 46020
Valencia
SPAIN
Tel:+34 961925970
Email: sanfelix_gab@gva.es

Brian Godman (treasurer)
Division of Clinical
Pharmacology
Karolinska Institutet
Stockholm
SWEDEN
Tel: +4687374081
OR 070/5585641
Fax: +46 8-737 40 12
Email:
mail@briangodman.co.uk
Brian.Godman@ki.se;
godman@marionegri.it

Jolanta Gulbinovič
State Medicines Control
Agency and Vilnius University
Žirmūnų 139A, LT-09120
LITHUANIA
Tel/fax: +370 673 06653/+370 5
2639265
Email:
JolantaGulbinovic@vvkt.lt

Janet Krska
Medway School of Pharmacy
The Universities of Greenwich
and Kent at Medway
Chatham Maritime
Kent UK ME4 4TB
UNITED KINGDOM
Tel: 01634 202950
Email:j.krska@kent.ac.uk

Elisabetta Poluzzi (webmaster)
Department of Pharmacology,
University of Bologna
Via Irnerio, 48
I 40126 Bologna
ITALY
Tel: +39 0512091809
Fax: +39 051248862
Email:
elisabetta.poluzzi@unibo.it

Paraskevi (Voula)
Papaioannidou
Aristotle University of
Thessaloniki; Faculty of
Medicine Department of
Pharmacology
University Campus
54124 Thessaloniki
GREECE
Tel:+30 2310 999314
Email: ppap@auth.gr

Gisbert W. Selke
AOK Research Institute
(WIdO)]
Rosenthaler Str. 31, 10178
Berlin
GERMANY
Tel:+49-3034646-2393
Email:
gisbert.selke@wido.bv.aok.de

Catherine Sermet
Institute for Research and
Information in Health
Economics (IRDES)
10 rue Vauvenargues, 75018
PARIS
FRANCE
Tel: + 33 1 01 53 93 43 37
Email: sermet@irdes.fr

Katja Taxis
Department of Pharmacy
Section of Pharmacotherapy
and Pharmaceutical Care
University of Groningen
Ant. Deusinglaan 1
9713 AV Groningen
THE NETHERLANDS
Tel: +31- (0)50 - 363 8205
Fax: +31- (0)50 - 363 2772
Email: k.taxis@rug.nl

Lisa Pont (SIGDUR chair)
Sydney Nursing school
University of Sydney
88 Mallet Street
Camperdown NSW 2006
AUSTRALIA
Tel: +61 2 9351 0563 |
Email:
lisa.pont@sydney.edu.au

For updates please visit our website: www.pharmacoepi.org/eurodurg

Please distribute this Bulletin to your colleagues!