

# **Minutes of the General Meeting of the European College of Equine Internal Medicine**

**Date and time: Friday February 3rd 2012, 9:00 hr  
Venue: The Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, UK**

## **Welcome & Apologies for absence**

Apologies were submitted by Robin van den Boom, Carla Cesarini, John Pringle, Niamh Collins, David Rendle, Agnès Leblond, Constanz Fintl, Monica Venner and Alexandra Imhasly.

The President showed the timeline of the ECEIM, starting in 2002 when the College was established, having the 1<sup>st</sup> Congress in 2005 in Leipzig and now having it's 5<sup>th</sup> Congress in Edinburgh. At this time the College has 106 Diplomates, of which 44 by examination, and 50 Residents. The Diplomates live in 19 countries, in Europe, the Middle East, South Africa, the USA and Australia.

He was delighted to report that the 2012 ECEIM congress had 145 delegates, comprising 68 ECEIM Diplomates, 51 Residents, 12 Non-ECEIM delegates, 2 Non-ECEIM guests, 7 Non-ECEIM speakers and 5 Non-veterinary assistants.

## **Minutes of the last meeting**

There was no comments or requests for changes from the Diplomates and the minutes were duly accepted as a true and accurate record of the 2011 GM

## **Examination Committee report (John Keen)**

The current Examination Committee consists of John Keen (Edinburgh, UK) Chair and local organiser, Karsten Feige (Hannover, Germany), Kris Hughes (Wagga Wagga,

Australia), Monica Venner (Destedt, Germany), Michael Hewetson (Helsinki, Finland), Lisa Katz (Dublin, Ireland), Anne Courouc -Malblanc (Nantes, France), Alexandra Imhasly (Berne, Switzerland) and Youssef Tamzali (ex officio). A schedule for succession planning showing the pattern of rotation of Diplomates into and out of the Examination Committee for the next five years and was shown. The president congratulated the committee on its excellent organisation and commented how important it was that the committees had a good list of volunteers waiting to join the committee so that the escalator system for entry into the committees and then progression into the Board could operate efficiently.

John Keen explained the progress towards the Exam 2012, including the assigning of duties to the committee members in March 2011, a meeting in July 2011 in Edinburgh, to view the venue and make the MCQ's. The external reviewer for the 2011-12 examination was Dr Mary Ann Guglick, DipACVIM. John explained the important role of the external reviewer in quality assurance and verification of the examination and thanks Dr Guglick for her efficient and meticulous work.

Information for the candidates was put online in Sept 2012, the Board was updated at the BEVA meeting in Liverpool and in October 31<sup>st</sup> the final candidate numbers were known. More detailed information was sent to the candidates and in January 2012 final information was given to candidates. The venue for the 2012 exam was the Edinburgh University conference site, separate from the conference venue. It was a dedicated site with accommodation on site for examiners and candidates.

The Examination format was the same as in 2011. 26 candidates entered the examination, of which 7 entered the General Papers only. In 2009 only 3 candidates did this and in 2011 only 2. John commented that this was a sensible trend for residents because it allowed the examination to be taking in two consecutive years, rather than all

at once at the end of the training programme, thereby reducing the pressure of the terminal examination. Four new candidates sat the whole exam. In 2009 16 candidates sat the whole exam and 15 in 2011. There were 3 candidates for the Certifying Papers only. The amount of re-sits was 12 (3 more eligible but did not apply/enter). In 2009 there were 9 and in 2011 there were 12 re-sits.

The consequences of lower numbers of candidates with a yearly examination are a reduced income for examination which makes the examinations a net cost (i.e. a deficit) to the ECEIM.

There are approximately 1500 MCQs/EMQs in the 3 question banks submitted by founding Diplomates, de facto Diplomate submissions, new Diplomate submissions and re-accreditation submissions. Scott Pirie, previous chair of the Committee, had created a more efficient database system with a tabulated question format, which is posted on the website. Although the ECEIM has a healthy number of questions in the bank, many questions are not useful, containing out of date information, repeat testing points, or opinion based questions without recent literature or text references. Many questions need minor or major re-wording. The result is that a higher proportion of questions have to be reused from year to year than is optimum.

To improve the quality of the question banks and provide better overall quality assurance of the examination process, the ECIM has decided as part of its strategic plan, to invest in advice and training input from professional medical assessment consultants. As a first step professional review and statistical analysis of recent examination papers (difficulty index, discriminatory index and reliability index analysis of each question) so that only quality assured questions remain in the bank from these examinations. This will be a continuous process applied to all future exams and future new question submissions

An assessment of the current bank of questions will be made and a bank of 'good' questions will be retained. A sub-committee of the exam committee will be formed, the 'Bank Managers', consisting of 6 Diplomates. The College will invest in a training and exam question writing seminar in July 2012, for the Bank Managers which will be run by the medical assessment consultants. The purpose of the training is to ensure that they are well prepared to perform this huge duty. Their aim will be to improve, update and manage new questions and the current bank.

To replace the current Diplomat rating process, the exam committee will also receive professional training in standard setting of exams. This will replace the current assessment by all diplomates because data from the medical assessment sector has shown that standard setting is more accurate and robust when carried out by a small number of trained individuals rather than a large number of untrained individuals. This will allow the examination to become separate from the Congress, which will bring many operational advantages to the ECEIM, because diplomate rating will no longer be required. The College is planning to decouple the examination and congress after the 2013 ECEIM Congress.

Essay questions are chosen by the exam committee and consist of questions about current 'buzz' topics/ important concepts etc. There is a generally high pass rate of the essays (78% in 2011). From 2011, there have been typed essays only and to ensure that all candidates are able to use keyboard layouts they are familiar with, for the 2012 exam ECEIM bought keyboards for all different European preferences (QWERTY/QWERTZ/AZERTY). The 2012 OCM consisted of 2 cases, like in 2011. Pass rate of the OCM in 2011 was 76%.

John Keen asked the Diplomates to please rate the exams if they have not already done so and thanks the current exam committee, the two Diplomates that will leave the

committee, Karsten Feige and Kris Hughes, the previous examination committees and the ECEIM Board.

*Questions:*

Lisa Katz: what are the question making rules for diplomats?

Kerstin Fey: new diplomats will have to make at least 5 questions (mandatory) and will receive 6 re-evaluation points for this effort, after this it is optional for Diplomates, and 2 points per question will be received with a maximum of 6. The goal of this policy is to continue to collect question ideas from Diplomates because even if the questions are not suitable for use without modification by the Bank Managers, it is very useful to have new topic ideas and question ideas submitted by Diplomates.

Gaby van Galen: Will there be a deadline for question making?

Josh Slater: there will be a deadline, because the trained group of Bank Managers needs time to refine them, but a clear briefing about this deadline and procedure will be sent out when the Examination Committee are ready to begin this new way of working.

Inge Wijnberg: what is the timeline of this decision?

Josh Slater: the training workshops will be before this summer and the implementation of all the new rules will be done before 2013. Members of the question bank group will be asked by the exam committee and there will be a priority for previous exam committee members because of their experience, followed by new volunteers that can apply to John Keen.

**Education and Credentials Committee report (Kerstin Fey)**

At this moment there are 32 ECEIM accredited institutions, none of them need reevaluation in 2012.

There is stability in the amount of yearly enrolments of residents. There is no deadline for enrolment and applications can be submitted at any time to the E&C Committee. A resident can start a residency provided the resident meets the minimum educational and experience standards specified by ECEIM, if the institute is approved, and if the resident's enrolment is approved.

***Resident Documentation Pack (RDP).*** The first RDP should be assessed between 6 and 18 months after the start of training in Standard programmes. The RDP can be submitted to the Committee at any point up to the annual deadline of June 30th and supervisors and residents are encouraged not to leave submission to the last minute. The 2nd RDP has to be submitted before the exam application, approximately after two thirds of the training programme. A 3rd RDP must be included in the exam application. Detailed case logs are to be included. In 2011, nineteen residents were asked to submit individual files. In 2011, 12 residents sent in their first RDP and 10 their second RDP. There were 11 new exam applications. The 7 that applied for general paper only were all accepted. Four candidates applied for full exam, of which 2 were accepted (1 standard, 1 alternate), one had 'restricted' acceptance (in press in time) and one was declined and hence accepted for General Paper only.

Regarding the diplomate reevaluation, all 6 assessed Diplomates reached required points and received re-accreditation without problems.

This year, 22 Diplomates are due to submit applications for reevaluation, the Invited Diplomates (2002) (Aguilera-Tejero, Knottenbelt, Leadon, Mair, Marr, McGorum, Pringle, Sloet), the De facto Diplomates from 2002 (Feige, Gehlen, Herholz, Ricketts, Schusser) and the Diplomat that passed the Exam in 2007 (de Bruijn, Duggan, Fintl, Hughes, Keen, Sutton, Westermann, Abbott, Delguste).

Diplomates are asked to list publications only up to 100 points.

Kerstin Fey explained the new regulations for exam questions again and asked

Diplomates to arrange proof of conference attendances.

Kerstin Fey will rotate off the E&C Committee having completed her term of office and

Nicola Menzies-Gow will become Chair of this Committee. Diplomates who are

interested can always join on the first meeting.

*Questions:*

Ben Sykes : why not detach publication demands from the date of the exam? The answer

that these rules are EBVS rules was explained by Celia Marr, Derek Knottenbelt and

Marianne Sloet and that residents must have completed all credentials requirements in

full before sitting the examination.

Gaby van Galen: would it be good to consider feedback from residents on their institute?

Kerstin Fey: We will ask the residents at the resident meeting what they think of it.

Ben Sykes: ACVIM is busy with some sort of resident feedback/ resident ombudsman.

Inge Wijnberg: “paper accepted” should be on the slide instead of “paper printed”.

#### Nominations Committee report (Derek Knottenbelt)

The nomination committee consisted of Derek Knottenbelt, Bruce McGorum and

Bernard Ohnesorge. For the Board, there was a single vacancy because of the retirement

of Constanze Fintl. Nominations were sought and resulted in 2 nominations of which 1

preferred to be considered in 12 -24 months time. The other one, Prof Kerstin Fey was

proposed for election.

Six other diplomates identified for sub committees.

#### **Elections to the ECEIM Board**

There was a single candidate standing for election to the ECEIM Board. The Secretary read out the candidate's CV: 'Kerstin Fey is Professor of Equine Internal Medicine at the Justus-Liebig-University, in Giessen, Germany. She became ECEIM de facto Diplomate in 2003 and is Chair of Educational & Credential Committee since 2009'.

There was a written vote by secret ballot to elect Prof. Kerstin Fey as new Board Member. Youssef Tamzali explained that Board membership is very time consuming and that applicants need to consider this before applying.

Marianne Sloet: The voting form should contain yes/no/abstain. This is true and Diplomates are asked to write down "abstain" if they want this option.

After a count of votes Prof. Kerstin Fey was elected unanimously.

#### Report from the President and Board (Youssef TAMZALI)

The ECEIM Board in 2011 consisted of Youssef Tamzali (President), Josh Slater (Past President), Gunther van Loon (Treasurer), Cornélie Westermann (Secretary), Constanze Fintl (Board member) and Hélène Amory (Board Member).

First, the president reminds that attendance at least 2/5 ECEIM meetings is mandatory for all ECEIM diplomates, because it is a mandatory re-evaluation requirement by EBVS, and the President was happy that there are many Diplomates at this AGM.

The President stated that for ECEIM Committees, volunteers are always needed and welcome. From the volunteers, some selection takes place because language and geographical issues in mind, so it could be that volunteers are asked later than the first year of volunteering.

Volunteers for next ECEIM congresses organization are Giessen, Utrecht, Oslo, Brno, Zürich, Helsinki, Lyon and Perugia.



In 2011, there was a case of fraud by a new resident and previous internship supervisor in relation to the documents submitted for enrolment into an ECEIM residency programme. Forms were not accurately filled in in relation to the duration of the internship, an investigation was started, and measures taken. The President reminded all diplomates that all supervisors must check all submitted documents because they are responsible for these. Furthermore, when certifying completion of internships diplomates were reminded that it is an EBVS requirement that these are for a minimum of 12 months and that intern periods of less than 12 months are not eligible for entry into residency programmes.

**ECEIM Mission Statement:**

The mission of the ECEIM is to have an international leadership role in Equine Internal Medicine, advancing the discipline through postgraduate education, training and research to create a collaborative global community of specialists. The College will promote the highest clinical and research standards, ensure the visibility of equine internal medicine specialists and engage effectively with the wider veterinary and horse-owning communities.

**ECEIM Strategic Plan 2011-2015**

*Aim1. Outreach and widening participation:* extending standard and alternative track training opportunities in Europe and beyond.

Beyond Europe, ECEIM has locations in South Africa (Training institution) and in Australia : Wagga Wagga, a newly approved ECEIM training institution.

*Question:*

Inge Wijnberg: which is the institute in South Africa: ?

Youssef Tamzali: Pretoria.

In Europe, there are still countries with no ECEIM Diplomate and also no ECEIM training programme. To try resolving this problem, a Development Scholarship Program (DSP) is going to start. Equine veterinarians that will join this program will be funded by their own institutions. A pre-requisite is that they have performed an internship or equivalent to an internship. They will enrol in 6 months training for upgrading scientific and practical knowledge, in order to have a better chance of applying for established residency programs. Diplomates are asked to volunteer with their institution. The President will come with more information soon.

*Aim 2: Development of the ECEIM family:* resident training and support, resident assessment and specialist development for Diplomates.

The work that will be done in this field in the near future is:

For resident assessment and training:

- Core skills workshops for residents will take place during congress.
- Professionalization of examiners will take place as presented by John Keen.
- Splitting Congress and Exam from 2014, with the exam in a fixed place for many years (Hannover, same date).
- The Diplomates are asked what the best period for a congress will be. The meeting decides it will take place between November and January, depending on things like other congresses, etc.

A bi-annual newsletter will be launched.

To ensure Specialist development for Diplomates, advanced ECEIM Continuing Education programs will be developed. The format will be one day before or during the congress, and it will be opened to ECEIM and to ACVIM Diplomates as well. Assembly's interest from the proposed list of topics is as follows: oncology 17, ophthalmology 16, neurology 26, cardiology 20, ultrasonography 7, endoscopy 5, neonatology 26, dermatology 5, endocrinology 15, sport medicine /exercise physiology 30+. The future congress committees will take account of these results.

*Questions:*

Inge Wijnberg: will this education take place within the timeslot the congress?

Youssef Tamzali: it will be linked to the congress, it is an extra activity, but it is less time consuming than if it were planned on a separate meeting.

Lesley Young: please try to insert this advanced education day in the "empty day" to not extent the congress too long. It was agreed to do this.

*Aim 3: Visibility of the ECEIM*

a) Working with ACVIM and JVIM

JVIM:

JVIM Editor in Chief Ken Hinchcliff is in Edinburgh this year and has a separate presentation.

ACVIM:

ECEIM and ACVIM have a mutual goal in increasing collaboration. Actions that have taken place until now are:

The President of ECEIM was at ACVIM Forum (Denver May 2011) and attended several meetings.

An ACVIM-ECEIM liaison committee has been set up, consisting of Allen Roussel (President LAIM Executive Committee), Pamela Wilkins, and Ben Sykes for ACVIM, and Youssef Tamzali, Josh Slater and Cornélie Westermann for ECEIM.

The first meeting has taken place in Edinburgh. Areas of partnership will be a speakers exchange, collaborative CE meetings, sharing “marketing” strategies, sharing organizational policy and structure. ACVIM is also working on an associate member status proposal.

Visibility to veterinary community and public:

Europe is working hard to establish the European Acknowledged Practitioner (EAP).

This is a species-bound and not discipline-bound group, and the programme is acted upon by the European Board of Veterinary Professional Development (EBVDP).

ECEIM action upon this matter is that it will write to EBVDP for clarification and that it will work to enhance development of communication tools for Diplomates to clarify the difference between the ECEIM Specialists and the EAP.

A question to the Diplomates is that experts in a specialism area write a small part on their subject for the website and send it to Gunther van Loon. This is to expand visibility to non Diplomates. Gunther van Loon and Bianca Schwarz will take the lead in this.

*Question:*

Lisa Kats: AAEP has this already, the advice is to contact them, which will be done.

**Treasurer’s report (Gunther van Loon)**

The Treasurer reminded all Diplomates that the deadline for payment of annual dues is March 2012 and that payment should be made as soon as possible. A proof of payment can be sent if wished (on demand).

He reported that the total balance of ECEIM is very healthy, so projects about improving exam quality training etc. can be done well financially. There will be no change in fees for this year. The accounts and balances are checked professionally this year again, following the constitutional demands. EBVS has stated ECEIM's financial accounts to be the best of all Colleges. The treasurer invites any interested Diplomate to check all financial reports and talk with him about the books this afternoon.

### **Future ECEIM meetings**

Emmanuelle van Erck gave a short presentation about Horseland, the proposed venue for the 2013 Congress. This is a resort near Lille that is dedicated to the horse. As an introductory offer, The ECEIM has been given a significant financial discount. There will be plenty of horses and facilities like a racetrack and pistes for hands-on workshops. Included in the accommodation will be: spa, pool, bar, pooltable, indoor golf, etc. The idea behind this location is also an increase of ECEIM visibility. For this matter, the congress will include workshops and a theoretical day for practitioners parallel to our meeting. The scientific program will be from Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> -Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> of February, 2013. Workshops and advanced education programme will be on Friday.

### **Welcome to new Diplomates**

The President handed out ECEIM Diplomas to the new Diplomates of the College: Fernando Malanana, Katja Roscher, David Rendle, Bianca Schwarz, Catriona Lyle,

Dagmar Trachsel, Niamh Collins, Inge Durie, Barbora Bezdekova, Philip Ivens, Liewwke Kranenburg, Bettina Dunkel, Jill Bryan, Rosa Barsnick, and Ben Sykes.

**Any other business**

Derek Knottenbelt: commented that the College should standardize the post nominal for Diplomates of the college (the abbreviation to be used after a Diplomat's name).

Marianne Sloet: EBVS has issued a ruling on this for all colleges and the abbreviation that should be used is DipECEIM.

Inge Wijnberg: asked what Diplomates should call themselves. Josh Slater said that Diplomates hold a diploma of ECEIM, making them Diplomat, and their title is European Specialist in Equine Internal Medicine. Diplomates are invited to use the EBVS logo on business cards, email and other correspondence. This is available for download from the EBVS secretariat.