Motherhood and apple pie

Phil Wiffen

Last month saw the much publicised European Association of Hospital Pharmacists (EAHP) summit take place in Brussels. Over 100 delegates representing 34 European countries gathered to debate and discuss a series of statements about hospital pharmacy. The summit set out to develop a set of statements for hospital pharmacy that are relevant to Europe. These built on the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) global hospital pharmacy statement that was published in 2008.1 A full report of the meeting with papers on the underpinning methodology and the full statements will be published in a future issue of EJHP.

This was a well organised and managed event with the majority of the day-and-a-half of meetings being used to discuss and refine the proposed statements. Every delegate had the opportunity to discuss each statement in a café style meeting where delegates moved around a number of stations. The value of the discussions was enhanced by the attendance of both patient groups and non-pharmacy professions.

The meeting was able to move forward smoothly because of a large amount of preparation during the previous 18 months to develop the draft statements using a Delphi process. One of the textbooks2 on Delphi defines the process as ‘a method for structuring a group communication process so that the process is effective in allowing a group of individuals, as a whole, to deal with a complex problem.’ In practice, it is a communication method whereby questionnaires are used to develop responses to particular issues. These are then collated and replayed to the original contributors as a means of obtaining consensus.

Dr Roberto Frontini stated that: “Through the new European Statements of Hospital Pharmacy, patients, hospital pharmacists and our sister healthcare professionals have set out a clear vision for what hospital pharmacy should be achieving in every European country.” The end result was agreement on 44 statements in six sections as follows:

Section 1: Introductory Statements and Governance—seven statements
Section 2: Selection, Procurement and Distribution—seven statements
Section 3: Production and Compounding—six statements
Section 4: Clinical Pharmacy Services—eight statements
Section 5: Patient Safety and Quality Assurance—11 statements
Section 6: Education and Research—five statements

The agreed statements are currently available on the EAHP website.3

These statements need to be examined within hospitals in every European country. As Dr Roberto Frontini continued in his quotation to say: “EAHP will roll out a series of tools and initiatives to support the achievement of the statements, but a major onus now falls on health systems to prepare the way for improvement as well. The positive support from patient organisations and other healthcare professionals assures us that the statements are a shared aspiration and provide a route towards continuously improving patient care within hospitals in every European country.”

EJHP supports the developments and will publish relevant wisdom and discussion as we move forward.

Competing interests None.

Provenance and peer review Commissioned; internally peer reviewed.


REFERENCES
1 http://www.fip.org/baselstatements
3 http://www.eahp.eu/events/european-summit/summit-documents

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