European Academy of Neurology – What Has Happened Since the First Conference in 2015?

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The European Academy of Neurology (EAN) has seen rapid growth and development since its inauguration in 2014 during the joint congress of the European Federation of Neurological Societies (EFNS) and the European Neurological Society (ENS) in Istanbul, Turkey.1,2

Last year, EAN’s first congress brought together 6,391 health professionals related to the field of neurology from all over the world. The delegates enjoyed a wide range of high-quality lectures, symposia, focused workshops and excellent teaching courses, as well as posters and oral presentations showing an impressive level of state-of-the-art technology in Europe across all generations.3

In only two years, the number of EAN members has grown substantially and currently there are more than 21,000 members.2 One can join the EAN in a number of ways. One option is to become an individual member, either as a full, corresponding or associate individual member. Another option is to become an institutional member, which is further categorised as full or corresponding institutional membership. Detailed information on how to join the EAN can be found on the EAN website.2

The advantages of being a member of EAN are manifold. Besides the opportunity to be part of the largest neurological community in Europe, which allows one to build an active network with other health professionals with similar interests, monthly mailshots of the EAN electronic newsletter ensure that one stays up to date with developments within the growing field of neurology in Europe, as well as around the world. Additionally, individual and some institutional members benefit from a reduced fee at EAN congresses and individual members are allowed to vote and hold office within the EAN.2 Furthermore, membership also includes free online access to several journals and learning platforms including the European Journal of Neurology, eBrain and the EAN guideline archive.2

To improve and facilitate communication and interaction between the EAN, its members and the wider public, the EAN website is being updated.4 EAN, as the ‘home of neurology’, also has a strong focus on involving the next generation representing European neurology. Since the beginning of this year, the former European Association of Young Neurologists and Trainees (EAYNT) has become a section of the EAN.5 Residents, research fellows and junior specialists in neurology with no more than three years of practice after completion of the resident training are highly encouraged to become members of the newly formed Residents and Research Fellows section (RRFS) of the EAN. Amongst other things, the RRFS provides junior colleagues with the unique opportunity to become part of different educational and scientific initiatives at an early stage of their career, to get support via grants and bursaries and to meet and exchange their experiences with trainees from other countries. Membership is free in 2016 and more information can be found on the EAN website.2

In order to give junior neurologists the best possible education and to harmonise European neurology training, EAN also offers a wide range of excellent schools and teaching courses throughout the year. The most widely known is the EAN spring school, which is annually held in Stare Splavy, Czech Republic, as well as regional teaching courses which are held in regions in Eastern Europe and Africa.6 During these very successful courses the main fields of neurology are covered and state-of-the art knowledge is delivered via lectures as well as interactive seminars.

Besides these courses, the EAN also supports junior training in neurology with different fellowship programmes. EAN-sponsored fellowships range from six-week clinical fellowships up to 12-month research fellowships. Fellowships are a unique opportunity to gain a deeper insight into another health system whilst learning new approaches to both, clinical neurology and research (including rare techniques), to build a network and to improve and broaden international collaboration.2

The second congress of the EAN is rapidly approaching, and will be held in Copenhagen, Denmark on 28–31 May 2016. This years’ programme is not to be missed! It offers an exceptional selection of different lectures, symposia, workshops and special sessions, as well as teaching courses, hands-on courses and case-based workshops by key opinion leaders in the field of neurology. An impressive 1,900 abstracts were submitted from neurologists all over the world. These abstracts have been reviewed and the majority will be presented in the form of e-poster sessions or oral presentations during the EAN congress.7

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E-poster sessions were introduced last year and allow delegates to have a closer look at the posters on one of the poster screens during the entire congress.

Participants whose abstracts have been accepted have the chance to be selected for a bursary to attend the EAN congress in order to present their work. Additionally, 12 participants were nominated to present their work during a clinical and a scientific tournament which will be held during the congress. All presented abstracts will be published as a supplement to the European Journal of Neurology, exposing them to a wider audience even after the congress has ended. Besides this outstanding scientific programme, participants will also have the opportunity to meet colleagues and international key opinion leaders during numerous networking events.