

## European Association of Faculties of Pharmacy

### **EAFP Organization**

#### **From the President: Our experiences from COVID-19 pandemic in pharmacy education**

The occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic was a sudden, unprecedented disruption from an academic, social and economic perspective. As we reflect on this past semester, we can identify challenges faced by academics on a personal level and as an academic. A main task was to shift from onsite teaching and assessment to online platforms as University campuses were closed impacting on classes, laboratories and placements. The shift to online teaching was rapid and abrupt. Looking back at this scenario from a positive viewpoint, this presented an opportunity: to experience new possibilities from digital technology so as to maintain contact between staff and provide the teaching to students. In such a context, feelings of uncertainty abounded and the need to have support structures for students and staff led to the intensification of collegiality.

As countries are easing down the COVID-19 measures, society is looking towards the new normality. Arguments into whether Europe is past the first wave, if there will be a second or a third wave keep coming forth. For sure there are lessons that we can take up from this unexpected but predicted situation. Economies are adapting and while maximising on remote working, adopting changes in work patterns to minimise personal contact. Within pharmacy education, an ultimate goal is to reflect on the COVID-19 disruption and adopt positive aspects which contribute to transformation in pharmacy education. Transformation that increases efficiency in obtaining the learning outcomes aspired to through the education programmes provided and which leads to relevant research would be a constructive impact of COVID-19.

One of the features recognised during the COVID-19 pandemic is the need for research including in areas related to identification of compassionate use of medicines, medical devices including use of protective equipment and point-of-care immunology testing, and development, testing and licensing of vaccines. At the Department of Pharmacy of the University of Malta, a series of webinars were presented as weekly sessions over 15 weeks to pharmacy and other healthcare professions students, pharmacists and healthcare professionals from Malta and internationally.

The webinars were intended to develop an interprofessional dimension to the discussion by analysing current research and practices in the management and mitigation of the COVID-19 pandemic. For each Webinar, a panel of experts including virologists, immunologists, specialists in infectious disease, internal medicine and intensive care, pharmaceutical and public health regulators. These webinars served as an informal forum for staff and students of the Department of Pharmacy to catch up and discuss the on-going science and practices related to the evolvement of the pandemic measures. A large number of pre-print publications were experienced and a clear signal was that critical analysis of the papers published and interpretation of causality and correlation within context is crucial when extrapolating research into practice.

The COVID-19 pandemic has kick-started a momentum to underline research that has relevant and translational impact to public health, patient needs and the management of infective diseases. A lesson learnt is that there is still room and need for relevant research in this area. Exploiting on digital technology to provide a fruitful and significant pharmacy education experience is another lesson learnt.

Creating an optimum balance between on-site and remote teaching, moving towards more paperless methods adopted in learning experiences are surely worth considering as we continue to innovate our teaching models. In this issue of the Newsletter, we bring you a snapshot of articles in pharmacy education published in the past six months. One paper, published in the journal *Currents in pharmacy teaching and learning* last February by Hamilton et al, reports on pre-pandemic student perspectives, of online learning. Most students prefer live lectures or a mixture of live and remote-based lectures. A global student survey by Aristovnik et al from the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia on impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on life of higher education students, reports that students felt that COVID-19 significantly increased study workload. In general, students did not feel confident using online platforms for learning. Students from Croatia and Italy reported least disturbance and students from Slovenia and Malta were the most satisfied with the support from teaching staff and tutors.

*I would like to invite you to share your experiences and features that you are planning to incorporate in the long-term. We look forward to receiving your feedback on [info@eafponline.eu](mailto:info@eafponline.eu) so that we can include them in the upcoming Newsletter issues so we all learn from shared experiences.*

**Lilian M. Azzopardi**

University of Malta

### Pharmacy education

*Train4Health Project webinar on interprofessional education for health students'*

The President of the European Association of Faculties of Pharmacy, Professor Lilian Azzopardi, was a guest commentator on a webinar on interprofessional education (IPE) for health students. Professor Azzopardi joined other European educators to comment on the talks of the internationally acclaimed expert on IPE, Professor Jill Thistlethwaite. Jill gave two talks in the first Webinar of the

Train4Health Project, on the 17th June, about principles and advantages of IPE in health, challenges in implementing IPE, strategies to overcome them and case-based learning in the IPE context. The webinar was well-attended, reaching a global interdisciplinary audience, who actively participated in the Q&As session. Professor Thistlethwaite's presentations will be available at <https://www.train4health.eu>.

The webinar was part of a series of webinars with academic educators, researchers, practitioners and regulators, organised by the Train4Health project. The next webinar, entitled "Advancing self-care support for people with chronic diseases" is scheduled for the 16th July 2020. This interactive digital session will discuss topics such as the contribution of behaviour change science to supporting self-care in people with chronic diseases and the role of competency frameworks to improve health professionals' support. Registration and updates are available via the project social media (<https://www.facebook.com/eseltrain4health/>).



[www.facebook.com/eseltrain4health/](https://www.facebook.com/eseltrain4health/)

Train4Health aims to improve health care students' competences in behaviour change to effectively support self-care in chronic diseases. It is funded by the European Union's Erasmus+ Programme under grant agreement no. 2019-1-PT01-KA203-061389. This educational project with a strong R&D component targets nursing, pharmacy and sports sciences students. It is expected to yield a coherent and innovative educational package on behaviour change support, aligned with the European agenda on digital transformation in education and training. Educational products contributing to advance behaviour change support education in chronic diseases include a MOOC and a simulation software, informed by a common learning-outcomes based curricula.

**Cristina Baixinho, Mara Guerreiro**

Project Co-ordinator



**Chronicles in pharmaceutical education from perspective of working professionals**

One of EPSA's main pillars is education and we have a long-standing tradition in advocating for an evolving pharmaceutical education all over Europe that will prepare students for the professional world. Pharmaceutical education offers a variety of different career possibilities which EPSA considers an advantage. EPSA is advocating for comprehensive education that offers students the introductory knowledge to work in various pharmaceutical fields and specialize after graduation.

As each pharmaceutical field requires specific additional knowledge, EPSA wishes to demonstrate both the specific knowledge required for each field and the need for the same basic knowledge in all fields to pharmaceutical students. Some of our members have raised concern that they do not feel prepared for all fields. For this reason, EPSA organised Educational Chronicles in the form of a series of online activities.

The idea for each online activity was to focus on specific fields of pharmacy. Speakers, who are experts from professional entities presented their view on pharmaceutical education. The activities were structured as a presentation of the specific fields by the professionals, followed by a discussion with the student participants. All in all, in 2019 EPSA delivered 6 webinars, with around 12h of educational presentations and released 60 pages-long report from all those meetings. The areas covered by the webinars were:

- Academia, Research and Clinical Trials
- The Pharmacy of Tomorrow
- Oncology and Veterinary Pharmacy
- Drug Information and Falsified Medicines Directive
- Basics of Regulatory Pharmacy
- The Future of Pharmaceutical Industry

For more information on the outcomes please visit EPSA website <https://www.epsa-online.org/educational-outcomes/> or contact [vp.er@epsa-online.org](mailto:vp.er@epsa-online.org)

**News**

**2020 EAFP Annual Conference**

The 2020 Annual Conference of the European Association of Faculties of Pharmacy which was scheduled to be held in Malta between the 6 and 8 May 2020 is postponed tentatively to the 9 till 11 November 2020. We are monitoring the situation and updates will follow in September 2020. All paid registrations are still considered to be valid. Name changes to these paid registrations are allowed. The early bird registration fee holds. All accepted posters and oral communications remain valid.

Looking forward to hosting you soon. Please do not hesitate to contact the organising committee on [registrationeafp-pharmacy.ms@um.edu.mt](mailto:registrationeafp-pharmacy.ms@um.edu.mt).

**EAFP grants for 2021**

The EAFP executive committee has decided to make available 4 partnership development grants for the year 2021. Each grant involves



a maximum of 2000 Euro's, plus a free participation in an EAFP annual conference.

The grants are intended to facilitate network forming between European member institutions, to identify new opportunities for education (PED-grant) or for research (PRD-grant). The grants are primarily intended to provide funding for members and member institutions to start up new projects and to assist in the development of an effective collaboration. Project-funded activities must take place within one year after the grant allocation.

Details about eligibility criteria and the application procedure can be found at: <https://eafponline.eu/grants/>

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 30 September 2020.**

### **Abstracts from EAFP Annual Conferences Published**

Abstracts from the EAFP Annual Conference organised in Parma in 2018 are now published in the Pharmacy Education Journal (citation Pharmacy Education 2020; 20(1): 28-42) accessible at <http://pharmacyeducation.fip.org/pharmacyeducation>.

### **Announcements**

#### ***A special issue on Curriculum Development: Call for papers***

Worldwide changes in the roles of pharmacists has triggered the idea to dedicate a special issue of the journal Pharmacy to several aspects of 'Pharmacy curriculum development'. The following (non-exhaustive) list of subjects may be of interest for this issue: educational frameworks, progressive development of student competences, motivation, feedback and assessment, and suitable teaching/learning approaches for professional development. In addition, curriculum integration, optimization, management and teacher/preceptor professionalization are planned to be covered. The chapters will also be made available in book format, as free digital or as paperback edition (through Amazon.com). Further details are given at the website of the journal:

[www.mdpi.com/journal/pharmacy/special\\_issues/Pharmacy\\_Curriculum\\_Development](http://www.mdpi.com/journal/pharmacy/special_issues/Pharmacy_Curriculum_Development)

Authors are invited to describe their experiences with aspects of curriculum development in an inspirational and practical way, aimed at supporting colleagues worldwide with the design of completely new curricula or with the re-engineering of existing curricula. The deadline for submitting manuscripts is **September 1, 2020**.

If you are interested in contributing to this volume, contact the guest editor, Andries Koster, with your suggestions and/or outline of the proposed paper: [A.S.Koster@uu.nl](mailto:A.S.Koster@uu.nl)

### **Opportunity for students to publish their research**

The European Pharmaceutical Students Association (EPSA) has teamed with the European Federation for Pharmaceutical Sciences (EUFEPS) and launched a special science publication where students can submit, get an evaluation and publish their research work.

Further information on this opportunity to motivate students to experience dissemination of research available at [www.epsa-online.org/epsa-students-science-publication/](http://www.epsa-online.org/epsa-students-science-publication/).

### **Literature alert**

#### ***The role of online learning in pharmacy education: A nationwide survey of student pharmacists***

Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning 2020; 12: 614-625 by Hamilton LA et al.

Purpose: Assessing student preferences associated with the utility of online learning methods

Highlights: Most students prefer live lectures or a hybrid of live and recorded lectures. Most students consider technology to be valuable to their academic success. Younger students prefer keeping their academic and social live separate.

#### ***An assessment of interprofessional education in schools/colleges of pharmacy in the United States***

Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning 2020; 12: 626-632 by Salvati AL et al.

Purpose: To gather information regarding current IPE programs and curricula in colleges of pharmacy across the US.

Highlights: Mechanisms that promote IPE success include partnerships, faculty interest, having an IPE center, being located on an academic medical center, administrative support, and integrating IPE during curricular change. Barriers to IPE include logistics, faculty buy-in, sustainability/funding, distance from other



programs, and differing accreditation standards across programs, Advice for others developing IPE include be innovative/patient/flexible, collaborate with others, identify key initial partners, develop a director or coordinator of IPE position, and receive administrative support.

***Clinical pharmacy education and practice evolution in Malta***

J Am Coll Clin Pharm 2020 DOI: 10.1002/jac5.1280 by Azzopardi LM et al.

Purpose: To describe how outcomes of pharmacy education developments have impacted pharmacy practice in Malta

Highlights: The characteristics of pharmacy education in Malta involve the absorption of change in a transformative process that produced positive pharmacy education outcomes and an impact on clinical pharmacy evolutions in both hospital and community practice

***Contribution of pharmacy education to pharmaceutical research and development: Critical insights from educators***

Perspectives in Public Health 2020; 140: 62-66 by Nouri AI et al.

Purpose: Examines outputs of pharmaceutical education with the development of the pharmacy profession and how that affects pharmaceutical innovation. It also discusses different models of collaboration between the academic and pharmaceutical industry in order to achieve a healthy collaboration between stakeholders.

Highlights: The shifting of pharmacy education from the technical to more clinical aspects did not change the identity of the pharmacist. Initial education of pharmacists still covers the fundamental sciences that give them the proper knowledge and equip them to be competent to be involved in technical and industrial work.

***Time to change to improve health: Clinical pharmacy and pharmaceutical care education in Turkey***

Journal of Ideas in Health 2020; 3(1): 131-134 by Bektay MY et al.

Purpose: To describe clinical pharmacy education in Turkey

Highlights: A stepwise approach significantly smoothed the transition from the product-oriented to the patient-oriented pharmacy education.

***Why we should create uniform pharmacy education requirements across different countries: A review of current requirements and the need for global regulator input***

Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning 2020;(12): 499–503 by Micallef R et al.

Purpose: Across the globe, multiple degree pathways exist to enter the pharmacist profession. These include a bachelor of science, a masters, and an increasing number of doctor of pharmacy degrees. Various models exist for lifelong learning (CPD and CE) requirements. While frameworks exist for a global model, there is limited evidence of progress.

Highlights: Lifelong learning practices, including Continuing Professional Development and Continuing Education vary globally, learning from global experiences allows the sharing of best practice, Working together globally will enhance the patient experience.

***The COPHELA (Cooperation in Quality Assurance for Pharmacy Education and Training between Europe and Latin America) Project***

Pharmacy 2020, 8, 29; doi:10.3390/pharmacy8010029 by Sánchez-Pozo A. et al.

Purpose: Describes the COPHELA (Cooperation in Quality Assurance for Pharmacy Education and Training between Europe and Latin America) collaborative project which consists of a consortium of Universities from the European Union (EU) and Latin America. The project is funded by the Erasmus+ program of the Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) of the European Commission and aims to produce on-line courses for masters' degree in the area of pharmacy.