UEMS votes positively on the establishment of IR Division

One of Interventional Radiology’s biggest problems and therefore one of CIRSE’s main fields of action has been the recognition of Interventional Radiology as a medical specialty rather than a “professional hobby” as some would like to denominate it. Although it sounds simple enough, it has been anything but, due to greatly varying definitions of the field in the various European countries and the numerous interest groups.

It is the great interest in interventional procedures that have made a clear definition of our specialty so indispensible at a time when everybody is lining up or rather jumping the line to get a piece of the cake. Although many non-radiologists think of IR mainly as a collection of peripheral vascular interventional procedures, its spectrum is much broader, and covers nonvascular interventions (e.g. biliary, gastrointestinal, urinary), embolization, and tumour ablation as well. In essence, interventional radiology is the use of imaging guidance in the treatment of patients.

Until recently Interventional Radiology was a self-declared medical sub-specialty of radiology. Although recognized in some countries and embedded in the European Society of Radiology (ESR), it was not seen as a clearly defined profession by numerous authorities. In this context CIRSE proved that it has grown to become a powerful political organisation able to play a strong role on the European level.

This was clearly shown in the preparation leading up to the UEMS Council vote on April 25th on the establishment of a Division for Interventional Radiology. CIRSE president Jim. A. Reekers, ESR president Christian Herold and UEMS Radiology Section Chairman Peter Pattynama joined forces in order to carry out an information campaign for the radiology societies of all European countries. This met with a very positive response which ultimately resulted in an overwhelming majority of UEMS delegates voting in favour of the motion.
With its positive vote on the establishment of an IR Division within the UEMS Radiology Section, Interventional Radiology has been officially recognised as a medical speciality in Europe and by the same token interventional radiologists as distinct medical specialists. The national implementation of this decision, in the form of national accreditation, is the next step.

The new IR Division will greatly contribute to achieving some important goals, such as the establishment of a European training curriculum for IR, a European IR skill certification and quality standardization. Its recognition by the UEMS will give Interventional Radiology room to further flourish, creating a solid basis for the future of our specialty.

For further information please contact the CIRSE Central Office at
Neutorgasse 9/6
1010 Vienna, Austria
Phone: 0043 1 904 2003/15
Fax: 0043 1 904 2003 30
mailto: mann@cirse.org