6. Report from Regional Members
4. Regional Groups

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EFMI (IMIA-EUROPE)

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the European Federation for Medical Informatics are:

- to advance international co-operation and the dissemination of information in Medical Informatics on a European basis
- to promote high standards in the application of Medical Informatics
- to promote research and development in Medical Informatics
- to encourage high standards in education in Medical Informatics
- to function as the autonomous European Regional Council of the International Medical Informatics Association

ACTIVITIES

Each European country is entitled to be represented in the Federation by a suitable Medical Informatics Society. The term Medical Informatics is used to include the whole spectrum of Health Care Informatics and all disciplines concerned with Health Care and Informatics. The organisation operates with a minimum of bureaucratic overheads and each national society supports the Federation by sending, and paying for, a representative to participate in the decisions of the Federation's Council. Also, again to reduce overheads, English has been adopted as the official language although simultaneous translation is often provided for congresses in non-English speaking countries. Currently, 18 countries have joined the Federation and Council normally meets twice a year. Furthermore, it is represented by a Vice President (Europe) at meetings of the Board and the annual General Meetings of the International Medical Informatics Association.

CONGRESSES and PUBLICATIONS

So far, eight general Congresses, MEDICAL INFORMATICS EUROPE (MIE), have been organized by the European Federation for Medical Informatics. These have taken place in Cambridge (1978), Berlin (1979), Toulouse (1981), Dublin (1982), Brussels (1984), Helsinki (1985), Rome (1987) and Oslo (1988). The next Congresses is planned in Glasgow in 1990 and Vienna 17-22 August 1991. A special EFMI-working conference on DRGs (Diagnosis Related Groups) will be held in Brussels, 18-21 June 1889. The Proceedings of these Congresses have been published by Springer Verlag in the series of Lecture Notes in Medical Informatics. The official journals adopted by the Federation are Methods of Information in Medicine and Medical Informatics.

Working Groups

Four EFMI-Working Groups were created in 1988.

- EFMI-WG 1: Minimum Basic Data Sets, Case-Mix and Severity of Cases (Chairman F.H.Rogers)
- EFMI-WG 2: Data Protection in Health Systems (Chairman B.Barber)
- EFMI-WG 3: Standards for Medical Records Exchange (Chairman J. Noothoven van Goor)
- EFMI-WG 4: Information Planning and Modelling in Health Care (Chairman B.Kabbes)

COUNTRIES

The participating countries are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Hungary, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Applications are open to representative societies in countries within the European Region of W.H.O.

INFORMATION

Information can be obtained about the activities of the European Federation for Medical Informatics from the officers of the Federation. They will be able to advise you about forthcoming meetings, about your country's representative and it's Medical Informatics Society, if it is represented in the Federation, and about the regulations governing membership if it is not.
OFFICERS

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Kuwait City, Feb 16, 1990

Dr. Barry Barber,

I would appreciate my name being added to the mailing list of the Medical Informatics Newsletter, as suggested to me during the last MEDINFO '89 held in Beijing.

I am Assistant Professor in the Health Information Administration Department, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences and Nursing, Kuwait University, fulfilling simultaneously the duties of the Director, Computer Unit.

We are relatively young institution with 7 years old undergraduate programme for Health Information Administration (formerly Medical Records).

We collaborate actively with the Ministry of Public Health towards development, introduction and subsequent implementation of the Integrated Health Information System. Our graduates work as Health Information Administrators in Ministry of Public Health facilities: out-patient, in-patient and others.

I wonder whether there is any regional IMIA branch for the Middle East or there are any plans of establishing one. We, at the Kuwait University, are ready to work and collaborate towards this end. May be the organisation of a regional conference on Medical Informatics in Middle East should be considered. I am sure it will receive full support of the University, the Ministry and various medical associations.

I am sure that our faculty staff members and other people
involved in development and maintaining of Health Information Systems would benefit greatly from the contacts with IMIA, its regional bodies and working groups. I think that receiving the Medical Informatics Newsletter, the official organ of IMIA, should constitute the first logical step towards further contacts and hopefully future collaboration.

May I therefore reiterate my kind request to send us few last issues of your Newsletter and to add my name to the mailing list for the future.

Thanking in advance for your co-operation, I remain

sincerely yours

Dr. Michal BOJANCZYK, Assistant Prof. Director, Computer Unit Health Information Department Faculty of Allied Health Scs Kuwait University P.O.Box 31470, Sulaibekhat 90605, KUWAIT

my BITNET address is: NHXHMB14KUKUN00

P.S. I am sending the copies of this letter to:
- Prof. S. KAIMARA
- Dr. B. BARBER
- Dr. A.S. GUSE
- Prof. O. RENHOFF
Dear Dr. Bojanczyk,

Through Dr. B. Barber I received a copy of your letter dated February 16th, 1990. Your interest in IMIA is highly appreciated.

Prof. Otto Rienhoff will certainly put you on the mailing list to obtain the IMIA Newsletter.

Your question if a regional IMIA branch exists for the Middle East or is in the planning stage, has to be negatively answered, although this idea has been brought forward at MEDINFO in Singapore. It would be fine indeed, if this could result from future activities in this region.

I will bring up your question in the IMIA Board which will convene April 20-22nd, 1990.

I wonder whether you have already plans to form a Medical Informatics Society in Kuwait. Such a step would of course be required first by Kuwait and some other countries in order to form an association of Medical Informatics Societies in your region similarly as for EFMI (the European Federation of Medical Informatics Societies) and IMIA-LAC (the Latin American regional group, involving South and Middle America as well as the Carabean).
Sofar we have only 2 IMIA corresponding Members for the Middle East i.e. Dr. Khalide M. Al-SALAMAH, from the Computer Center of the National Univ. Hospital in Riyadh and Dr. L. SALIH from the National Computer Center in Baghdad.

The idea could be broadened towards a Regional Group for all the Magreb countries, i.e. including not only countries from the Middle East, but also from North-Africa such as Egypt, Algeria and Marocco, which are already represented in IMIA by Corresponding Members. A Regional Conference could indeed be a catalyst to stimulate this happening.

Sincerely Yours,

Prof. Dr. J.L. WILLEMS
President of IMIA

cc. : Prof. Dr. S. Kaihara, Past President of IMIA
     Prof. Dr. R. Salamon, Secretary of IMIA
     Dr. R. Rodriguez
     Dr. J. Zvarova
     Dr. B. Barber
     Dr. O. Rienhoff
Prof. Dr. J.L. Willems
Kuwait City, June 2, 1990

President of IMIA
Afdeling Medische Informatica
Univ. Hospital St. Rafael-Gasthuisberg
49, Herestraat
B-3000 Leuven, BELGIUM

Dear Prof. Willems,

Thank you very much for your kind and encouraging letter of March 19 '90 (EC/JW/vd/90-130) in which you are describing the steps and procedures to be followed in order to be able to establish officially recognized Medical Informatics Society.

I do agree with you that this is a gradual process requiring time, commitment and determination. I believe strongly that organizing the Regional Conference with a comprehensive scientific programme and with representative participation of the international bodies and leading researchers and educators would be a natural starting point for the future development.

As for Kuwait. I hope that the suggestion of Prof. O. Rienhoff to include our institution: Health Information Department, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, Kuwait University to the mailing list of the IMIA Newsletter as the corresponding member will work out and that we will start receiving it regularly.

I am anxious to know what were the results of the IMIA Board meeting of April 20-22, 1990 regarding the idea of the Middle East regional IMIA branch.

Thank you for your keen interest in solving the problems that the developing countries encounter on their road towards modern Health Informatics.

Let us know whether we in Kuwait could be of any help or assistance in IMIA plans for the Middle East.

I remain, sincerely yours,

Dr. Michal Bojanczyk
Director, Computer Unit
Health Information Administration Dept.
Faculty of Allied Health Sciences
Kuwait University
P.O. Box 31470 Sulaibekhat
90805 KUWAIT
Dear Dr. Bojanczyk,

I hereby want to confirm my letter dated March 19th, 1990. Your proposal was discussed by the Board of IMIA during its Meeting in Tbilisi, April 20-22nd, 1990.

The Board agreed with a gradual approach. It was not in favor of establishing a regional group of all Magreb Countries, since there are still too many differences between the various countries.

The Board wants to stimulate activities in your region and would appreciate it very much if you could help us to eventually organize an IMIA Board Meeting in your country in the Spring of 1991 (i.e. March 29-31st or April 5-7th). The Board also asked Dr. Salah Mandil from WHO to explore through his connections in this region, the various possibilities.

The Board proposed you as a Correspondent Member of IMIA for Kuwait. Such a nomination still has to be approved by the General Assembly which will convene in the middle of August in Glasgow.

Please let me know your reaction to these points as soon as possible.

Sincerely Yours,

Prof. Dr. Jos L. Willems
President of IMIA

cc. : Prof. Dr. S. Kajihara, Past-President of IMIA
Prof. Dr. R. Salamon, Secretary of IMIA
Prof. Dr. F.H. Roger, Chairman Membership Gce
Dr. Salah Mandil