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ЕВРОПЕЙСКА АСОЦИАЦИЯ НА СТАРШИТЕ БОЛНИЧНИ ЛЕКАРИ**

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AEMH-statement on Accreditation of Hospitals in Europe

Patient safety and treatment qualities are major issues in Europe as in the rest of the World. Migration of patients as well as doctors has increased over the last decade, and is expected to increase further in the future. As a result of this increased migration there is a need to focus on the quality of diagnostic procedures and treatment in a cross border perspective. There is a need for general European recommendations concerning documentation of quality and patient safety.

Accreditation is one of the tools that can be used, but in our opinion accreditation should be recommended only if used in the broadest of terms, including:

- Documentation of pre- and postgraduate education
- Continued postgraduate development
- Description of the working processes
- Quality of treatment
- Timeframe that physicians are allowed to work without rest

We propose that accreditation be used in a standardised form all over Europe in order to guarantee quality of treatment and ensure patient safety.

The accreditation procedure should include:

Evaluation of pre-and post graduate education. There is a need for general recommendations to document this in the European perspective.

In a world where diagnostic and treatment procedures are under continuous development there is a need for a postgraduate development policy for hospitals and for individual doctors. There is a constant imperative to incorporate new treatment modalities in hospitals across European countries. This leads to a need for hospitals as well as for individual doctors to document competencies in new treatment modalities to ensure optimal treatment and safety of the procedures used.

Working processes in the hospitals must be documented. This includes documentation of all procedures used in diagnostic and treatment modalities as well as the information given to patients. In most accreditation models already put to use, these elements have been incorporated.

Every hospital must be able to document the effect of treatment as well as the safety of procedures used. There is a need to develop generally accepted markers for this, markers that can be used all over Europe by any hospital, and for some markers possibly also by individual doctors.

Working time for doctors is a major issue in Europe today. In this context we have to focus on ensuring that patients are not treated by doctors who are tired because of too many hours on duty. Regulations have already been implemented in many other sectors, for example in the transport sector. In our view the accreditation process should incorporate an assessment of the time a doctor can work before she/he has to have an obligatory period of rest. The length of working time, for instance in a 24 hour period is a major issue in the patient safety debate.