

Newsletter February 2012

Dear Colleagues

I am sure that I am not the only one who is sitting in the midst of this surprisingly cold and snowy winter and thinking of how great it will be to visit Tuscany for the ESCIF Congress and Assembly of Delegates in May!

Despite the attractive surroundings, however, the theme of the congress is very topical, very serious and rather depressing. The economic crisis is threatening healthcare and social services throughout Europe. As advocates for people living with SCI, our task is to investigate the problem, analyse the issues involved and come up with appropriate measures to address the situation. We look forward to hearing your reactions and input.



Federazione Associazioni Italiane Paraplegici (FAIP), ESCIF's Italian member organisation, has worked hard, not only on preparing an extremely interesting programme for the congress, but also on initiating a detailed study of 10 ESCIF member countries in order to elucidate the effects of the crisis.

I am sure that we will all learn a great deal that will help us in our work.

On behalf of the ESCIF Executive

Regards
Jane

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ESCIF Congress in Tuscany, 23 to 25 May 2012

Welcome to the
2012 ESCIF Congress and
Assembly of Delegates
23 - 25 May 2012
in Italy.



The ESCIF Congress and Assembly of Delegates 2012 will be held in Italy, in a countryside village of the region of Tuscany named Lucignano. The Congress venue is Casa Vacanze I Girasoli. Please visit www.escifcongress2012.it for more information and for registration. You can also gain access to the Congress website from the ESCIF website, www.escif.org. The theme of the Congress is the impact of the on-going economic crisis on the lives of people with SCI. As usual you should register on the Congress website before **1 March 2012**.

Material will be sent to delegates prior to the Congress.

The Delegates' Assembly will last longer than usual, as we wish to have more time for input from our members about projects in their own countries. Rather than finishing at lunchtime on the last day, we will continue in the afternoon until 4pm on Friday 25 May.

During the afternoon program on Friday, May 25, we invite members to give a presentation about an ongoing or recent project in their country that might be of interest or inspiration to other member organisations. The presentation should not exceed **10 minutes**. The ESCIF Executive must be notified in advance. If your organisation would like to give a presentation, please send your abstract to Winnifred de Moes, vice-president@escif.org. Due to time pressure, all presentations must be given in English.

One of the seats on the Executive board is up for election. Jani Trdina, our current treasurer, is willing to stand for re-election. If you would like to nominate a candidate for the Executive, please send name and contact information to Urs Styger at secretary@escif.org as soon as possible.

During the Delegates' Assembly a proposal for some amendments to the ESCIF statutes will be presented. The proposed changes will be sent out six weeks prior to the Congress so that delegates have the opportunity to discuss the proposals with the appropriate people in their organisation.



Working group on Quality in SCI rehabilitation

The work to formulate a policy statement on Quality in SCI rehabilitation and management is progressing. The draft will be sent out six weeks prior to the Congress to ESCIF members for discussion and comment. We expect the final version to be endorsed by the Assembly of Delegates.

Information-gathering project on MRSA and ESBL

The survey on MRSA, ESBL in connection to SCI is progressing. The survey will start with activities in March or April. At the Assembly in De Rijp 2011 a contact form was passed around. Organisations that were not present or that haven't responded to mails will be contacted at the official mail address. If you think that your organisation isn't represented in the survey please do not hesitate to contact Gunilla Åhrén at 1stexecutive@escif.org.

5th Coloplast symposium for current topics on SCI

The Coloplast annual symposium in Copenhagen took place on 26th November 2011. The symposium attracts health professionals from all over the world.

The morning session discussed diagnostic techniques and novel methods in the specific areas of urinary tract function, bowel function and physiology, and cardiovascular function.

The afternoon session was a combination of presentations and discussion from a diverse panel on Value-based healthcare delivery in SCI – professional, consumer and industrial perspectives. Jane Horsewell, President, and Gunilla Åhrén, Board Member of ESCIF joined the panel discussion to offer their SCI consumer perspective.

If you want to watch the symposium and the panel discussion please visit <http://www.coloplast.com/urologyandcontinencecare/events/scisymposium>. You will be asked to fill in a form and afterwards you can view the video.

ESCIF and ASCoN

The collaboration between ESCIF and the consumer organisations and groups in the ASCoN countries has made great progress since the meeting in Colombo in October 2011. The ASCoN SCI consumer network is now a working reality!

Thanks to support from Livability Ireland and Irish Aid this work to promote self-advocacy groups in Asia will continue, and can contribute to the creation of a global SCI consumer network. Jane Horsewell and Frans Penninx are the contact people in ESCIF. Jane and Frans are still seeking support and sponsorship for future work – especially in developing countries.

Representatives from Asia will join ESCIF representatives in the SCI consumer workshop planned for the ISCoS meeting in London this year. We will also be joined by colleagues from US.

Interdependence 2012



The conference organised by the Nick Hansen Institute in Vancouver in May has changed its programme since we last announced it in the ESCIF Newsletter. It has been decided to focus entirely on SCI research and development. Registration fees for the conference have also been reduced.

Read more about this programme update on www.interdependence2012.