

# The New Portuguese Residents Society

## What should be the role of national societies?



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**To raise the level of medical education in urology, residents must actively participate in discussing the main issues and in finding solutions for problems and needs of residents in Europe.**

To do so and enable us to express our opinions, it is essential that we first organise ourselves through structured national societies that can help define the global position of residents in that country. With the increasing number of urology residents in Portugal and the wide distribution of centres, communication has become a challenge for residents, which affects the effective discussion of these issues.

We started by gathering residents from various parts of our country which were motivated to contribute to the creation of the society. After a couple of meetings to discuss on how to proceed, our first step was to create an updated database of our residents so that we could make official announcements and bring more people into the project.

Even if it seems easy to create this database, our experience in ESRU is that most of the countries, with or without a resident's society, still don't have a global and updated list of all residents. To reiterate, if

one can't reach people, then all the other objectives one may want to achieve will be out of your reach.

Thereafter, we created our own internal regulations. Although it is a time-consuming process, it helps to carefully think about the real purpose of the society and to remind all members of the main objectives, including those who are members of the Executive Committee.

All residents are aware of these internal rules and were invited to present a list of five candidate residents, including a chairman and a secretary, which we consider sufficient to have an adequate nationwide representation of our Portuguese trainees (nowadays slightly over 60) while maintaining a good level of functionality.

The Executive Committee mandate was for a two-year period. Elections were scheduled so every resident could vote and choose one of the lists during an annual resident's dinner. By doing this we had a democratic selection of the committee in an informal way, while at the same time we had the opportunity to exchange ideas and improve social links among us.

### **Full support**

The full support that the Portuguese Urology Association is providing us is essential not only for the success of our society but also for its future activities. Creating the national resident's society within the national association may be an advantage since we can learn from the obstacles they have faced and dealt with, enabling us to focus on essential processes. Moreover, being recognised as part of the National Urology Association allows an open and active debate that includes various viewpoints from consultants, young urologists and residents.

Our Resident's Society aims to be a consultative group within the Portuguese Urology Association, with the main goal of raising awareness regarding specific national problems. Thus, we can help contribute in raising the standards of urological education in our country. We can also assign ESRU National Communication Officers who can participate in the discussions with other European residents.

The Portuguese National Association of Urology has also given us a time slot for a plenary session during their National Annual Congress. This year, we selected post-residency career options as the main theme and invited young urologists to speak about academic and non-academic career moves, as well as private practice and working overseas. These are priority issues for us due to the growing number of specialists in Portugal.

Those who are participating in our project to create a new Portuguese Resident's Society have found it to be

an amazing experience since they came in touch with residents from all over the country, allowing an exchange of essential information.

We strongly encourage countries that still haven't created their own national residents society to consider the benefits and take the first steps. ESRU members can certainly provide support by sharing lessons from their own experience. And for countries which already have urology resident's societies, actively recruiting active members and involving them in current and future projects should be a priority.

Even though it is a daunting task, it is worth the effort. Involvement and commitment are certainly important. Knowing who we are and what we think can inspire residents to have an active voice in the debate of how urological education can be further improved based on the needs and concerns of the residents themselves.

## **EUREP 2015 - Important information for applicants!**

From 2015 European participants in EUREP will no longer have their travel costs reimbursed. This means that all selected participants must pay for their travel to and from Prague.

The EAU/ESU will continue to cover the cost of accommodation for European residents in a shared room as well as the cost of the course (incl. lunches, coffee breaks).