EADPH Periodontal Epidemiology Special Interest Group

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Report of Meeting held in Istanbul on 17 September 2015

Number of Participants: Total 14 (8 of whom have attended previous meetings). Of the 14, ten were present in the room where the meeting took place, a further four sent reports of which two were ppts and two were verbal reports. They were from: Austria, France, Lithuania, Malta, Moldova, Norway, Poland, Romania, Turkey, United Kingdom (UK) plus the representative of MMM, who is based in Germany.

Agenda (Programme)

Welcome and Introductions

New EADPH mission statement for SIGs

Progress reports from participants

Discussion

Plans for next 12 months

Results

New EADPH Mission Statement

Those present concluded that the Periodontal Epidemiology SIG had met all five stages of the mission statement.

In 2010, after work by members of the SIG, the position paper Leroy et al. (2010) was publish in BMC Oral Health. Its title was Methodological issues in epidemiological studies of periodontitis - How can it be improved? Later that year a workshop was held in Barcelona just before the IADR annual meeting. It sought to obtain a consensus on reporting standards for chronic periodontitis prevalence and severity in epidemiologic studies and involved individuals and organisations from North America and Europe. This was a example of an EADPH SIG reaching out to others with an interest and knowledge in the SIG's area. In May 2015, Holtfreter et al. (2015) Standards for reporting chronic periodontitis prevalence and severity in epidemiologic studies - Proposed standards from the Joint EU/USA Periodontal Epidemiology Working Group was published as an extended editorial in the Journal of Clinical Periodontology.

Progress

In 2013, the SIG initiated a Pan-European survey of General Dentists knowledge and day to day practice of periodontology. A protocol and a questionnaire were drafted and agreed. The questionnaire was translated from English into French, German, Lithuanian, Polish and Romanian and piloted in seven EU member states, which were: Austria, France, Lithuania,
Malta, Poland, Romania and the UK. Delegates from Finland and Norway also agreed to translate the questionnaire into their languages and pilot the questionnaire but did not.

During the 2014 EADPH meeting, the initial results of the pilots were discussed and the final version of the questionnaire agreed.

At the SIG meeting on 17 September 2015, it was planned to hear presentations from delegates from each of the seven EU Member States where the survey is taking place. Power point presentations (ppts) were received from Austria, Lithuania, Poland and Romania. Verbal reports were sent to the Chair from the other three EU Member States (France, Malta and the UK). In the event, the very comprehensive presentation from Romania took up a large proportion of the time for the SIG meeting and there was no time to present the other three ppts. However, the member from Lithuania summarised her ppt and the chair summarised the other two ppts and gave verbal reports from the other three EU Member States.

In Romania, in order to achieve a 95% confidence level that the results are representative of the national situation, a Power calculation has indicated that 332 of completed questionnaires must be returned from a random sample of Romanian General Dentists. So far 229 have been received. The presentation from two of the Romanian delegates presented the results from the 230 completed questionnaires and each result was discussed during the presentation.

In Austria, the pilot was completed in 2014. Questionnaires were distributed to dentists this month (September 2015).

In Lithuania, considerable time was required to obtain the e-mail addresses of the random sample of dentists. The questionnaire was distributed by email in July 2015. So far there have been 58 responses (40 via laptops and 18 via smart phones.

In Poland, the pilot started later. It has been completed. The Polish representative did not attend the meeting but did send a ppt. The Chair will send the Polish representative this report and ask her to start the full survey in Poland.

In Malta, all general dentists (approximately 150) have been sent the questionnaire. To date replies have been received from 30.

In France, the pilot has been completed but progress has stalled due to the need to contact over 1000 dentists and the time required to distribute the questionnaires and collate the results.

In the UK, there is a problem in obtaining the e-mail addresses of dentists from the General Dental Council who register all dentists and maintain a data base of their contact details. Membership of the British Dental Association is not obligatory for UK dentists so this organisation does not have a comprehensive list of the email addresses of UK dentists. As in France, the time required to collate results, once the questionnaire has been distributed, is a potential problem.
Points Emerging from the Reports

Survey questionnaires have been distributed to a random sample of dentists in Austria, Lithuania, Malta and Romania.

Obtaining lists of email addresses of all dentists in a country has been a problem in some EU Member States. In all countries the protocol requires investigators to seek ethics clearance prior to starting the survey. This has not proved to be a problem, because the survey does not involve patients, participation is voluntary and the anonymity of participating dentists is guaranteed.

In all Member States, the organisers of the survey have contacted their dental associations and where they exist periodontal societies to advise that the survey is taking place and in many case have received their active support.

Proposals

First time attendees to the SIG meeting from Moldova and Norway, both of whom were PhD students, expressed an interest in carrying out the survey in these countries. The Chair agreed to send the protocol and questionnaire for the survey to them, together with the papers Leroy et al. (2010) and Holtfreter et al. (2015), and suggested that they discussed the possibilities of performing the survey with their supervisors and universities. If it was subsequently agreed that they could perform survey in their countries, they would first need to translate the questionnaire into their own languages.

It was agreed that those present at the meeting should contact colleagues in other countries and EU Member States to encourage them to perform the study in their country/EU Member State. During the EADPH meeting, the Chair approached colleagues from Finland and Macedonia, both of whom have expressed an interest in performing the survey and have asked for the protocol and questionnaire to be sent to them.

Those who attended the meeting in person from Lithuania, Romania and the UK agreed to continue with the survey and to seek to collect responses from a sufficient number of dentists to meet the requirements for a 95% confidence level in the representativeness of their samples. The chair subsequently spoke to the representative from Malta who also agreed and will contact those from Austria, France and Poland.

State of Publications

As detailed earlier in this report, the work of the Periodontal Epidemiology SIG has led to two publications in peer reviewed impact factor journals (Leroy et al. 2010 and Holtfreter et al. 2015).

Tasks before the Next Meeting

To progress the surveys in the EU Member States where they are currently taking place.

To start them in France and the UK
To encourage colleagues in Finland, Macedonia, Moldova, Norway and any other country/EU Member State which wishes to take part to carry out the survey in the countries/EU Member States concerned.

To share reports of the surveys with others in the SIG over the next year.

**Topics for the Next Meeting**

Progress reports from the countries/EU Member States taking part in the survey.

Finalisation of policy for publication of results of the surveys

Presentation of any developments in the field of periodontal epidemiology that have taken place over the previous 12 months i.e. up to 1 September 2016.

**Powerpoints Presented**

The ppt from Romania, which was presented is attached to this report. It is currently in Romanian. The ppts from Austria, Lithuania and Poland, which were sent for the meeting but not presented due to lack of time, the questionnaire that is being used in the survey and the papers Leroy et al. (2010) and Holtfeter et al. (2015) are also attached.

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