

President's annual report 2012

Dear Colleagues,

We are under increasing pressure each day. The techniques are improving, and they are arriving on the market faster and faster. We must face the dilemma between the medical demand (“as soon as possible”) and the medical physics demand (take enough time to know that we apply the new techniques safely and well). We may argue that the situation is critical: not enough time, not enough resources, etc... That is certainly true. But this is probably also the price to pay for our increased involvement in radiation therapy, radiology and nuclear medicine. The elders among us may remember the times when there were no planning systems, no CT and no linear accelerators. The role of medical physics in the process was completely different. Nowadays, a radiation therapy department cannot function without us. We are completely involved in the process and our knowledge is mandatory to perform high level treatments. This is both the price to pay and the recognition for our daily work and commitment to research. Our job is increasingly interesting and we are in the heart of the process. Sometimes it is difficult and complicated. But isn't it what we are expecting of a profession? Never boring and never uninteresting. Medical physicist is a really nice job!

There is a report from the three committee presidents (science, education and professional affairs). Therefore, I will only give an “Impressionniste” or “Pointilliste” version of the work done by the board and the achievements of our society.

There were three board meetings during the year. Most of the discussions have taken place through email correspondence. There was an excellent atmosphere during the board meetings and we were really functioning as a team. There has been almost no vote to take a decision, which means that the strategic vision of the board members is almost the same. That allowed us to work in a very pleasant context.

Among the decisions and discussions of the board and the achievements of the society in 2012, here are some of the important points:

- BAG

There were two meetings with BAG. Different matters were discussed, but the most important part of the time was dedicated to art74.7 of the radiation protection ordinance.

The « Strahlenschutztag » organised by BAG was followed by 40 participants. It has globally been appreciated by the participants. This meeting will be repeated each two years for radiation therapy and radiology/nuclear medicine.

- Bulletin

There was only one edition of the Bulletin. Shelley Bulling and Regina Müller are warmly thanked for their work. Don't forget to participate by sending papers, information, feedback, etc...

- CIRS

The board has decided not to support the actual CIRS system anymore. This decision has been followed by the same decision of SASRO. The board considered that it is not possible to maintain the CIRS system using only volunteers. For example, the Belgian government has decided to allow 150 k€ for setting up a CIRS system. We have

informed BAG of our decision, and indicated that we would probably support a new strategy coming from BAG.

- EFOMP

The role of our two representatives (Stefano Gianolini and Gerd Lutters) has been clarified. The functioning of EFOMP has also been clarified to the board by our representatives. The board has decided that Gerd Lutters would follow the education track and that he would be elected in the education committee of SSRPM.

- Website

A new harmonised website is in progress. There will be a fusion between the former SPAMP and SSRMP website. The new website is expected for the first half of 2013.

- Professional committee (Frédéric Corminboeuf)

The implementation of art74.7 of the radiation protection ordinance is on track after a long consultation process. Two two-day courses have been held, organised by Francis Verdun and Frédéric Corminboeuf (thank you!) about the practical implementation of the article in radiology and nuclear medicine. A representative of BAG followed these courses, because we asked BAG to consider them as the third week of radiation protection education that medical physicists have to follow.

The results of the salary survey have been issued.

- Education committee (Hans Roser)

Sixteen candidates have successfully passed the examination of SSRMP certification in medical physics. A warm welcome to these new colleagues!

The rules of the SSRMP certification are in complete revision. This is the first time since the start of the certification that such a big revision has been done. It has been rendered mandatory mainly because of the new academic environment set by the Bologna process. For example, the question of what is equivalent to a bachelor in physics became very complicated to answer. Many other topics have been pointed out by the education committee that justified a major revision of our rules. It is expected that the new rules will be voted by the general assembly in 2013.

- Science committee (Peter Manser)

There has been one applied medical physics (AMP, former “Valley group”) meeting this year. The subject was peripheral doses and the usual other topics.

The science committee supervised the organisation of the annual meeting. Many thanks to the organising and scientific committee, and particularly to Daniel Vetterli and Pascal Favre-Bulle, for the organisation of the Biel/Bienne annual meeting. It was a real success and the level of the communication was considered by all as excellent. In particular, I would like to mention the new “Mini Symposium” (to honor the memory of Roberto Mini) where young colleagues presented their on-going work, was a success. When hearing the quality of the contents of their talks, there is no doubt that the future of our profession is assured.

Two working groups were active this year: one working on a revision of our recommendation Nr 11 and the “Stereotaxy group”.

The Varian prize has been awarded to Andreas Joosten for his work in peripheral dose and related secondary cancer risk.

- Honorary membership

When I prepared this report I was thinking of a sentence in a song of Radiohead called « Creep » : « What the hell I am doing here ? ». In fact when I looked at the past presidents, it occurred to me that it is one thing to be president, but another to leave some trace after the mandate. Why I am saying that ? Because I remembered what my past boss, Jean-François Valley told me : « The important thing is not the position. It is the work you do ». Therefore, I am really proud that the general assembly has elected Prof. Jakob Roth, one of our most eminent colleagues, as an honorary member. He was not only our president and a member of the board, but more importantly he participated in many ways in the emancipation of medical physics in Switzerland. A specific report about Prof. Jakob Roth is included in this Bulletin. Dear Prof. Roth, in the name of all the members of the Society, I would like to warmly thank you for your extremely important commitment to the activities of SSRMP during your professional life. It is an honor for us to have you as an honorary member!

- General assembly

Beside the most important decision of the general assembly, which was the election of Prof. Roth as an honorary member of SSRMP, the election of the board also took place. It was really appreciated that all the board members have been re-elected. Namely, Peter Manser as scientific committee president, Hans Roser as education committee president, Frédéric Corminboeuf as professional committee president, Stephan Klöck, Markus Notter, Jean-Yves Ray, Werner Roser and Daniel Vetterli as board members, and myself as president. In the name of the board I wish to thank all the voting members for their trust.

The next annual meeting will take place in Neuchâtel the 14th and 15th of November 2013. It will be organised by Jean-François Germond, our young and very active retired colleague.

I really liked my job as president. It is very interesting to be involved in many of the activities and decisions of our society. This is time consuming, but of great interest (Jean-François Germond, mentioned that fact at the end of his two mandates: « Quatre ans, c'est long et c'est court en même temps »). Working on improving our skills together and not alone in each of our centres is certainly the best way to improve the importance of our work in radiology, nuclear medicine and radiation therapy. For that, politics, scientific and educational strategies have to be set-up at the national level. That is why I really liked my job of president and why I applied for a new mandate : this is exciting to try to drive the boat for the future. Luckily for me, but also for you and the society, I was not alone in the boat and my colleagues of the board played the most important part in our achievements. We have mainly the same vision for the future. That gave us an excellent work dynamic. I have to deeply thank them for their involvement !

I would like to thank all the active persons in the society, particularly the chairpersons of the active working group. This is the heart of our society. I also would like to welcome anybody willing to take an active part in the work in our Society. There is room for everyone and I am convinced that an active society is the best way to increase our influence in radiology and radiotherapy for the good of the patient.

Raphaël Moeckli, Lausanne, le 12 décembre 2012