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FIMM NEWS

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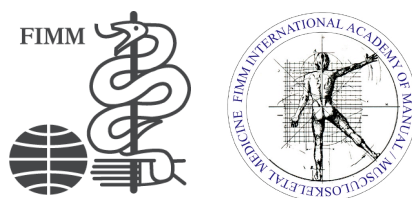
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From Scientific Committee of FIMM to *FIMM* International Academy of Manual/Musculoskeletal Medicine

Editorial

Dr. Jacob Patijn, PhD, Chairman of the Science Board



History of the present FIMM Scientific Committee

FIMM is an international association of 29 national societies of Manual or Musculoskeletal Medicine. Its remit includes the development of and improved standards of practice in Manual/Musculoskeletal Medicine (M/M Medicine) internationally. In 1997 FIMM General Assembly (GA) decided to split the existing Scientific Advisory Committee into an Education Committee (EC) and a Scientific Committee (SC) to meet the increasing needs of FIMM, and to pay more attention to evidence-based science and education in M/M Medicine. In his first report to the GA in Australia in 1998, the SC-chairman stated that science has to have a prominent place within FIMM and that the composition of the SC had to be independent of National Society interests and representation. A well-defined problem within M/M Medicine was illustrated by the phrase:

There are many (arguably, too many) different approaches in M/M Medicine in different countries with many different diagnostic procedures and many different therapeutic modalities.

At first the SC had to create conditions for information exchange between different schools in M/M Medicine, and to stimulate

scientific work within M/M Medicine. In the longer term the SC had to develop a structure, clearly related to the FIMM, in which more scientists and educationalists from the different schools in M/M Medicine (in diverse countries) could be involved. The SC comprised invited scientists and researchers in M/M Medicine, recommended by the Chairman and ratified by the FIMM GA. In the early SC-meetings plans were further elaborated and it was decided that the first scientific activities of the SC were to be focused on efficacy and reliability in M/M Medicine. At the subsequent SC-meetings the different areas of the locomotion system (lumbar, cervical, shoulder/thoracic and extremities) were discussed in the framework of efficacy and reliability. The SC decided also to provide the international community of M/M Medicine with proper tools to perform scientific work. Reliability and efficacy protocols and a protocol for 13 GCP rules were developed and published. To create an international platform to discuss scientific work, a first SC-Conference was organised in cooperation with a National Society for M/M Medicine (Denmark, Odense 2003). At this SC-conference, scientists presented and discussed their (preliminary) results, and proposals for scientific protocols.

At the SC-meeting in 2004 a start was made to discuss basic research in M/M Medicine. A consensus model, in which different approaches of M/M Medicine

could be integrated, was elaborated. Such a model was needed to provide M/M Medicine with outside evidence for efficacy and reliability, with a general theoretical background that included the different approaches in M/M Medicine. Besides, a protocol was developed to evaluate the reproducibility studies of diagnostic procedures in M/M Medicine, with the ultimate goal to provide the educational boards of the societies of the FIMM with the state of the art of evidence based diagnostic procedures. The same was true for the state of the art of efficacy in M/M Medicine. A paper will be published by the SC about the present status of efficacy in M/M Medicine.

In the past seven years the chairman and eleven SC-members undertook the work within the SC. From a practical point of view this composition of the SC was the best format to create a basis for future science within the FIMM. However, it became clear that the SC had reached a point at which it became necessary to involve more scientists and educationalists in its work. This idea was strengthened by the fact that many requests were received from individuals to become a member of the SC. The financial status of the FIMM and the format of the SC prevented such an enlargement of the SC. In an early stage of the SC, preliminary ideas were developed to establish an International Academy of M/M Medicine and subsequently discussed with the Policy Committee of the FIMM. The Policy Committee supported these ideas and at the GA of Bratislava 2004 the plans and statutes of a FIMM International Academy for M/M Medicine were ratified by a substantial majority of the National Societies of FIMM.

Reasons for transformation from the SC to a FIMM Academy of M/M Medicine and its benefit for the profession and therefore the National Societies

The work of the SC over the past years resulted in a firm position of science within FIMM. By defining the main problem within M/M Medicine and providing solutions in the form of protocols and publications, the SC has slowly influenced a change in attitude of the international community of the FIMM towards a more evidence based M/M Medicine. However, the present composition of only twelve SC-members cannot guarantee a further development. The diversity of approaches, which exists in M/M Medicine, is not reflected in the present SC. The results of scientific work undertaken in countries with a different approach cannot be discussed and integrated internationally. M/M Medicine is by definition a multidisciplinary and eclectic profession, in which many medical disciplines such as neurology, internal medicine etc and preclinical disciplines such as neurophysiology and clinical biomechanics are integrated, but the present format of the small SC cannot guarantee such a multidisciplinary character.

In previous years the National Societies of FIMM indirectly, by their fees, financed the work of the SC. Because of the politically independent character of the SC, the National Societies could not influence the activities of this committee. Although this political independency was the best condition for the activities of a SC within the FIMM, the disadvantage of such a format was that many scientists and educationalists from the National Societies could not be involved in the work of the present SC. As a consequence, not all-available knowledge within M/M Medicine can be assimilated and discussed on its evidence-based merits.

At the present time two different institutes (the Scientific Committee and the Educational Committee of FIMM) operate mainly in a separate way. In keeping these two institutes apart, educational programs will not professionalize with a firm evidence base.

By transforming a SC to an International Academy, many of the above-mentioned drawbacks of the SC in its present format can be overcome. A future Academy, by involving more scientists and educationalists from the National Societies, can better guarantee increased professionalism of M/M Medicine in a more evidence based way. The Academy as an international organisation will provide the National Societies of FIMM with a larger platform on which to interact and discuss the different approaches within M/M Medicine.

Format of the Academy and the need for a firm relationship to FIMM

The present SC had an intimate relationship to FIMM. The FIMM General Assembly ratified the proceedings and plans of the SC. A firm relationship has also to be present with respect to an International Academy for M/M Medicine. In addition to medico-political issues, FIMM has an overall responsibility for scientific and educational aspects of M/M Medicine. The organisational format of an Academy, with an Executive Board and a Science Board, and the election of different officers by the FIMM General Assembly, reflects in a constitutional way this mutual relationship. Furthermore, both the chairman of the Executive Board and the chairman of the Science Board are obliged to present their annual reports to the General Assembly.

An Academy without a connection with the National Societies through the FIMM is meaningless. Participation and support of the National Societies of FIMM is mandatory for the future of an Academy. By

ratifying the founding of the Academy, the National Societies not only confirm the need for a strong relationship between an Academy and the FIMM, but they subscribe to the goals of the previous SC, which also forms the basis for future activities of the Academy. More precisely, the National Societies subscribe to the need for improved professionalism of and increased evidenced basis for M/M Medicine.

Academy as an organisation, membership and Academy Conference

The Academy has two separate structures: logistic and scientific. The logistics fall under the responsibility of the Executive Board of the Academy. This Board comprises a Chairman, the Scientific Director, an Administrative officer and a Finance officer. The Executive Board is responsible for all logistics and finance of the Academy. The Science Board comprises a Scientific Director (chairman) and 9 Science Board members (SB-members). Additionally, the Chairman of the Education Committee of FIMM participates in the activities of the Science Board of the Academy together with the Administrative officer. The Science Board is responsible for all science and education within the Academy.

All members of the Academy have full voting rights at the annual general meeting. They choose the Scientific Director and the members of the Science Board. Members of the Academy are expected to make presentations to the Academy conferences, and to uphold the principles of FIMM, the parent organisation. Interactions and contributions to discussions and the development of consensus papers on diverse topics will be open to all members.

The further organisation of the Science Board of the Academy comprises a subdivision into different areas of special attention for which individual SB-members will

bear full responsibility. For these areas of special interest, such as efficacy, reliability, basic research, complications, education, paediatric M/M Medicine, additional diagnostics etc, individual SB-members will have the task to elaborate plans, to involve more scientists and educationalists and to establish a special Academy working group. In these Academy working groups, future Academy members can be involved such as those proposed by National Societies. The previous SC-Conference will be transformed to an Academy Conference, which will be held every second year. At this conference, Academy members can present their papers on scientific and educational issues. Participation in the Academy Conference is intended for both Academy members and others who are interested. The Academy will also be involved in the scientific organisation of FIMM congresses.

So far a rough outline is presented, because scientific and educational plans within the Academy will have to be elaborated in more detail in due course. Nevertheless, the activities of the Academy will be a logical continuation of the work of the previous SC. The defined remit of the previous SC and its proposed problem solving will form the basis for future activities of the Academy, however with the involvement of more scientists and educationalists.

Education and the Academy

The starting point in the Academy is the opinion that ***science is nothing without education*** and vice versa. This means that education must have its place within the Academy. First of all, this relationship is illustrated by the fact that the Chairman of the Education Committee (EC) of the FIMM will participate in the Science Board of the Academy. In this way the connection between the Academy and the Educational Boards of the National Socie-

ties is guaranteed. Secondly, a section of educationalists must be formed within the Academy with the responsibility for the level of international educational standards within M/M Medicine and development of new formats for education programs. Further plans will be elaborated in cooperation with the EC-Chairman. Although science plays a major role within the Academy, educational concerns within the Academy are indispensable. It guarantees the implantation of scientific results and consensus produced by the Academy. Conditions for membership will be elaborated in cooperation with the EC of FIMM.

Future plans of Academy

As already mentioned the future work of the Academy will be a logical continuation of the work of the late SC. The problem defined by the SC and its proposed solutions will form the base of the activities. Areas with special interest will be defined and elaborated in Academy working groups. In these working groups Academy members will be involved and/or invited under the responsibility of a member of the Science Board. Projects, which have not been completed by the late SC, will be finalised. Plans for a first Academy Conference will be elaborated. The possibility to establish an international journal for M/M Medicine in cooperation with existing journals for M/M Medicine will be explored. A logistical structure of the Academy will be developed which has to guarantee maximal transparency, maximal information dissemination to the National Societies, scientists, educationalists and FIMM as an organisation. A public relations policy will be elaborated to involve all the National Societies of FIMM in the work of the Academy and to stimulate membership of the Academy.

The need of the support of the National Societies

For the work of the SC, the support of the National Societies of FIMM was indispensable. For the future of the Academy, substantial participation in its development and support of its activities by the FIMM and its National Societies is even more necessary. The ratification of the Academy and adoption of its Articles of Association by a large majority of the National Societies at the FIMM GA in Bratislava 2004 not only reflects a substantial support of the idea of an Academy, it also obliges FIMM in general and its National Societies in particular to contribute wholeheartedly to the success of the Academy. As science is nothing without education, so an Academy is nothing without the National So-

cieties of FIMM. The work of the Academy is firstly to professionalize M/M Medicine in a more evidence based way, secondly, to be an international platform for mutual discussions and cooperation between schools and/or approaches of National Societies.

FIMM has, by creating an International Academy for M/M Medicine, taken a step towards a new future of its organisation whereby scientists, educationalists, and practitioners in M/M Medicine can meet each other in a more personal way. This Academy will also provide FIMM with the necessary knowledge to meet medico-political problems it will face in present and future times.

Report of the Chairman of the FIMM Scientific Committee

Preceding the General Assembly 2004 of FIMM and the 14th Triennial FIMM Congress 2004 the 7th and last SC-meeting was organised from September 11-13, 2004 in Bratislava, Slovak Republic. Outside general policy items of the SC and general scientific items, this meeting was scientifically dedicated to «Basic Research in M/M Medicine».

Dr. Jacob Patijn, PhD

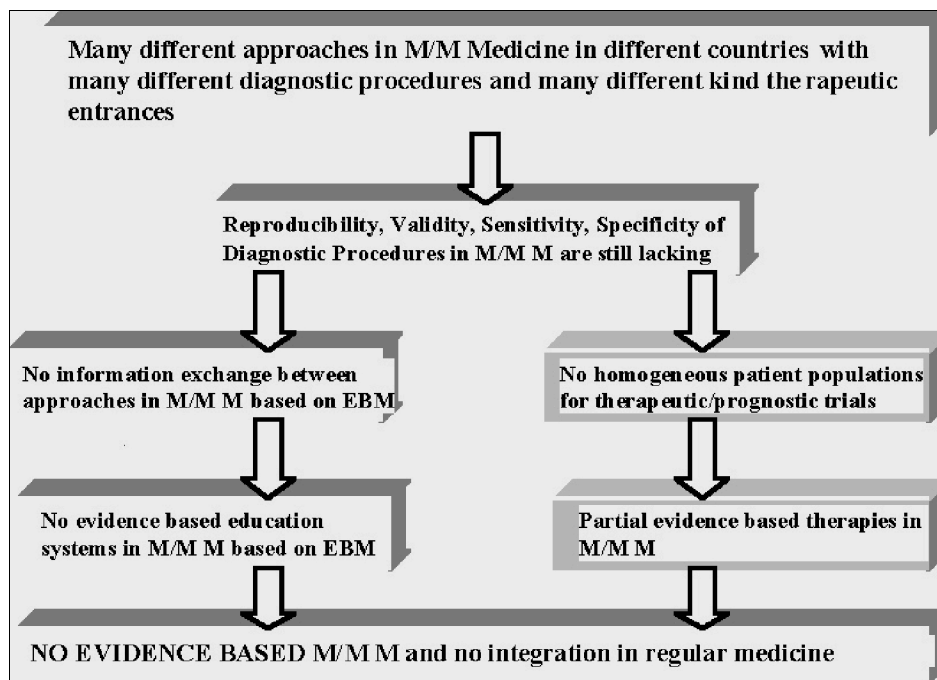


In the past seven years of my chairmanship the Scientific Committee of FIMM has been occupied with the main problem in M/M Medicine and its consequences illustrated in the algorithm below. Outside defining the problem and its solutions, which form the central issue of the work of the SC, efficacy and diagnosis in M/M Medicine in the different regions of the locomotion system have been extensively discussed in the SC-meetings. In the past seven years 60 presentations were made during SC-meetings of which a number have been published. Based on these discussed presentations, protocols have been developed to provide the National Societies of FIMM with proper tools to perform scientific work. In this period 6 protocols been published, some of them in different editions. The development of these protocols finally ended in the publication of booklets of three scientific protocols. The defined problem is current in M/M Medicine and will remain the starting point of a future FIMM International Academy for Manual/Musculoskeletal Medicine. The work of the SC in the past seven years has contributed to a slow change in attitude in Manual/Musculoskeletal Medicine towards a more critical and evidence based approach to our profession. This is a slow process with its own natural speed and a period of seven years of a SC is too small

to create a complete change in attitude. Therefore, for daily practitioners in Manual/Musculoskeletal Medicine represented in the General Assemblies it was not always clear what benefits they had and will have from the work of the Scientific Committee. It must be clear that the work of the Scientific Committee always was aimed to provide the daily practitioner in M/M Medicine with a solid background with respect to the efficacy and theoretical base of their profession to find the best therapeutic solution for his patient.

Future work of the International Academy for Manual/Musculoskeletal Medicine will have the same aims, whereby the development of a profession we all believe in, will be the core business.

The seventh SC-meeting in Bratislava 2004 had as its scientific topic «Basic Research in M/M Medicine». The SC thought this topic essential for the international community of FIMM because a state of the art of the theoretical background of M/M Medicine is mandatory for our profession. In this SC-meeting a first step was made to discuss this item. In the same meeting general issues of the SC were discussed. In 2004 the first SC-Conference was held in cooperation with the Danish Society for Manual Medicine. By organising this conference, the SC wanted to create a scientific platform on which a discussion could take place between the different ap-



proaches in M/M Medicine based on solid scientific methods. The first SC-conference was a tremendous success scientifically and from an organisational point of view, the Danish Society has contributed substantially to this success. An evaluation questionnaire resulted in a judgement of the overall quality of the conference of 8.6. This result is encouraging for the future conferences. The SC-Conference will be transformed to an Academy-conference with the same format and organisation in cooperation with a national society of FIMM.

Change in composition: New SC-members

It was agreed that with regard to the continuity of the SC, Dr. Lars Remvig will be Vice-Chairman of the SC. Because of health reasons, Prof. Robert Ward will leave the SC. He will remain a corresponding member and probably a member of the future academy. The Chairman has thanked Bob Ward by e-mail for his tre-

mendous contributions and efforts he has made in the SC.



1st FIMM Scientific Committee Conference on "Reliability and Efficacy studies in Low-Back Pain and other Musculoskeletal Disorders", January 30, 2003. Overall quality 8.6.

Because of other official functions in osteopathic organisations in the USA, Dr. Boyd Buser has resigned from the SC. During the SC-meeting Dr. Richard Ellis informed the meeting about his resignation of the SC on the grounds of age. Richard was thanked for his indispensable work for the SC and his major contribution to the development of the SC in the past seven years. Richard Ellis wished to remain a corresponding member of the SC and in the future perhaps a member of the academy.

In the months before the meeting several SC-members proposed potential new members for the SC. The CV's were discussed of Dr. Michael Patterson, (biologist, a basic researcher and fully involved in osteopathic medicine; Dr. Berit Schiottz-Christensen (rheumatologist, active member of Danish Society for Manual Medicine) and Dr. Michael Yelland (musculoskeletal physician, university-based, researcher). The three proposed members were elected through democratic voting.

The General Assembly ratified the membership of the proposed new members.

FIMM Congress, Bratislava

The participation of the FIMM congress in Bratislava was discussed. Prof. Lothar Beyer, SC-member has been the President of the Scientific Congress Committee and presented the programme of the Congress. Both Prof. Lothar Beyer and the SC-Chairman have played major roles in deciding the theme of the congress, the format of the congress and the scientific program and organisation of the congress. As agreed in previous GA's the SC-chairman and committee will have to be involved in the scientific organisation of the next FIMM Congress (Switzerland).

1st International Introduction Course for Reproducibility Studies in M/MM in Montreux 2004

The SC-Chairman has organised the first (pilot) International Introduction Course for Reproducibility Studies in M/MM in Montreux. This course was also evaluated by a questionnaire afterwards. The overall quality was judged very good (8.6) by the participants. The participants agreed that educational boards must be involved in reproducibility studies by providing this type of courses. Far advanced plans have been elaborated to organise another International instructional course in Denmark 2005. The format of the course will be slightly adapted based on the discussion in the SC.

An international instructional course on pragmatic trials in M/M Medicine will be developed by the SC.

FIMM Academy

The development of an International Academy for M/M Medicine has been elaborated in a subcommittee (Patijn, Remvig) of the SC with participation of Dr. Michael Hutson as Vice-President of FIMM. All SC-members participated in an e-mail discussion and the final results were ratified by the SC-meeting. The results were presented at the GA in Bratislava.

The reason for founding an International Academy for M/M Medicine is very clear because:

- (1) After seven years of work the SC has created a firm foundation for future scientific activities. However, the present SC is too small to cover the whole field of scientific work in M/M Medicine.
- (2) Therefore, more scientists and educationalists of National Societies must be involved in this work.
- (3) In an academy, members of small national societies can be also involved.

(4) M/M Medicine is by definition a multi-dimensional diagnostic and multidisciplinary therapeutic profession and therefore in an Academy more scientists of related disciplines can be involved.

(5) An Academy is a better form instead of a SC to bring together researchers in M/M M and related disciplines.

(7) An academy is a better form to stimulate scientific work in M/M M on an international base.

(8) An Academy provides better format to stimulate discussions between schools in an evidenced based medicine way.

For a successful future of an International Academy for M/M Medicine essential conditions are necessary for the formation of the Academy:

(1) The FIMM, the GA and its National Societies have subscribed completely to the definition of the problem in M/M M and its solution as elaborated by the SC in the previous years, as the base for the future activities of the Academy.

(2) The FIMM, the GA and its National Societies subscribe completely to the independency from national society interests with respect to the scientific content of the activities of the Academy.

(3) The FIMM in general and its National Societies in particular, will subscribe to the necessity of the Academy for the future of our profession and substantially will contribute by promoting the Academy among its members.

Future tasks of SC-members in relation to the Academy

In the future Academy the tasks of the SC-members will be adapted to the new situation of an Academy.

The logistic responsibility of the Academy falls under the Executive Board with its

Chairman, Administrative Officer and Finance Officer. The scientific responsibility falls under the Scientific Director who is also Chairman of the Science Board (SB). Dr. Lars Remvig will become the Vice-Scientific Director and Vice-Chairman of the SB.

In the present SC, the chairman took full responsibility for the scientific policy of the SC and based on his developed ideas delegated different tasks to the SC-members. Of course decisions were made in a democratic way and in negotiation with the SC-members.

In contrast to this format of the SC, the members of the Science Board will have a more independent position and task, whereby they have to develop their own initiatives. Couples of two SB-members will responsible for a particular scientific theme. For the elaboration of each scientific theme (for instance efficacy or reliability) SC-members have to form a scientific theme working group by inviting new academy members. Outside inviting new Academy members, the National Societies of FIMM will be asked to propose new Academy members, who meet the entrance criteria for the Academy and have a particular expertise for a certain scientific theme within the Academy. The aims and working methods of the scientific theme groups will be agreed in dialogue with the Scientific Board members. The preparation for a particular scientific theme will be made by presentations held in the SB-meeting as performed in previous SC-meetings. Results of these scientific theme groups will be presented at the SB-meeting by the two responsible SB-members as well as at the Academy Conference.

By involving more scientists from different National Societies and/or related universities/institutes, an Academy is a better and more efficient forum compared to the former SC with its 12 members, who were unable to meet the needs for participation of more members.

The necessity of education, as an essential part of the Academy, is illustrated by the membership of the Chairman of the FIMM Education Board on the Science Board of the Academy. Educationalists of diverse National Societies have to participate in an educational theme group of the Academy. Herewith too, National Societies will be asked to propose potential new academy members. Education is an indispensable component of the Academy activities such implementation of science and licensed international teaching, new educational formats and international education standards. The EC-Chairman, Dr. Glen Gorm Rasmussen has a key position here. A more detailed elaborated scientific policy will soon be elaborated and presented on the next GA.

General Scientific activities of the SC

The SC will finalise the protocol for pragmatic trials in M/M Medicine which will be published on the website, journals and in a booklet. The last edition of the protocol for reliability studies will be prepared and published. The SC will develop a state of the art consensus report about the efficacy in M/M Medicine. In this way the National Societies will be provided with evidence based material which can be integrated into their education systems. This report can also be used for negotiations with insurance companies and/or national health authorities.

A large project has been started to evaluate the published reproducibility studies of diagnostic procedures of M/M Medicine in the different regions of the locomotion system. The lumbar region will be the first. The results of this study will be published per region and the data will be available for all National Societies to integrate them in their education systems. At the same time it will provide National Societies with information regarding which diagnostic procedures have yet to be evaluated. The

study makes it possible that diagnostic procedures will become interchangeable between education systems of the National Societies of FIMM.

Basic Research in M/M Medicine

The SC has made a start to discuss basic research in M/M Medicine. The aim of this exercise is to provide the education systems of the National Societies of FIMM with a common theoretical background of the profession. A lot of basic research has been done in past decades but has no mutual connection, because of the lack of a proper definition of M/M Medicine and/or thinking model which covers the different existing approaches in M/M Medicine. Therefore a consensus model was developed and discussed which can be used as a framework in which different areas of basic research of M/M Medicine can be discussed. The best model at this moment is the dynamic postural control system as part of the function of the human motor system. Well known features in M/M Medicine such as segmental mobility, manipulation, muscle dysfunction, muscle chains, trigger points, posture, pain etc. can be incorporated in this model. By introducing the factor time in the model, dysfunctions based on structural abnormalities of tissues and altered CNS-systems can also be incorporated in the consensus model. The same model will be presented at the FIMM congress in Bratislava. During the SC-meeting basic research of: muscular chains, segmental dysfunction, electromyographic relations with manipulation, SI-joint motion, trigger points, pain and rationale of invasive therapies in M/M Medicine were discussed on the base of extensive presentations of the SC-members.

This discussion of basic research in M/M Medicine is the first of a series SC-meetings – in the future SB-meetings – dedicated to this topic. At the end we will have a complete overview of the evidence and

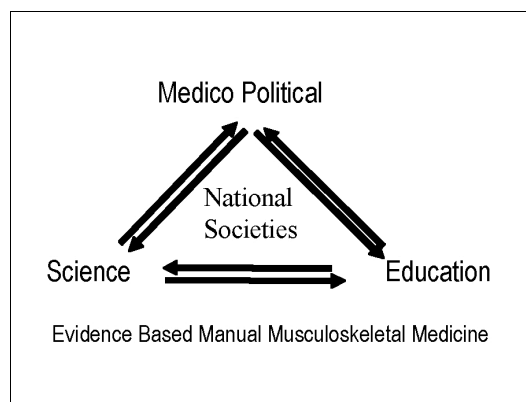
hypothetical character of theoretical backgrounds existing in M/M Medicine. It will illustrate to a considerable degree what the different approaches in M/M Medicine have in common. This information can be implemented in educational systems of the National Societies of FIMM.

Future Plans

The next year will be dedicated to the transition for the Scientific Committee to the FIMM International Academy for M/M Medicine. Much energy has to be spent on the structure of this very young Academy. Scientifically, the Academy work will be a logical consequence of the work of the SC. However, more than during the SC-period the implementation of knowledge in the form of international instructional courses and involvement of National Societies in the activities of the Academy will be emphasised. This is a logical consequence if my report and the proposals for an Acad-

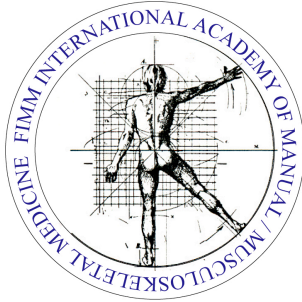
emy will be ratified by a majority of the General Assembly in Bratislava. This result lays a great responsibility on the shoulders of both FIMM and the Academy.

FIMM as an international organisation, with its tasks in the areas of science, education and medico-political issues, can only survive if these three components are interrelated. This functional triangle is essential for the future of FIMM. Science will provide the evidence for M/M Medicine with respect to efficacy, reliability and theoretical background. But science in M/M Medicine has no sense if it is not implemented in education systems of the National Societies. Conversely, education as such has no sense if its contents are not based on evidence. The same mutual relationship between science and the medico-political tasks of FIMM exists. Medico-political issues must be supported by evidence arising from scientific work. Science needs the support and recognition of FIMM as organisation. The same is true for education.



The International Academy for M/M Medicine will represent science within the FIMM. In this Academy more scientists and educationalists from National Societies of FIMM can be involved with the ultimate goal to professionalize M/M Medicine based on evidence. The Academy is the right discussion platform for the different approaches in M/M Medicine whereby we finally can form an unambiguous image of M/M Medicine for the outer medical

world. Ultimately, the individual patient treated by the physician for M/M Medicine has to benefit from the results of the Academy as an indispensable component for the functional triangle between science, education and medico-political function of the FIMM. FIMM and its National Societies have to invest in their future, and therefore in the further development of the FIMM International Academy for Manual/Musculoskeletal Medicine.



***FIMM* International Academy of Manual/Musculoskeletal Medicine**

CHAIRMAN, Executive Board

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15th January 2005

To: Presidents and Secretaries of National Societies of Manual/Musculoskeletal Medicine

Dear Colleague,

Re: *FIMM* INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF MANUAL/MUSCULOSKELETAL MEDICINE

We write to you about a very exciting development in Manual/Musculoskeletal Medicine.

The International Federation for Manual/Musculoskeletal Medicine (FIMM) was founded nearly 40 years ago. Since 1998, the FIMM Scientific Committee (under the Chairmanship of Dr. Jacob Patijn) has been very active. The results of its endeavours are to be found on the FIMM website (www.fimm-online.org). The development of research protocols on reliability of diagnostic tests, and on efficacy of treatments has been of enormous benefit to the research community in Manual/Musculoskeletal Medicine (M/M Medicine).

However, for some years it has been apparent that the 12-member FIMM Scientific Committee would benefit from interaction on a regular basis with a much wider group of scientists and educationalists in M/M Medicine and related disciplines. Accordingly, we have been working over recent years towards the formation of an International Academy, to comprise individual membership by subscription. By such means, the scientific basis for Manual/Musculoskeletal Medicine and its implementation through teaching will benefit from the interaction of several hundred international members.

At the FIMM General Assembly in Bratislava, Slovakia on 14th September 2004, the Articles of the FIMM International Academy of Manual/Musculoskeletal Medicine were adopted. The undersigned (Dr. Michael Hutson and Dr. Jacob Patijn) were elected Chairman of the Executive Board and Scientific Director respectively, and we write to you in this capacity. We attach the Articles of the Academy for your information.

Members of the Academy will engage in consensus debate and other types of scientific/educational interactions. The future work of the Academy will be a logical continuation of the work of the late FIMM SC. Areas of special interest will be defined and elaborated in Academy working groups. Academy members will be invited to contribute to the activities of the working groups, under the responsibility of a member of the Science Board. Projects that have not been completed by the late SC will be finalised.

We hope that you will share our excitement at this development. The Academy will become the scientific arm of FIMM. FIMM, whose membership comprises National Societies of Manual/Musculoskeletal Medicine, will remain the (parent) organisation that is ultimately responsible for the achievements of the FIMM International Academy. We will write to you again, providing you with further information and inviting you to assist in recruitment of members, in a further few weeks.

Yours sincerely,

**Dr. M. A. Hutson
Chairman**

**Dr. Jacob Patijn
Scientific Director**

***FIMM* International Academy of Manual/Musculoskeletal Medicine**

Vice President FIMM

**Chairman of the
Science Board**

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION for MANUAL/MUSCULOSKELETAL MEDICINE

