



**Under the High Patronage of His Excellency
the President of the Republic of Algeria**



Outcomes and Recommendations

of the

**EMISPHER International Dissemination Twin Conferences on
“The Virtual Euro-Mediterranean Hospital and Continuity of Health Care”
25-26 June 2004 in Algiers, Algeria and Nicosia, Cyprus**

EMISPHER Press release, July 21, 2004

On last June 25-26, the third **EMISPHER International Dissemination Twin Conferences on “The Virtual Euro-Mediterranean Hospital and Continuity of Health Care”** (www.eumedis.net/en/events/) took place in Algiers, Algeria, (<http://www.andis.dz/emispher/index.htm>), hosted by our EMISPHER partner ANDIS (“Agence Nationale de Documentation de la Santé” of the Algerian Ministry of Health, Population and Hospital Reformation; General Director Prof. Hamid Kessis, hkessis@sante.dz) and Nicosia, Cyprus (<http://grid.ucy.ac.cy/emispher2004cc/>), hosted by our EMISPHER partner the University of Cyprus (Department of Computer Science, Prof. Marios Dikaiakos, mdd@ucy.ac.cy).

The EMISPHER project (Euro-Mediterranean Internet-Satellite Platform for Health, medical Education and Research, EUMEDIS Pilot Project 110, see www.emispher.org/, co-funded by the EC under the EUMEDIS Programme; see www.eumedis.net/) is dedicated to Telemedicine, E-Health and medical E-Learning in the Euro-Mediterranean area. In order to maximise its impact EMISPHER is committed to organise in its second project year in the various Mediterranean EMISPHER partner countries four International Dissemination Conferences:

1. **EMISPHER International Dissemination Conference on “Medical E-Learning”**, October 9-12, 2003 in Casablanca, Morocco; hosted by our EMISPHER partner the Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy Casablanca, Hassan II University; Participants: ~130.
2. **EMISPHER International Dissemination Conference on “Public Health in the Euro-Mediterranean Region”**, February 19-22, 2004 in Cairo, Egypt; hosted by our EMISPHER partners Ain Shams University and Nasser Institute for Research and Treatment (Egyptian Ministry of Health and Population); Participants: ~195.
3. **EMISPHER International Dissemination Twin Conferences on “The Virtual Euro-Mediterranean Hospital and Continuity of Health Care”**, June 24-26, 2004 in Nicosia, Cyprus, hosted by our EMISPHER partner the University of Cyprus, and in Algiers, Algeria, hosted by our EMISPHER partner ANDIS; Participants: ~300.
4. **EMISPHER International Dissemination Conference on “Best Practice in Real-time Telemedicine”**, September 16-19, 2004 in Istanbul, Turkey; hosted by our EMISPHER partner ISTEM – Continuous Medical Education and Research Centre, Istanbul Medical Faculty, Istanbul University.

Within the EUMEDIS programme, EMISPHER strives to pursue joint activities with the 5 pilot projects currently active in the health sector of EUMEDIS: EMISPHER (www.emispher.org/), Coordinator: Dr. Georgi Grasczew, SRU OP 2000, RRK/MDC, Charité, Berlin, Germany,

graschew@mdc-berlin.de), EMPHIS (www.emphis.org/, Coordinator: Prof. Henri Debois, Fondation Merieux, France, henri.debois@fondation-merieux.org), BurNET (www.burnet.org/, Coordinator: Prof. Michele Masellis, Mediterranean Council for Burns and Fire Disasters, Italy, mhcpa@medbc.com), PARADIGMA (www.paradigmamed.org/, Coordinator: Prof. Mannucci Moia, Ospedale Maggiore di Milano IRCCS, Italy, moia@policlinico.mi.it) and EuMedCancer (www.eurogene.org/, Coordinator: Prof. Giovanni Romeo, European Genetics Foundation, Italy, romeo@eurogene.org), as well as with other EUMEDIS pilot projects, e.g. in the education sector: ODISEAME (www.odiseame.org/, Coordinator: Elena Verdù, Centro para el Desarrollo de las Telecomunicaciones de Castilla y León – CEDETEL, Spain, everdu@cedetel.es). Health cluster meetings were held in Bari, Italy (November 2002), Paris, France (January 2003) and Turin, Italy (November 2003); a meeting with ODISEAME was held in Cairo (February 2004).

EUMEDIS Workshop on “Infrastructures for Disease Control”

Emerging from these various cluster activities, in particular thanks to joint efforts from EMPHIS and EMISPHER, the first EUMEDIS Cluster Workshop on “Infrastructures for Disease Control” was held during the conference in Algiers. The scientific programme of this first workshop was composed under the responsibility of the EMISPHER partners IsMeTT (Dr. Daniela Filì, dfili@ismett.edu) and Charité (SRU OP 2000, op2000@rrk-berlin.de) and focussed on infectious diseases. Numerous contributions were presented by leading experts from various European and Mediterranean countries like Turkey, Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Italy and Germany. The lively discussions among the ~90 participants have demonstrated that the scientific programme (shortly available on the dedicated Workshop CD) was of a high level and addressed the appropriate topics and targets. Following this workshop, a round table discussion was held among the experts and it was suggested, because of the importance of infrastructures for disease control, to organise the next dedicated workshop during the final EMISPHER Conference on September 16-19, 2004 in Istanbul. Experts on disease control from the whole Euro-Mediterranean health region, especially from the other EUMEDIS health pilot projects, are invited to contribute to the scientific programme of this next workshop.

Scenarios of the Twin Conferences in Algiers and Cyprus

A particularly new aspect of the present Dissemination event has been the concept of twin Conferences: two linked Conferences, taking place simultaneously in Cyprus and Algiers. EMISPHER has chosen this new concept of twin conferences in order to reach a larger target audience in two different countries, to meet the recommendations by the EC at the project's Mid-Term-Review, as well as to follow-up on the previous success of the EUROMED 2004 Conference.

EUROMED 2004, the first Euro-Mediterranean Conference on “Views on Health” was organised by the Algerian Ministry of Health, Population and Hospital Reformation, on February 14-15, 2004 in Algiers, Algeria and brought together international experts from the health sector and political decision-makers (his Excellency the President of the Republic of Algeria, the Prime Minister of Algeria, the two Presidents of the two Chambers of the Parliament of Algeria, all Ministers of the Algerian Government, representative of the EC-DG Information Society, ambassadors from all countries having a representation in Algeria, the Minister of Health from Italy, etc.; in total more than 1200 participants) and aimed to identify the needs and possible strategies for **lasting and sustainable international co-operation in health care in the Euro-Mediterranean region**.

The proposal of his Excellency the President of Algeria, recommending the development and deployment of a **Virtual Euro-Mediterranean Hospital as key structure for future activities** were further concretised in subsequent round table discussions, resulting in the official EUROMED 2004 resolution of 10 concrete recommendations. Also based on the experiences gained in EMISPHER and other EUMEDIS projects, a new concept for a Virtual Euro-Mediterranean Hospital was presented at this conference for the first time.

The twin conference at the University of Cyprus focussed on Continuity of Care in eHealth: ICT Applications & Development of New e-Health Technologies for Improved. Experts from the EC, Cyprus and Spain gave high-level presentations on the various key aspects to an audience of

~30 participants from the local medical community and the University of Cyprus. Live multimedia streaming of the lectures was done via Internet using the conference website. A dedicated Conference DVD with the recordings of all presentations will soon be available.

Continuing the work of the EUROMED 2004, the present EMISPHER Conference in Algiers brought together international experts from the health sector and political decision-makers. The Algerian government was represented by the Minister of Health, Population and Hospital Reformation who officially opened the Conference, accompanied by 6 colleague Ministers, the Secretary General of the Government, Presidents of various national Councils and the Vice-President of the Algerian Parliament. Furthermore, the Head of the EC Delegation in Algiers, 7 Ambassadors of European and Mediterranean countries, as well as high representatives of various international organisations like W.H.O, UNICEF, UNPD and UNFPA were present. The Conference in Algiers was attended by ~300 high-level international health experts. All presentations held will be available on the dedicated Conference CD shortly.

Based on the official recommendations of EUROMED 2004, a round table discussion was held by 20 health key players from various Euro-Mediterranean countries (Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey, France, Greece, Italy and Germany) to further identify and define key aspects and requirements for a Virtual Euro-Mediterranean Hospital. Concrete technical, medical, scientific and political steps towards the Virtual Euro-Mediterranean Hospital were recommended:

“The realisation of a **“Virtual Euro-Mediterranean Hospital”** could be achieved and accelerated through the following actions:

1. Provision of global geographical coverage within the Mediterranean could be achieved after concrete political and economic actions that are necessary to identify the infrastructure for the future Virtual Euro-Mediterranean Hospital.
2. This process could be coordinated and undertaken effectively by beneficiary countries; EU member states will provide technical and scientific consultancy.
3. As primary coordinator for this undertaking the government of Algeria therefore emerges as a strong partner.
4. The formation of a high level committee, under the auspices of the Ministry of Health of Algeria with participation from other MEDA countries' Ministries of Health, could be very helpful to accelerate the process of organisation of the infrastructures for a Virtual Euro-Mediterranean Hospital. It is further suggested a first meeting of this committee to take place during the final EMISPHER Conference in Istanbul, Turkey, September 16-19, 2004.”

The Virtual Euro-Mediterranean Hospital aims to facilitate and accelerate the interconnection and interoperability of the various services, being developed by different organisation at different sites, through real integration. This integration will take into account the social, human and cultural dimensions and strive towards common approaches but open and respectful of cultural differences: **striving to move step by step from aid towards multi-lateral cooperations**. Activities will include various real-time telemedicine services to support implementation of Evidence-Based Medicine, as well as Fellowship programmes for training of young medical doctors, providing complete and area-wide coverage including all Mediterranean countries.

During the final EMISPHER Conference in Istanbul (16-19.09.04) various round table discussions will take place to identify and define key characteristics of such a “virtual hospital”, as compared to the known situation of a “real hospital”. Round table discussions on the Virtual Euro-Mediterranean Hospital, **all focussing on the transition from a real hospital to a virtual hospital** will be organised on various topics such as:

- Medical Infrastructures
- Medical Services
- Communication Infrastructures
- Infrastructures for Disease Management
- Collaborations in Virtual Communities

- Legal & Regulatory aspects
- Business & Sustainability models
- New role of Medical Faculties in the Virtual Hospital

We invite all key players, policy-makers, stakeholders and interested press representatives to join us at our next EMISPHER International Dissemination Conference on “Best Practise in Real-time Telemedicine” in Istanbul, September 16-19, 2004, hosted by our EMISPHER partner ISTEM (Continuous Medical Education and Research Centre, Istanbul Medical Faculty, Istanbul University, Prof. Cavit Avci, avcic@istanbul.edu.tr).

Let's meet, where the continents meet!

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