



Athens was honored to host the **Executive Board of the EUGMS (European Union Geriatric Medical Society)** on June 26th for a special workshop entitled "**The Development of Geriatric Medicine: A perspective for a new approach towards the older patient.**" This meeting was a great opportunity for Greek medical societies and health professionals involved in the care of the aged to partake in the experience of the European experts in Geriatrics, but also to come together and jointly demonstrate their willingness to bring about positive change to this field in Greece. Thus, the Hellenic Consortium for Geriatric Medicine was formed, and members of the involved societies were keen to display their enthusiasm at the newly refurbished Athens Electra Metropolis Hotel.

The meeting started with a brief introduction by **A. Benetos, Academic Director of the EUGMS**, on the status of Geriatrics in Greece and how this meeting could be a starting point for significant progress. One of the highlighted points was the possibility of hosting the 2020 EUGMS Meeting in Greece, and its support by the Hellenic Consortium for Geriatric Medicine. In brief, this consortium consists of:

- **Hellenic Society for the Study and Research of Aging**
- **Geriatrics and Gerontology Association of South West Greece**
- **Hellenic Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics**
- **Hellenic Society of Geriatric Oncology**
- **Hellenic Society of Physical and Rehabilitative Medicine**
- **Hellenic Society of Orthopedic Surgery and Traumatology**
- **Geriatrics and Gerontology Association of Northern Greece**

In cooperation with the:

- **Hellenic Dietetic Association**
- **Hellenic Scientific Society of Physiotherapy**
- **Panhellenic Physiotherapists' Association – Scientific Section**
- **Hellenic Association of Ergotherapists**

The **President of EUGMS, S. Maggi**, then took the podium for an interesting overview of the development of Geriatric Medicine in Europe. Importantly, it was made clear by Prof. Maggi, that care delivered to older patients by physicians trained in Geriatrics and in a Geriatric clinical setting, was provably superior to care delivered by Internists or General Practitioners.

Next, **A. Vilches-Moraga, EUGMS Executive Board member**, pointed out the importance of a geriatric evaluation in older patients undergoing surgery. His experience at Salford and of other centers in the UK was examined, and the importance of the cooperation between the surgical and geriatrics staff to the benefit of patients was clearly demonstrated.

The **EUGMS President-elect, F. Martin**, then offered an excellent lecture on the value of a geriatric evaluation for patients with cancer, and the importance of delivering optimal care to patients considering the multiple aspects of their health and general status

**A. Benetos, Academic Director of the EUGMS**, delivered an interesting lecture on the geriatric evaluation of patients with cardiovascular conditions. He focused his presentation on the importance of taking into account functional status and frailty level when determining therapeutic strategies in older patients with hypertension.

Finally, it was an honor to have **A. Trichopoulou, Emeritus Professor at the National School of Public Health and The University of Athens Medical School**, who pointed out the value of the Mediterranean diet in Healthy Aging and provided an overview of the development of this important concept. The exciting future prospects of research in this area were pointed out and the efforts of several groups in Greece were highlighted

A much awaited discussion on the need for Geriatric Medicine was moderated by **T. Strandberg, Past-president of the EUGMS**, and a lively discussion ensued. Participants in the session pointed out the inherent weaknesses of the Greek healthcare system, how it has been adversely affected by the financial crisis and how care of older adults frequently is suboptimally shared by several specialties. The topic of Geriatrics being instituted as a separate specialty or a sub-specialty was discussed at length. A common point made was the importance of instituting a Geriatrics program at undergraduate and graduate levels, and the need for a dissemination of Geriatric knowledge by experts trained abroad to the Greek healthcare field. Representatives of several specialties remarked on the unique challenges of each specialty, and the need for a cooperative mind-set when treating older patients.

In conclusion, the EUGMS workshop was a very rewarding opportunity for the exchange of knowledge and experience on the care of the aging population, and how successful models used abroad may be implemented in Greece. The speakers' expertise should serve as an informative guide for the Greek health care personnel, and hosting the 2020 EUGMS meeting could be a landmark in the development of Geriatrics in Greece.