

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT,
Association for Medical Education in Europe

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The birth of a new Journal for Medical Education is a most important development, calling for serious recognition. On behalf of the European Association, and of the World Federation for Medical Education, I write to convey the warmest congratulations of the international brotherhood of medical teachers on the founding of Medizinische Ausbildung, and wish the Mitteilungsblatt der Gesellschaft fur medizinische Ausbildung great success with this necessary development. As the German Section of AMEE, the Gesellschaft has the responsibility to study, describe and promote medical education - in its undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing phases - for the Federal Republic of Germany. The Gesellschaft also has responsibility to the other countries of Europe : to convey accurately and in detail the condition of medical education in the Federal Republic - its present state, its current problems, its particular strengths, and the proposals for necessary change.

These important tasks will be met more adequately through the existence of a new Journal devoted to medical education. The Journal can also serve to make known throughout West Germany and neighbouring countries the developments taking place in medical education in other nations.

At present the 450 medical schools of Europe, almost all of them long established and often described somewhat disparagingly as "traditional", are under criticism for being resistant to the changes called for by the current upheavals in our society. These shifts which present great new challenges in the training of doctors follow from altered economic circumstances; demographic shifts in populations (greater longevity, for example); the new diseases of affluence (such as the complications of drinking, wrong nutrition and smoking associated with contemporary lifestyles); technological discoveries; and many other social changes which have altered the practice of medicine. The new Journal will be an important instrument in assisting medical schools to evolve new patterns of education and training which will be relevant to their societies and which are needed to create doctors competent to meet the emerging demands for health delivery systems.

If medical schools can respond to these challenges, a promising future lies before them. For that to happen, a national Association such as the Gesellschaft will require authority and national recognition as a foremost body with primary concern for all stages in the training of doctors. No legislation should be passed, for example, on any health education matter without the advice of the Gesellschaft. All medical schools should look to the Gesellschaft as their counterpart on the national scene. Official bodies should liaise with the Gesellschaft about all matter concerning medical education.

Such influences will be fostered by the birth of the new Journal.

In that spirit, I express satisfaction and pleasure on behalf of European medical teachers, that the Gesellschaft has taken the wise and necessary step of launching the Journal. Medical teachers in all our countries will wish it a vigorous, effective and long life.

Henry Walton .

Professor Walton writes also in his capacity as President of the World Federation for Medical Education.