

**Minutes**

**Pediatric Oncology East and Mediterranean (POEM) Meeting**

**Thursday, 23 October 2014**

**Time: 12:50 – 13:50**

**Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel, Toronto, Canada**

**SIOP Board Room (ELGIN)**

**Attendees:** Paul Rogers (SIOP Secretary General), Gregory Reaman (SIOP Treasurer), Susanne Wollaert (KAW), Dr. Amani Al Kofide (POEM Chair), Dr. Hassan El Solh (POEM Vice Chair), Dr. Sima Jeha (POEM Ex-Officio)

**Apologies:** Giorgio Perilongo (SIOP President), Gabriele Calaminus (SIOP Immediate Past President)

**Agenda:**

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| **Item** | **By** | **Est. time** |
| 1. **Welcome and Communication** | **Giorgio Perilongo** | **15** |
| 1. **Presentation of POEMS** | **Haifaa M. Khalifeh** | **15** |
| 1. **Possible future joint agenda** | **All** | **29** |
| 1. **Any other business** | **All** | **1** |

**1. Welcome and Communication**

Paul Rogers (PR) as acting Secretary General of SIOP is welcoming the POEM delegation to Toronto and briefly introduces the roles of the present officers and secretariat staff.

**2. Presentation of POEMS**

PR adds that in order to establish a possible collaboration with POEM, SIOP needs to know more about their vision, mission and general activities.

Dr. Amani AlKofide (AAK) is briefly summarizing the history and activities of POEM (kindly refer to Appendix 1 for detailed slides)

POEM’s main goal is to collaborate with national and international societies and that is the main reason as to why they have asked to meet the SIOP Executive Board.

AAK is asking the SIOP board how such a collaboration could take form and PR explained that the role and goal of SIOP is to be platform for all stakeholders involved in Child and Adolescent Cancer. There are two important aspects to the society which are the annual meeting and of course the recently formed advocacy committee headed by Dr. Gabriele Calaminus. Additionally, SIOP is aiming to improve the scientific content of the upcoming meetings as well.

In regards to a possible collaboration, PR asked the POEM representatives if they have already contacted the SIOP Continental Presidents for the respective regions.

Dr. Sima Jeha (SJ) explains that they have been in touch with SIOP representatives in the region and that the collaboration with St. Jude Hospital is also very good. Due to this success they are able to form further international partnerships that reach as far as China.

Despite the large network and resources of St. Jude, POEM was founded on the basis of lack of access to care and vast regional differences in Asia and the Middle East. There is a mix of extremely wealthy and poor countries and the political crisis in the region poses a big challenge.

All those issues need somebody to constantly oversee them and ST. Jude cannot be present in every single country hence the decision to found POEM independently from them.

Gregory Reaman (GR) inquired about what set of criteria POEM applies to the centers they are working with. SJ explained that there is fixed set of standards outlined in the society’s bylaws.

POEM is also actively promoting workshops which are focused on infection control, guidelines and protocols depending on their setting.

The society also initiates two weekly case presentations and also has two fellows in the region including nurses.

GR inquired if POEM feels that all centers in the region have been reached or if there are still major stakeholders missing from the network or if they did not chose to join POEM (e.g. does POEM membership exclude other memberships).

SJ outline that POEM does not exclude any members and many POEM centers are linked to SIOP and vice versa.

GR asked the representatives what issues or areas does POEM address that is not addressed by others.

SJ explained that the one thing that POEM addresses is the focus on deliverables to directly impact patients on the ground and the main focus is on data registry.

GR inquired if they are providing financial support to these centers. SJ answered that the majority of the budget is coming from St. Jude, grants and other contributors (e.g. Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and some other wealthier countries in the region).

PR wanted to know what POEM does really envision about how SIOP can support them and vice versa.

SJ explained that POEM can provide data sets to SIOP which have not been available previously and make these accessible to the society. Data and information about cases can be presented during SIOP meetings and also support the development of clinical trials as well as establishing care support guidelines.

PR stated that the PODC working group of SIOP are very similar and there might be a better fit for POEM within their network and not so much with SIOP as entity.

SJ replied that PODC is already developing guidelines and that the difference to POEM is that they would actually implement these on the ground and there is no reason to duplicate efforts.

**3. Possible future joint agenda**

The POEM representatives stated that they are not asking for any funding but merely the recognition of their existence as society from SIOP. There is no need for a formal agreement such as a Memorandum of understanding, just simply the fact that both bodies know each other.

GR agreed that it is all about working together and that this is vital to achieve a regional approach to guidelines. The existence of POEMS would also be helpful for a future SIOP congress in the Middle East for example.

PR added that the role of SIOP from an international perspective is to overlook and facilitate the collaboration and communication on a regional level and to provide a platform. He can see a major collaboration taking place in the PODC area.

**4. Any other business**

n/a

Decision(s):

No formal agreement, e.g. Memorandum of agreement, between SIOP and POEM needed.

Action(s):

* Susanne Wollaert to send POEM information on how to book a room during the last afternoon during annual SIOP meetings (at own cost)
* Susanne Wollaert to send her contact detail and inform POEM about next Call for Bids

Appendix 1





   

 

 

  

 

 