"Why do we need a European Board of Balneology?"

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PRM and Balneology have common roots and probably will share a common future. At least in some of the European countries. The strong tradition of Balneology is present on South, Central and Eastern regions of our continent. The medical use of mineral waters, gases and peloids is no longer an empiric practice. Research brought more and more scientific evidence to Medical Hydrology allowing the understanding of its therapeutic principles and mechanisms. The empiric atmosphere of the past gave place to a modern approach of this medical field. Even though we must recognized that there is still a long way to stablish a global acceptance of Balneology by the medical community and health authorities. There are several reasons for that. Most probably the insufficient knowledge of Balneology is one of the main ones. The therapeutic principles of Balneology include physical, chemical, biological and psychological factors. But the balneotherapy techniques and the contextual conditions (both environmental and personal) also play a very important role in this therapeutic process. In the future of Europe we will face progressively a higher freedom of circulation of patients and health professionals. Health systems will need to converge into a continental dimension. This will bring the need of the establishment of European Standards for Health Care and patient's rights. Within PRM we are aware of this for a long time and our European Bodies work hard aiming to have a better Education, to develop research and by this to ensure a good Clinical Practice. Since 2004 UEMS PRM Section decided to pay attention to Balneology as a strong reality of our specialty. Recently ESPRM also decided to establish a Balneology Committee. But the reality still shows a lot of differences in curricular contents among our countries and regions. It is time now to define European Standards for Balneology Education and Certification. PRM specialists in most cases have a lot of credits to achieve these Balneology European Standards. But this judgment should be done by a new independent European Body. That's why in 2014 the European Board of Balneology was founded. Now is the time to develop its objectives establishing the rules for a European certification diploma. We believe that a great number of PRM specialists will get easily the conditions to obtain this recognition. We present a proposal for the development of the future certification criteria analysing particularly the PRM curricula and their needs to achieve a satisfactory Balneology knowledge.

Key Words: PRM, Balneology, Medical Hydrology, European Board