Editorial

Medical Ultrasonography
2008, Vol. 10, no. 2, 71-72

Why it is Necessary to Implement the Multilevel System of Practice in Ultrasound in Romania

Some years ago, following the efforts of the Educational and Standards Committee of EFSUMB, a unified European system for the evaluation of performance in the field of ultrasound was initiated. This guideline (www.efsumb.org), was a difficult target to achieve, since it implied the standardization of practice of ultrasonography across Europe.

This Multilevel System of Practice (MSP) obtained the approval of the Board of Directors of EFSUMB, thus becoming an official document of the society.

From my point of view, these guidelines are a good instrument that should be used by every National Society in which a stratification of the level of practice is required. At the same time, these guidelines allow every specialty which uses ultrasound in daily practice, to make their own, specific, modifications.

We started to implement the Multilevel System from the 1st of January 2007, at the level of the National Society of Ultrasound, without the assistance of any other regulatory institutions (such as the Ministry of Public Health or the National Health Insurance System). We prepared this step two years in advance. By e-mail and through the *Romanian Journal of Ultrasound*, we asked all the members of the Romanian Society of Ultrasound, registered in our data base, to apply for a level of practice (according to their experience), the application form being available on our web-site. In the first year, only a small number of people applied for a level. Every application form was evaluated by the Committee of the Romanian Society of Ultrasound (chaired by Prof. Dr. Ciprian Brisc), who made the decision to grant or not the level of practice desired by the applicant. For the "expert level", approval from the Executive Bureau of SRUMB is required. After approval, an appropriately designed Certificate stating the Level of Practice was sent to the applicant.

After more than a year of intense advertising of the Multilevel System of Practice, I was a little disappointed by the small number of applicants. This year, the National Board of our Society and I personally, made a special effort to promote this. At this moment, only 15.9%, 90 out of the 567 members of SRUMB have been evaluated through the Multilevel System and received a classification. It is a paradox that even people who can achieve level III (experts), have not yet applied. On the other hand, individuals with long experience in the field of ultrasound, but who do not perform more sophisticated procedures, would not like to be granted only level I or II of expertise. Personally, I tried on many occasions (General Assembly of SRUMB, editorials in the *National Journal of Ultrasound*, on the web-site of the Society, or by sending reminder e-mails), to explain to our members that the Multilevel System can be an instrument to encourage people to permanently increase their level of practice.

In our country, we have a large number of doctors performing ultrasound examinations, but, sometimes unfortunately not reaching the desired level. This Multilevel System offers the opportunity to take ultrasound to a different level of performance and at the same time, it can be an opportunity for the patients to choose the physician with the desired level of expertise. At the same time, it enables the patients to have a "second opinion", at an upper level, if they want to.

This material was written in order to ask the doctors in the field of ultrasound to apply for a level. For me is a little strange that only 16% of the physicians who use this method have made an application, and, probably, if the Multilevel System of Practice would be mandatory in order to obtain reimbursement from the Social Security Health System, in a very short period of time, all the people in-

Address for correspondence: Dr. Ioan Sporea
UMF Victor Babeş Timişoara
E-mail: isporea@excite.com

volved in the practice of ultrasound would be evaluated.

So, dear members of the Romanian Society of Ultrasound, please open the web-site of our Society (www.srumb.ro) and complete the application form. You will receive an answer regarding the level of practice granted to you, positive or negative, as soon as possible. But remember to read the application form very carefully in order to make the right choice of the level of your practice. Later on, you will receive a very nice diploma stating your level of practice that you can frame and ex exhibit in your office. If you will receive a negative answer regarding the desired level, you can always apply for a step down.

I believe that our Society can make order in its own house using European regulatory rules, and that mandatory regulations issued by a third party are not required.

Therefore SRUMB member, we are waiting for you to have very soon one of the Multilevel System of Practice classifications. At the same time, in the future, you can permanently increase your level of practice, and indeed this is the main objective of continuous medical education (CME).

Prof. Ioan Sporea, MD, PhD,
President of the Romanian Society of Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology