

Paris, October 12, 2018

### To whom it may concern

The European Council of Podiatrists (ECP), is the committee of International Federation of Podiatrists, responsible for promoting the interests and general awareness of the podiatry profession to the European Commission, Parliament, and Council.

Therefore, under its actions to strengthen and promote Podiatry in whole Europe, the ECP fully supports the further development of Podiatry in Romania knowing that Mrs Norina Gavan, president of the Association of Podiatry is already working to achieve that goal.

Podiatry is defined as that profession of health sciences concerned with the research, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of deformities, pathologies and injuries of the foot and associated structures – in relation with the body as well as the manifestations of systemic diseases – by all appropriate systems and technologies using scientific and professional specialised knowledge. Like most health sciences the podiatry profession has undergone major transformations over the last years, in the academic, professional as well as in its social aspects.

Therefore, the Podiatrist is the specialist, which diagnoses and treats the different conditions, deformations and foot diseases, through of palliative, orthopaedic, physical, pharmacological and sometimes surgical treatments, which are specific to their specialty, training and expertise and the legislation applicable in that specific country.

In June 2017, the Association of Podiatry in Romania submitted a master program in Podiatry. This program was elaborated with the support of The University of Malta, Department of Podiatry. This master in podiatry would be the first step, as the International Federation of Podiatrists is supporting a full podiatric education starting from the first grade in higher education: 3y bachelor supplemented by a master degree.

Internationally the bachelor degree in Podiatry is 3year min. 180 ECTS that gives the student the possibility to work in the many fields covered by the podiatry profession: Biomechanics and orthotic therapies, treatments and wound care and in some cases Podiatric surgery and focussing in specific care to paediatric and geriatric patients. Nowadays, podiatrists are involved in almost every area of health, such as (professional) sports activities and playing a crucial role in the multidisciplinary team around the diabetic patient and in prevention of lower limb injuries. One of the most important professional activities developed by Podiatry is the care given to diabetic patients, achieving a significant increase of the quality of life of those patients and reducing the complications related to diabetes such as amputations, working together with other medical specialists as Endocrinologists and Vascular Surgeons.

In English terms the wording used to indicate the profession is **podiatry**, despite the variability of the educational programs in the different European countries, which establishes the requirements for the verification of official qualifications that enable the practice of the Podiatric profession the translation of the profession starting at bachelor degree is **Podiatry**. In English the word 'podologist' is the person who on an academic level does research on foot science, it isn't the denomination of the profession.



The International Federation of Podiatrists has recently adopted international standardised criteria concerning the practice of Podiatry. Besides the registration and licencing requirements all podiatrists undergo a three-year bachelor degree training in Podiatry at a minimum. Moreover, the law should protect the title of Podiatry/Podiatrist/Podiatric medicine and establish both the minimum qualification necessary and the further requisites of training in the practice of the profession. The role of the podiatrist in the country should in some way defined by a rule or directive that is accepted universally and allows podiatric practitioners to be able to define and defend their clinical practice.

The use of the term Podiatrist (or equivalenced to podiatrist) as a title is one part of the regulation. However, the title has to reflect practice and be accepted as such. The term/title podiatrist is protected, and there is an expectation that a Podiatrist will be “qualified” to carry out podiatric procedures.

We encourage all the actors involved in establishing the podiatric profession in Romania to follow the International standards to make sure patients and practitioners receive the same treatment all over Europe and globally.

Yours sincerely,

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