



Marko Hawlina

# New EBO website to cater for ongoing expansion in 2010

Dermot McGrath  
in Paris

THE European Board of Ophthalmology (EBO) has launched a new website (<http://ebo-online.org/newsite/home.asp>) with greatly enhanced functionality to cater for the growing demand and interest in its many activities and services across the continent.

Designed by the team at Agenda Communications in Dublin, Ireland, which is also responsible for the administration of the ESCRS and EURETINA organisations, the new website provides EBO with a robust platform on which to base future growth and improve outreach to its target community of resident ophthalmologists across more than 40 European countries.

"We felt it was time for a fresh, new look for our organisation and to update a lot of the information on our website," explains Marko Hawlina MD, PhD, FEBO, president of EBO. "With so many of our resident ophthalmologists spread across such a wide geographical area, it makes sense to be able to offer a maximum of services and support through the Internet site and to keep it as lively and as up-to-date as possible," he said.

Visitors to the new-look website will now be able to carry out a range of tasks such as submitting applications to take the EBO Diploma (EBOD) examination in Paris in May 2010 or submitting grant applications for the EBO residency exchange programme to encourage ophthalmologists to share their knowledge within the countries of the European Union in order to achieve the highest standards of training.

"This residency exchange programme has become even more important since 12 new countries joined the EU since 2004 and we hope that the new website will help to build on the growing popularity of the scheme. For 2010, the programme will cater for up to 40 residents, 10 teachers and 10 chair/programme director visits to one of the EBO certified centres in Europe," explained Prof Hawlina.

He noted also that much of the impetus for the new website comes, of course, from the ongoing expansion of EBO, and in particular the EBOD examination, which has grown to become a recognised and respected badge of honour for the hundreds of medical specialists who have added the designation "Fellow of the European Board of Ophthalmology" to their curriculum vitae.

"The 2009 EBOD examination proved to be the most successful of our examinations to date. We had 308 candidates from 25 European countries and 168 examiners from 27 countries in Paris this year, which is approximately a 10 per cent increase from last year," said Prof Hawlina. "We hope and anticipate that this upward trend will continue into the future and the new website will play a key role in helping us to maintain this momentum," he said.

Held every year, the EBOD examination is designed to assess the knowledge and clinical skills requisite to the delivery of a high standard of ophthalmic care both in hospitals and in independent clinical practices.

Prof Hawlina said that the Board of the EBO had very clear objectives in mind when it decided to revamp and overhaul the website. As well as making it more aesthetically appealing and adding improved functionality, the new EBO Internet site will also serve to cut down on administration by automating many of the online application processes, said Prof Hawlina. This also includes a simplified form to apply for accreditation of European training centres and for CME points.

"We already started on this process in 2009 and it worked very well. It means that all the information collated on all applicants can be transferred directly to our database and automated confirmations will also be immediately sent out to each applicant. This makes for more efficient administration and enables us to collate important statistical information about the candidates and helps us to better serve their needs," he said.

As well as the new website, the EBO has several other initiatives in the pipeline for 2010. The most recent Executive Board meeting of the EBO in Slovenia decided that the International Council of Ophthalmology (ICO) curriculum, to which many European experts

contributed, will be suggested by the EBO as the basic platform of knowledge that residents will be encouraged to use for training purposes, with guidance to the organisation of topics and references specific to EBO

requirements. Furthermore, the extended EBO syllabus is expected to be rolled out in 2010, and will help candidates to more precisely orient their studies in preparation for the EBO Diploma examination.

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The call for grant applications for 40 residents, 10 teachers and 10 chairmen/programme directors to visit one of the European accredited training centres is now open and will close on **December 31, 2009**.

Apply at [http://ebo-online.org/newsite/committee/residency\\_exch/grant-application.asp](http://ebo-online.org/newsite/committee/residency_exch/grant-application.asp)

The application period for the EBO Diploma examination is now open and will close on **January 31, 2010**.

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