



**Dear colleagues, dear friends,**

Let us stop and think back on 2013. Once again the year is rapidly coming to an end, and we still have so much to do, reorganise and change, so many visions to make reality. Are we really so impatient, or can we sometimes sit back and let things take their course?

Combining work and family life is a goal we all want to achieve: if it wasn't for the Association, our work and our local, national and international commitments. The here and now is important, and not just for our colleagues, our staff and our residents. Don't we try too often to bring it all under one roof? But the day has just 24 hours, and there's only so much room under the roof!

The big E.D.E. family continues to grow. New members join (Croatia), former members (ADMR, Belgium) return, interested directors are co-opted (Yellow Cross, Russia); the challenges grow apace, and participation in European projects strengthens the team spirit. Our quality management system E-Qalin® has long become firmly anchored in many European countries, and the E.D.E. is a welcome and respected partner in Brussels. Interesting study trips in Europe forge

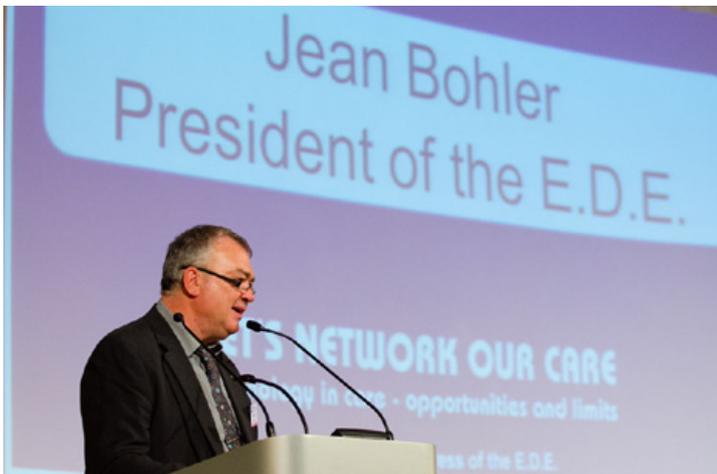
ties between our members. Gabriele Hartmann in our Berlin office meets every query with an open ear and perfect advice. And our homepage provides all relevant information in detail.

The 13th E.D.E. Congress in Tallinn held in cooperation with ESJN was perfectly organised by our partner MeeTincS, and the Executive Board members had plenty of time for participants on location. The Congress as the core focus of our gathering and the unforgettable social programme will long remain in our memory, and call for many more joint exchanges of ideas and concerns.

My wholehearted and honest thanks go out to all members of the General and Executive Boards for yet another year of committed and voluntary activity.

I wish all the readers of this newsletter a pleasant festive season and the very best for the New Year 2014.

*Sincerely, Jean Bohler*



*E.D.E. President Jean Bohler at the opening of the 13th E.D.E. Congress in Tallinn on 26 September*



*(l. to r.): Rünno Lass, President of the Estonian association of care home directors ESJN, Ene Ergma, the President of the Estonian Parliament who delivered the opening address on 26 September, and Jean Bohler, President of the E.D.E.*



*The Executive Board of the E.D.E. (l. to r.): Boris Koprivnikar, Angele Bajoriene, Franziska Rahmel, Jean Bohler, Pascal Champvert, Jean-Louis Zufferey, Erika Lörcinzy*

## **E.D.E. Vision 34**

*This is the 34th issue of the newsletter. E.D.E. VISION. It will inform you about current developments in the field of long-term care services for the elderly in Europe as well as about projects of the E.D.E. and its member associations. The E.D.E. will also give its views on current questions of European policy in the context of long-term care.*

*We invite you to forward this newsletter to your colleagues.*

**contact: [info@ede-eu.org](mailto:info@ede-eu.org) | [www.ede-eu.org](http://www.ede-eu.org)**

## 13th European Congress of the E.D.E. in Tallinn, 26 – 28 September 2013



Plenary hall of the 13th E.D.E. Congress

### “A first-row seat”

*I wasn't able to attend the 12th European Congress in Prague for health reasons, but that was the first one I missed. As an honorary member, I received the invitation for the 13th Congress in Tallinn with some pride. And I certainly don't regret having attended.*

*Taking part in an E.D.E. Congress is really being in a “first-row seat”. Again and again you hear about new cases that have a direct impact on your own way of working. The speeches – and above all the colleagues present – provide a host of engaging information.*

*But Tallinn was something special, despite the fact that the basic concept hasn't changed since the first Congress in Berlin in 1989 – something that perhaps would be worth thinking about. After 24 years, half a day at the start, a day of sessions and half a day at the end may be reaching their limit.*

*What was special about Tallinn?*

*First impressions often last the longest. The hotel accommodation, the Congress location, the transportation, supervision and information: there was really not a single cause for complaint. A fine choice of organisers. The advance information was perfectly arranged as well by MeeTincS from Luxembourg.*

*The content of the speeches will always draw the odd bit of criticism, but the opening addresses on Thursday afternoon by Rünno Lass, President of the ESJN, and by E.D.E. President Jean Bohler were clear and cordial. “Technology in Care” is a difficult topic that invariably sparks many questions and discussions. Thanks to the technology used for the question period by André Vasanne of MeeTincS, the discussions were modernised. Nevertheless more discussion is needed. Here the topic of the “robot hairdresser” by Prof. Heidrun Becker from Switzerland comes to mind.*



Workshop “Telehealth: Services, issues and perspectives in long-term care; recent advances and positive experiences” with Jean-Luc Michoud (Switzerland)

*Like at every E.D.E. Congress, the sessions on Saturday morning were a challenge even for experienced participants. The input from Finland and Austria couldn't do much to change that, but perhaps were more suited to another Congress concept.*

*E.D.E. President Jean Bohler called social contacts decisive for the success of a Congress. Before that in the Brotherhood of Blackheads we had already enjoyed the presentation of the Swiss delegation on preparations for the Congress in Montreux from 24 – 26 September 2015; the gala evening in the Estonian Maritime Museum made an overwhelming impression which I will never forget (by the way, Tallinn is a beautiful city).*

*I look forward to the E.D.E.'s 25th anniversary celebrations in Luxembourg on 11-12 April 2014!*

■ **Wim Schepers (Belgium), honorary member of the E.D.E.**



Honorary members at the gala dinner: (l. to r.) Carlos Marty (Switzerland), Martin-Michael Birkholz (Germany), Wim Schepers (Belgium)

## Assistive technology in long term care?

**A project by the Old Age Department of CURAVIVA Switzerland looks into the need for assistive technology and its current application potential**

The programme “Ambient Assisted Living” is receiving increasing attention in the healthcare sector. Various EU projects bear some of the credit for this development. One reason for this innovative technological thrust is the scenario of demographic ageing and the fear of a sudden rise in healthcare costs. Older people should – according to the explicit goal of Ambient Assisted Living – be enabled a longer independent life in a home environment. In this way long stays in a residential care establishment can be avoided.

### The need for assistive technology in long term residential care

Although most newly developed technological products are geared for use in ambulatory, domestic environments, there are now application possibilities for these products in long term residential care. However, little attention is currently being paid to this field. What is the need for technical assistance in care homes? What are the specific situations in which assistive technology can effectively help staff charged with care and supervision? In which fields of activity

are care and supervision staff ready and willing to use such products, and when do professional reservations get in the way (acceptance problem)?

To shed light on these central questions, the Old Age Department of CURAVIVA Switzerland has launched a multi-level and multifaceted project. A pilot study was commissioned with the Institute of Occupational Therapy of the Zurich University of Applied Sciences under the direction of Prof. Dr. Heidrun Becker. The aim of the study was to identify staff needs for assistive technology and factors that influence the acceptance of new technologies in care homes.

The first stage involved carrying out research on the relevant literature. On the basis of these results, and in compliance with the expanded technology acceptance model (TAM 2) by Venkatesh and Davis (2000), a guideline for an expert survey was worked out. These talks were then assessed using content analysis.



### First results

Most factors in the technology acceptance model developed by Venkatesh and David can also be seen in the survey of experts active in long-term residential care. These factors include above all the degree of experience with assistive technology products; the possibility of having input in the decision making processes; congruency with the attitudes of the "care sector"; the chance to have attractive working conditions; security regarding result quality; the advantages with respect to the effective reduction in workload and regarding the well-being of residents, and last but not least the user-friendliness of the application.

As an additional factor the experts put much stock in the individual, situation-specific deployment of assistive technology; stressing that the residents themselves should be able to state whether they favour its use. This ethical value of self-determination nevertheless contrasts with the trend toward deploying technological developments as "comprehensively" as possible.

As first application fields the care experts identified relief from heavy manual labour, routine tasks, documentation and commu-



*Christoph Schmid (left) and Dr. Markus Leser of CURVIVA Switzerland gave the Workshop "On the Benefits of New Gerontechnologies in Long-Term Care – Opportunities and risks from the users' point of view"*

nication, hygiene, the planning of care tasks and monitoring, especially at night. Resistance to technological support concerned food preparation and dispensation, a general sense of caution regarding dementia care, and basic care. These tasks seem to belong to the core tasks of caring, and form key elements in the professional caring relationship.

### Next steps?

A next project step involves investigating more broadly and in more detail the concrete application situations for assistive technology on the basis of the acquired results. This includes listing the specific products, which in turn will help to make them accessible. On the basis of experience and familiarity with the online platform "Wegweiser Pflege und Technik" (care and technology signpost), and with the support of the FZI Research Centre for Information Technology at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, the goal is to establish a clearly laid out online database listing specific application situations and assistive technology products for long-term residential care.

**Information on the pre-study:** Prof. Dr. Heidrun Becker, Zürcher Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaften ([heidrun.becker@zhaw.ch](mailto:heidrun.becker@zhaw.ch))

**Information on the project:** Christoph Schmid, CURAVIVA Switzerland ([c.schmid@curaviva.ch](mailto:c.schmid@curaviva.ch))

## 10th International Conference of the IAHSa in Shanghai, 17 – 20 November 2013

The 10th international conference of the IAHSa took place this year from 17 – 20 November in Shanghai. Around 300 participants from all corners of the world met to discuss the theme "Connecting our Global Community".

In addition to engaging speeches in the plenum session, a total of 50 different sessions took place in which individual topics could be addressed in detail. In one workshop, CURAVIVA Switzerland presented its new study on "Attractive Workplaces: What Employees Want, What Employers Offer".

As well as renewing existing contacts and making new ones, participants were thus able to address specialised topics from around



the globe in depth and from a variety of perspectives. The E.D.E. was represented at the conference by Jean-Louis Zufferey and Dr. Markus Leser, who drew attention among other things to the E.D.E.'s next congress in Montreux in September 2015.

**For further information:** [www.iahsa.net](http://www.iahsa.net)

## 16th Long Term Care Days in the Polish City of Torun

The 16th edition of the International Long Term Care Conference took place in the Polish city of Torun from 17 – 20 September. The main topic of the Conference, which counted almost 1,000 participants from 21 European countries this year, was therapeutic activity in long term care. For the third time in a row, the Conference took place under the patronage of the Polish Society of Gerontology and the E.D.E., whose President Jean Bohler was an honorary guest.



*Ceremonial opening of the Conference by Jarosław Józefowicz, President of TZMO*

The International Long Term Care Conference is an important event bringing together each year experts from all sectors of long term care and services for elderly and severely ill people from across Europe. They all meet up in Torun: scientists, managers, politicians, and above all professional caregivers who stand up for the interests of elderly and chronically ill people and people with disabilities. The organisers are Torunskie Zakłady Materiałów Opatrunkowych ([www.tzmo.com](http://www.tzmo.com)) and the European Long Term Care Education Centre, which is also active in Torun.

The consistent high quality of the Conference programme is the result of ongoing cooperation with leading representatives and actors in long term care from Poland and abroad, as well as sector-specific Polish and European advisors, stakeholders, associations and organisations. The guests and participants are traditionally welcomed on the first evening with an entertaining musical programme, followed by a speech dealing with issues of particular importance for the entire Conference. This time Prof. Leon Drobnik spoke about the pain of rejection and social exclusion due to sickness or other physical or mental impairments.

This year's meeting was dedicated to general therapeutic practices: new findings and good practices were presented to the professional caregivers. Experts from the area of pain treatment gave a series of presentations and workshops on recognising pain symptoms, particularly among people with serious cognitive disorders. Apart from pharmaceuticals, the benefits of physiotherapy in pain treatment were dealt with. In addition the role of emotional pain in the progression of every illness was discussed.

Of particular interest was the session on "coma patients" led by Dr. Małgorzata Świerkocka. Together with representatives from the international "Coma Science Group", she explained problems related to the diagnosis, therapy and supervision of coma patients. Dr. Athena Demertzi, who in her professional practice deals with clinical and paraclinical methods of diagnosis, pointed out in her talk that misdiagnoses of the vegetative state often mean that people who can feel or hear, for example, do not receive the appropriate therapy, and no effort at communication is made.

Aurore Thibaut, a doctoral student in coma research at the University of Liège, spoke of the need for standards and guidelines on therapies for patients with cognitive disorders. A researcher in the field of chronic cognitive disorders of consciousness and neurological aspects of waking from a coma, she drew attention in particular to efforts aimed at easing pain and spastic symptoms among such patients.

In the coming years the number of elderly people – and consequently the number of them who suffer from severe illnesses – will grow. Like many other countries, Poland is keen to secure needs-oriented and qualitatively optimal care for people suffering from dementia. During one of the Conference sessions, best practices for the care and supervision of people suffering from dementia in Poland and various European countries were presented. Shared apartments for people with altered behaviour due to dementia as well as winter gardens as therapy rooms met with great interest.

As every year, special talks and podium discussions were offered for managers and providers of long term care facilities in Poland. Prof. Piotr Błędowski, President of the Polish Society for Gerontology, led one session dedicated to current challenges facing directors of long term care homes and the search for optimal solutions. Representatives from various countries shared their experiences and dealt with the restrictions imposed by national care systems, as well as perspectives for future development. Numerous examples illustrated which changes in work organisation had a positive effect on the quality of care and the safety of residents. Attempts were made to pinpoint solutions for specific negative developments and areas where there is particular need for action, with a special focus on Polish care homes and domestic care services. Podium discussions on "Residential care homes – home or institution", in which representatives from politics, science and care facilities took part, met with particular interest. Care home directors were also offered a special workshop entitled "Anatomy of Conflict – the search for understanding".

The Conference ended with a series of talks on EU perspectives in Polish long term care, with particular accent on questions regarding funding and access to financial aid. The session was led by Dr. Elżbieta Szwałkiewicz, national consultant in nursing chronically ill and disabled people. Representatives from the Health Ministry (Department of European Funds) spoke about the need for European funding to improve the quality of medical care for people who require nursing in Poland, and explained in which contexts such funding can be used.

You are cordially invited to Torun for the next Conference in September 2014.

For more information, please visit [www.tdod.pl](http://www.tdod.pl) and [www.muchmorethancare.com](http://www.muchmorethancare.com).

■ *Daria Składanowska, coordinator of the conference programme*  
*Grażyna Śmiarowska, president of the Polish Association for Long-Term Care (PTOD)*

## Care professionals from Poland visit three homes in Berlin

From 23 – 25 October 2013, 12 colleagues (care home directors, care givers, nursing care specialists and occupational therapists) from the Polish city of Torun visited three different care facilities for the elderly in Berlin, thanks to the mediation of the E.D.E.: Bethanien Haus Bethesda – a care home run by the social service arm of the Protestant Church in Germany with shared apartments for seniors in the heart of the multicultural Kreuzberg district –, Senioren-Pflegeheim Birkholz – a modern family-run enterprise divided into small living



*Franziska Rahmel, Director of the Tertianum seniors' residence, answers the questions from Polish colleagues*

quarters, and Seniorenresidenz Tertianum, which offers assisted "luxury living" as well as residential care. The directors of the respective facilities showed the guests through their homes and answered numerous questions. The Polish visitors very much appreciated these direct exchanges with their German colleagues, in particular regarding questions of labour organisation and nursing plans. Return visits have already been arranged.

*E.D.E.*



*Viola Kleßmann (on the right), director of the "Bethesda" home, with the guests from Poland*

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## Haus Birkholz and its volunteers – a plus, not an alternative

For many years Berlin's Haus Birkholz and voluntary work have gone hand in hand. Apart from residential care, domestic care and physiotherapy, voluntary work is one of the four pillars that make our elderly care what it is. That in turn gives the work done by volunteers a special role, and heightens the esteem for each and every volunteer. For us, voluntary work is a plus, not an alternative. That being said, it's a plus that we would have a hard time replacing if it didn't exist. For that reason we make every effort to have our volunteers stay with us. That is best achieved by making sure they feel good, respected and needed. It is also very important that volunteers can work entirely according to their abilities and develop their full potential.



*Gordon Urban coordinates voluntary activities*

Consequently we offer those who want to do voluntary work in Haus Birkholz a broad scope of possibilities for sharing their talents and abilities: from one-on-one care to participation in existing group activities to creating new group activities for residents. As well as joining the weekly excursions organised by the home each week, volunteers can also plan and carry out their own excursions using our travel coach.

The voluntary activities are arranged by a permanent staff member charged with coordinating volunteer work, Gordon Urban, who ensures that this work fits in with the clearly structured daily schedules of the residents and staff. That presents quite a challenge, since by its very nature voluntary work cannot be slotted into a timetable, and because the activities carried out under this category are so

varied. Nevertheless the volunteers work very closely with permanent staff, who themselves (must) work according to fixed rosters and structures. So the coordinator is really more of a contact partner for everyone concerned in one way or another by voluntary work: residents, family members, staff and of course the volunteers themselves. In this way, offers and demands for voluntary work can be planned swiftly into the schedule.



*An excursion with volunteers*

Haus Birkholz now has 30 volunteer staff – for 136 residents. This allows us to offer our residents additional walks, discussions and individual care. Group activities like parlour games, the creative group, the painting group and the cooking group are also taken care of by volunteers.

And one thing we're particularly happy about is the kindergarten group set up by the volunteer service almost two years ago. Once a week the children in the kindergarten "Cheburashka" – which is located in the same building – get together with the residents. This is made possible through the tireless efforts of our volunteers. Certainly it would also be possible without them, but it wouldn't be nearly as fun – for the residents or for us!

*Alten- und Pflegeheim „Haus Birkholz“, Berlin*

[www.birkholz-net.de/berlin/haus-birkholz-gervinusstrasse/startseite.html](http://www.birkholz-net.de/berlin/haus-birkholz-gervinusstrasse/startseite.html)