

EIM 2013 Congress Report

Dr Anthony Annan

Mrs Philomena Annan

Introduction

Exercise is Medicine (EIM) and Sport and exercise medicine (SEM) is important to a country. There is a strong relationship between exercise and health. Physical activity is essential to good health and quality of life. Physical activity and exercise exerts a positive influence on muscular-skeletal, cardiovascular, respiratory, hormonal- immunological, haematological, neuro-sensory and gastrointestinal systems. Physical activity levels are declining in most developed countries and in all age categories.

Regular physical activity and sport, especially during childhood and adolescence, promotes proper growth and development, maintains health and counteracts negative risk factors such as cigarette smoking, obesity, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, hypertension, coronary heart disease and other ailments. Risk factor profiles for many ailments limiting the quality of life are beneficially affected by physical activity and exercise.

The Sports and Exercise Medicine (SEM) and Exercise Is Medicine (EIM) specialist and other parties involved in this work may have a substantial impact on all the above points raised including reduction of health care costs.

Sports and Exercise medicine (SEM) is a multidisciplinary clinical and academic speciality of medicine dealing with health promotion for the general population, by stimulating a physically active lifestyle and diagnosis, treatment, prevention and rehabilitation following injuries or illnesses from participation to physical activities, exercises and sport at all levels. SEM is globally defined and recognised not solely for taking care of the sporting elite athletes.

It is mainly focused on:

1. Prevention of chronic diseases caused by sedentary lifestyle as a major area of increasing interest which can partially be served by expertise in sports medicine = **EIM**-a concept which uses exercise or physical activity in the prevention, management and treatment of diseases
2. Pre-participation clinical screening and examination before exercise and competition as well as medical assistance to the athletes engaged in all sports.
3. The use of supplements, pharmacological agents, doping control and gender verification and its complex moral, legal and health-related difficulties.
4. Special medical issues associated with International sporting events of athletes, including disabled athletes, such as the effects of travel and

acclimatization.

5. Research in basic science and extensive clinical undertaken in the sports medicine domains within a great variety of specialities.

There is a great desire from all the people I had the pleasure to work with to see the Ghana EIM (GEIM) to be a success. There are many challenges facing the GEIM but with a concerted effort, and with the assistance of all stakeholders in the GEIM, all can be overcome and we can set real and sustainable goals for the GEIM.

Administration

1. A Training Programme for which we have made great progress-accreditation has been obtained through the hard work of the SEM training program GCPS taskforce set up within the faculty of FM within the GCPS.
2. We have a healthy interest in people who want to be participating in the FSEM and its program.
3. Our GEIM objective is to have as widely a representative group of Physicians, Surgeons, Anaesthetists, Dentists, Allied Health practitioners - physiotherapists, chiropractitioners, podiatrists, nutritionists, nurses etc, Accident and Emergency Medicine doctors, General Practitioners, Obstetricians & Gynaecologists, exercise physiologists, Occupational Medicine Specialists, Ophthalmologists, Pathologists, Paediatricians, Public Health Medicine Specialists, Psychiatrists and Radiologists interested in Sport and Exercise Medicine and EIM to join our ranks. We already have Sports Medicine Doctors, Physicians, General Practitioners, Emergency Medicine Specialists, Anaesthetists, and Surgeons, lifestyle medicine specialists, sports scientists, physiotherapists on board.

Education

Our 1st GEIM Annual Scientific Conference was held in June 2012, and it was a success, with more delegates attending this year. This is the biggest event for the GEIM each year, and I would like to thank our Organising Committee, especially our Chairman Professor Ocansey, for organising a very interesting meeting.

One of the areas we really have to look at will be how to form an umbrella committee to look at training programmes at all levels of the education concept of GEIM i.e.

- Post graduate programs in SEM/EIM (recently accredited by the faculty of FM and the GCPS)
- Training programs in Sports Science
- Training programs and certifications in Exercise medicine
- Fitness industry programs

- Lifestyle Medicine programs
- Environmental science programs
- How to incorporate SEM/EIM in other well established programs in medicine etc

Community Care

The World has seen the rebranding of Exercise as Health Prescription within the concept of EIM. We should be actively participating in this initiative through our African Colleagues (AFPAN) and then other organisations around the world i.e. ACSM/EIM, European, Asian and South American Counterparts. In Ghana we will need the active support of the government not to create or rebrand this concept but at least to support this initiative. We hope to work more closely with sporting and community bodies on this initiative. This will inevitably help achieve our aim of reducing and or prevent chronic diseases which is becoming an epidemic in developing countries like Ghana

Clinical Service

SEM/EIM should open up channels of communication and cooperation with our colleagues in medicine, allied health e.g. Physiotherapy, podiatry, chiropractic, nursing etc, Lifestyle Medicine and health, universities, the government etc. SEM/EIM would like to see this relationship, especially in the fields of clinical service and research grow and evolve over the coming years

Research

Finally, but not last on our agenda, Research is being highlighted where we are requesting all papers written by our colleagues to be brought together as a brochure of our current research interests. It's an important initiative from our colleagues at Narkh-Bita who have excellent publications on this front. Again this may be an area for cooperation with our other hospital colleagues. So far this has been encouraging but more is needed as there is a huge untapped 'market' in SEM/EIM research in the developing world like Ghana and Africa as a whole.

The proposed committees of the Ghana EIM Board are as follows:

- Finance and General Purposes Committee
- Education and Accreditation Committee
- SEM Training Committee
- Lifestyle Medicine Training Committee
- The fitness industry training committee
- GEIM International Relations Committee
- Government Liaison Committee
- ?Others

Conclusion

Our connections with EIM and Sports Medicine International bodies should be very strong ACSM/EIM, AFPAN (African federation of Physical Activity network) the European Specialty Board for Sport Medicine (UEMS, MJC Sport Medicine), the International Sports Medicine Federation, International Olympic Committee, Medical Commission, sub-commission on Medicine and Science in Sport and many International Sport Federations Medical Commissions.

EIM and Sports medicine is a multidisciplinary clinical and academic speciality of medicine dealing with health promotion for the general population, by stimulating a physically active lifestyle and diagnosis, treatment, prevention and rehabilitation following injuries or illnesses from participation in physical activities, exercises and sport at all levels. Sports medicine is globally defined and recognised not solely for taking care of the sporting elite athletes.

The increased attention from media and significant financial and political interactions in international sports events creates an atmosphere where business and sports meet, not always for the benefit of involved athletes. Consequently, EIM and sports medicine can encompass an array of areas including internal medicine, exercise physiology, cardiology, orthopaedics and traumatology, physical and rehabilitation medicine etc.

Sports medicine is a multidisciplinary specialty, integrating teams with physicians, athletic trainers, physical therapists, coaches, sport scientists, nutritionists, psychologists, athletes and other related specialties. The EIM/sports medicine specialist + The patient should be at the centre of the multidisciplinary team, coordinating the direct planning of the patients physical activity, related to his/her health.

In view of difficulties with the change in culture for the future benefit which we have faced in the past, I will agree with Professor Ocansey that we have to create a university of exercise medicine to cater for the unmet needs of the training of exercise medicine practitioners on the ground to take the concept of EIM into our cities, villages, government departments and ministries, universities, work places etc. The current situation will not serve this purpose. We have huge challenges to move the concept of EIM forward in Ghana and the rest of Africa but the key hurdle to overcome is how to change the culture of our current medical establishment, the government, educational institutions etc for the future benefit of our populations in Ghana and the rest of Africa.

I would like to thank the Chairpersons, colleagues, and all present today and the members of

each committee for their work and continuing commitment to the development of the concept of EIM/SEM in Ghana. I would encourage colleagues to get actively involved with the EIM and help move it forward for it's a win-win situation as this will benefit all of us and future generations of our populations.

THANK YOU ALL VERY MUCH