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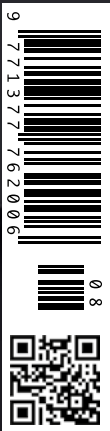
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Innovation and a Unique Experience at **EAHM 2019**

The 28th congress of the European Association of Hospital Managers (EAHM) will take place in Ghent in Belgium from September 11–14. Danny Havenith, congress chairman spoke to HealthManagement.org and shared the unique experience that will be offered to participants at the EAHM Congress 2019.



The congress theme of Innovative Healthcare Strategies encompasses the following areas: Big data & digital health; Finance & health economics; Smart buildings & logistics; Health management, governance & ethics; Innovation & technology; and Healing architecture. Which of these areas do you think hospital managers across Europe need to prioritise in order to improve care quality?

The theme of the EAHM 2019 Congress is: Innovative Healthcare Strategies. It sheds light on a key issue that should occupy the CEOs of hospitals in Europe, indeed throughout the world: innovation. Innovation is the engine of the future, anticipates future success, and enhances the quality of healthcare providers. Thus, all six themes are also quality issues, each of which in their own way gives the managers and guests of the Congress input

for their daily actions. This is applicable to the quality in medicine and nursing, but also in technology, paramedicine, administration, and management. It is about exchanging experiences and developing visions among the participants. It is about doing the right things in the right way.

Can you give some examples of hospitals across Europe that are working effectively and leading the way in any of the above areas?

The six selected Belgian hospitals that can be visited during the Congress are places where this innovation can be seen, especially in the topics that are specifically offered there. But I am also pleased that we have found intersections in cooperation with industry. We all work towards the same goal: to provide high quality and innovative health service that puts people first.

For the Inauguration Ceremony, we have asked two people for a keynote speech - people who live this vision: Prof. Fidelos Soh, CEO of Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Singapore & Central Health, National Healthcare Group, and Paul Stoffels, Chief Strategic Officer, J & J worldwide. They will give us a glimpse into the future they already live in their businesses.

In your Congress video address, you mention the need for open minds and networking. How do you encourage this at the event?

We as organisers and members of the Belgian Hospital Managers Association have put our vision under these very keywords: to reach excellence, to remain open-minded, to follow innovation in the sector, and to cultivate friendship with colleagues. These four aspects

are the cornerstones of the community of a Congress that brings together managers.

The Belgian Association of Hospital Managers has worked to create an impressive network amongst six hospitals that has addressed critical areas such as digital transformation and finances. What insights will you be sharing with delegates on how this network works?

The Congress theme is, as already indicated: Innovative Healthcare Strategies. We have also created a new concept in the organisation and pedagogy of the Congress. Instead of organising an ex-cathedra congress in which 500 participants sit together in a conference room and listen to the lectures and impulses, we have decided on a decentralised concept.

The participants vote for two of the six proposed topics that you have already mentioned. To do this, you leave the conference centre on two half days of the three-day congress and go in smaller groups of 80 people max in new innovative hospitals. By creating small groups, we will create communication among the participants. Interested people on a particular topic will get together in a dynamic process. This offer creates a great logistical challenge for the participants' exchange and for us, organisers, which we will handle with professional partners on-site.

What will delegates see on visits to future-proof hospitals?

The participants will have special offers in hospitals. Each session is presided by a chairman, and there will be an academic contribution. The other speakers are contributing from the industry. The second part includes a visit to the hospital to present innovative projects from the hospital and industry partners. The visit starts with the bus ride — a kick-off video introduces visitors to the hospital and the subject.

Not to be forgotten and, of course, worth mentioning is also the plenary

Innovative Healthcare Strategies

Six Themes, Six Hospitals

The European Association of Hospital Managers (EAHM) Annual Congress focuses on six main themes this year, Big Data & Digital Health; Finance & Health Economics; Smart Buildings & Logistics; Health Management, Governance & Ethics; Innovation & Technology; and Healing Architecture. EAHM 2019 aims to explore these themes by linking their implementation to different hospitals and centres around Belgium.

The digitalisation of healthcare has meant that data is now more accessible. **AZ Groeninge Kortrijk** has made digital health and big data a focus by the implementation of their integrated computerised patient record. The safeguarding and coordination of health data in systems such as this will be explored at EAHM 2019.

EAHM 2019 will also aim to focus on finance and health economics and the long-term benefits of investing in technology and prevention. The efforts of **Delta CHIREC Brussels** in the investment of their new site along with their neighbourhood centres demonstrates the group's aim to offer high-quality care in a multidisciplinary approach.

The development of smart buildings will also be explored at EAHM 2019. Intelligent hospitals need to be able to utilise technology for the benefit of the patient, whilst also evolving with

our constant need to provide personalised care. The new phase of construction at **AZ Delta Roselare** shows exactly how smart architecture and logistics have been prioritised.

With the digital revolution comes a new change in priorities. At EAHM 2019, the benefits of the digital revolution to both patients and care providers are explored and the subsequent changes that are needed to take place in healthcare to accommodate this. **UZA Antwerp** prioritises these governance and ethical concerns in its continuum of care.

To make progress in the face of technology and the mass of medical data available, we need to innovate. Strategies for innovation and technology, for example, those from **AZ Maria Middelaers**, will be examined at EAHM 2019. AZ Maria Middelaers aims to simultaneously provide high-tech healthcare along with basic care, making it an efficient hospital constantly striving for quality.

Hospitals' aim to get patients back to their comforts and the importance of healing architecture is the final theme to be explored at EAHM 2019. **AZ Zeno Knokke** is always innovating demonstrated by its slogan 'This is not a hospital.' The centre thrives from the benefits of unique architectural designs to deliver care of high quality.

sessions in the conference centre. In addition to the inauguration ceremony, which we talked about earlier, there will be a very dynamic workshop on innovation, including spin-off ideas and other sectors, and giving input to CEOs.

Last but not the least, we are organising an Innovation Award for the first time in cooperation with the European Association EAHM. So, the Congress offers many facets, and there is something for everyone. The social programme provides an adequate framework so that the exchange between the participants is effective and sustainable.

What do you hope delegates will take away from the 28th EAHM Congress in Ghent?

We hope that the delegates of EAHM2019 Congress will go back to their hospitals and do their daily business a

little differently, putting ideas and vision into practice, so that the patient feels that "appropriate and optimal health care is offered here." Maybe the Congress will also help make new innovative discussions between key players in the hospitals possible. That would be a nice reward for our efforts.

What changes do you think are necessary to be implemented in hospital management by the EAHM 2020 congress in Budapest?

Each national association - the organiser of the congress, sets its priorities. We have a wonderful team in Belgium that organises the Congress. It is already in contact with the Hungarians to exchange best practices. In the same way, I thank all the Portuguese colleagues who organised the Congress in Cascais in 2018 for all the support we have received. ■