

Rowing against the current – European optometry getting closer in times of social distancing

Across Europe, education and clinical practice in optometry remains heterogeneous. In some European countries, optometry is a fully recognised profession and a well-established academic discipline whereas in others further developments are urgently needed. For the foreseeable future collaborative projects at associative and academic levels will occur between different countries to develop optometry as a profession. These efforts will expand the possibilities to share knowledge and expertise and will lead to further and faster development of the field of optometry allowing optometrists to provide competent eye health and vision care required by patients everywhere. At the beginning of 2020 one of these long-term highly promising projects was initiated when the Italian Optometric Society, named SOPTI, decided to join The Norwegian Association of Optometry (NOF) to support a project initiated in 2008 – The Scandinavian Journal of Optometry and Vision Sciences (SJOVS). In 2020 SOPTI became a joint owner of the journal and Fabrizio Zeri was handpicked to join the group of editors. This “joint venture” between the two associations and SJOVS will allow the promotion of the journal

and will create new pathways and opportunities for the Italian optometric community that should consider SJOVS their new scientific platform for readers and authors.

This expanding European project has developed and will continue to thrive through utilization of digital communication despite restrictions imposed by COVID-19 at the beginning of 2020 leading to the dramatic and almost unthinkable closure of European borders. For now, two important European countries have joined in a common enterprise to empower the scientific relationship between their optometrists and researchers; hopefully, other countries and associations will follow in the near future. We anticipate a bright future for the world, for Europe and for optometry. Now, as in the past, human solidarity and intelligence will find solutions for the current crisis. We, the editors of SJOVS, with the support of the professional associations wish the very best for the European optometric community, and we are looking forward to receiving contributions from you to our journal.

Stay safe and keep well!

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