

## **Michelle L de Oliveira - President of the UEMS HPB Board of Examination:**

*"Together we will overcome the crisis and will improve learning platforms and quality of training in HPB surgery".*

The COVID-19 crisis is changing allocation of resources in many fields and consequently affecting all levels of our society. The uncertainty of our future highlights the strengths, but also the weaknesses of health care systems in different countries. Keeping our professional educative aims has become a challenge.

The UEMS HPB division under the leadership of Alejandro Serrablo fully supports the UEMS HPB Board of Examination under my guidance. Currently, our agenda embrace specific goals of performing two HPB Board Examination in 2020, as well as distributing the last HPB Honorary Diploma. Fortunately, we could hold on February 8<sup>th</sup> 2020 our regular UEMS HPB Examination in Guadalajara following the E-AHPBA Gold Seal Post-Graduate Course in Bile Duct. Five out of 8 candidates succeeded and six others qualified for the HPB Honorary Diploma (<https://www.uemssurg.org/divisions/hpb-surgery/fellows2>). While the second UEMS HPB exam cannot be defined at the moment, I would like to reassure our trainees that the education mission will be kept as one of our highest priority level together with the E-AHPBA Education Committee

I foresee two scenarios. First, the COVID-19 is overcome and the eligible HPB candidates will be able to travel within Europe. In that case, I would consider a location for a state of the art UEMS HPB exam in December 2020 with perhaps up to 8 candidates. The second scenario would be a persistent restriction of traveling within Europe. In this unpleasant situation, I would not favor performing UEMS exams on a web-based modality, but to postpone the exams to next year. Currently, there is no recommendation from the UEMS Section of Surgery in cancelling the Upcoming Board of Examination (General Surgery, Transplant Surgery among other specialties) planned from October to December 2020. It is obvious that the safety of candidates and examiners are mandatory. Therefore, the situation will be constantly evaluated and decisions adjusted accordingly.

In the meantime, I would support the E-AHPBA Education Committee to initiate dissemination of HPB syllabus content through web-seminar and/or podcasts. This would nicely serve as preparatory courses for the next HPB Examinations.

By working together and putting forward our resilience abilities, we will adjust to the upcoming challenges to secure, not only continuity, but also more ambitiously, improvement of the Professional Education in the HPB field. Transmission of knowledge is one of the most important missions from our society. Thus, succeeding with teaching, leading, and learning will require innovative discovery ways to cope with the time of coronavirus.