INTRODUCTION

The URO project intends to prepare a “new professional”, named Continent Therapist, in the area of Urinary Incontinence by integrating specific preparation in the field of urology with disciplines principally concerned with gynaecology, obstetrics, physical and rehabilitative medicine, neurology, coloproctology, geriatrics, paediatrics.

It is foreseen the extensive use of New Educational Technologies and of e-learning. The target groups are Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses, Nurse Assessment Coordinators, Midwives, Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapists. The main activities are concentrated on the preparation of curriculum and course material (content definition, teaching tools, production/printing of course material), their dissemination and the demonstration of the realised training services.

The project leader is the University of Salerno, Italy and the other participants are the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia; the Huazhong University of Science and Technology, China; the NU TRUST Hospital, India.

The duration of the project is 30 months.

Project co-ordinator
Massimo De Santo

The URO project involves partners from different backgrounds and experiences that are directly concerned by the need to design a new curriculum, with the appropriate learning value. The role given to the different partners also responds to the need to develop working relationships between the Asian and European countries.

THE ICT CENTRE - UNIVERSITY OF SALERNO

The ICT centre was founded in 2003 with the primary objective of co-ordinating and offer services to the institution as well as the territory in the area of Information technology, with particular emphasis on didactic support. In particular, the Centre has as it’s main objectives:

▲ to promote within the University and local territory a conscious use of Information Technology and Communication, with a particular attention on didactics;

▲ the promotion and adoption of innovative didactic methodologies based on modern computerised instruments, offering, at the same time, the opportunity to students to practice self-learning with the use of e-learning structures.

▲ to offer computerized services to students, teachers and personnel from both the University and the surrounding area, with the scope of making available knowledge about information and communication technology (ICT)

▲ the experimentation of different didactic approaches in all sectors in which ICT disciplines can lead the way in

The URO Team at their first meeting at the University of Salerno in May 2006.

A new curriculum to improve the “quality of life” for people with URinary inCOntinence by the use of ICT technologies
improving the effects and efficiency of training.

The ICT centre participates actively in research projects, both Nationally and Internationally, with the objective of experimenting the use of ICT Technologies in the largest possible number of sectors related to teaching.

The ICT centre promotes the use of the most advanced methods of didactic techniques. Of the most recent initiatives, there is the promotion of Podcasting with founding of 'UNISA Podcast', a centre for the production of informative and didactic Podcast. The centre offers regular training/information seminars on themes inherent to communication and information destined to students, teachers, professionals, entrepreneurs and Public Administration. All the information about the Centre and its services is available at: http://www.centroict.unisa.it

THE ROLE OF THE ICT CENTER – UNIVERSITY OF SALERNO - IN THE URO PROJECT

The ICT Center – University of Salerno has a wide experience in the field of on-line training and of the new educational technologies utilised in different applicative areas.

In the University various distance learning platforms are used of which some were self-developed and others have been bought and adapted to the internal didactic needs. Furthermore, the University is realising a variety of initiatives that link together new technologies and medicine. Of these projects, the most interesting are in the area of sensors, interfaces and, connected to URO, in the field of the web based training in various topics of medicine and surgery. Specifically, the ICT Centre of the University, lead partner of URO, is strongly concerned in creating innovative didactic methodologies based on ICT and in providing effective e-learning solutions.

Additionally, the work group of the lead partner includes international experts in Urinary Incontinence, as can be read in the related CVs, those experts also have a long experiences in managing projects. So the staff of the University of Salerno can provide expertise in Urinary Incontinence both from a scientific and technical point of view, competencies and experiences in the field of informatics and communication technology and include both an expert technical coordinator and a qualified communications expert.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF HEALTH STUDIES - UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA

University College of Health Studies is part of the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. For more than 50 years it educates at university level professionals for all health related disciplines except medicine. These include physiotherapy, work therapy, sanitary engineering, orthopaedic engineering, radiology, health care and midwifery. The last two are performed in accordance with European regulations. Criteria for enrolment to our programmes are very high - among of the highest in Slovenia. In all our three and four year programmes there are about 1200 students. Although teaching is our strongest point, we are also engaged in research in different health related fields. Quite a few research projects have been successfully finished and there are always some in progress. Most of our research topics are related to the quality of life of elderly, testing their physical capabilities, evaluating their problems and needs.

Besides this, we are also engaged in the study of rehabilitation of younger patients, stroke patients and also in ecological studies. We are also developing new methodological and technological solutions in our fields. And, as a higher educational institution, we are engaged in research in educational topics, too.
THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF HEALTH STUDIES IN THE URO PROJECT
The University College of Health Studies has an important role in URO project. As a teaching institution we have experience in developing and implementing new study programmes. Besides this, our staff consists of specialists in physiotherapy, work therapy and health care. They all have practical, teaching and research expertise in the field of continence therapy.

Our role in the project is to lead the activity area 2, where the background research is done and learning needs are determined, but we also actively participate in all other activities. Alan Kacin, PHD in physiotherapy, specialist in physiology of exertion, Darija Scepanovic, MS in physiotherapy, specialist in continence therapy, France Sevsek, PHD in physics, specialist in biomechanics, dean of the University College of Health Studies are involved in the project but other members of the University College of Health Studies also participate. They are specialists in physiotherapy, work therapy, health care in midwifery.

THE NU TRUST HOSPITAL – INDIA
Leveraging advances in medical technology and constantly updating medical expertise, the Nephro-Urology Centre is at the heart of the various medical services of the NU Trust. It is located in the Southwest part of Bangalore, south India, at Padmanabhanagar. NU Trust (now NU Hospitals) is a non-profit charitable Trust, has pioneered the diagnosis and treatment of renal diseases in the state of Karnataka.

It is not only one of the leading Nephro-Urology services in the southern part of the country, but is also the only dedicated center in state of Karnataka, to date, which is committed to personalized and cost effective care of highest quality, in an environment of excellent medical education. What primarily started as a dialysis and transplant service, has since grown into a major Nephro-Urology centre, conducting not only about 1200 haemodialysis procedures a month, but also providing a wide range of Pediatric and Adult urology, Andrology and Incontinence services, in addition to Cadaver and live-related renal transplants.

NU Hospitals is also a busy post graduate super specialty teaching hospital in Nephro-Urology with a separate department of Neuourology & Urodynamics. The hospital located in Bangalore, India, caters to the full spectrum of urinary incontinence patients where assessment and medical and surgical management options are offered.

THE NU TRUST HOSPITAL ROLE IN THE URO PROJECT
The hospital is participating in the Uro Project under the project leadership of Dr Vasan S S, who is trained in Neuourology, Urodynamics and Incontinence from Singapore and is heading the hospitals Department of Neuourology & Urodynamics initiative. He has been associated with several projects of Society for Continence, Singapore, which is driving the continence movement in that country. The team under his leadership, which consists of other leading incontinence specialists, gynecologists and interested hospitals / organizations, intends to participate actively in all aspects of curriculum development and its online evolution.

Furthermore, The Indian Continence Foundation presided by Dr Vasan and its team members are also providing inputs for the full realization of practically useful curriculum which can be adapted in the collaborating countries. Wide ranging interviews on end users were conducted in the preliminary phase to assess the preferred learning methods and needs. The curriculum also will be, in the later phase, extensively tested in India with support of other Incontinence specialists and hospitals.
THE HUAZHONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY - CHINA

The Union Hospital was established in 1866. It has developed into a large-size comprehensive hospital with missions of medical treatment, teaching, research and training medical professionals. The hospital has 2000 beds, 38 clinical divisions, 14 technical divisions and 57 experiments with an affiliated advanced tumor therapy center. Asia Emergency Center, Hubei Emergency Center and National Distant Emergency and Healthcare Center are located here.

The hospital is very strong in academics and professionals. There are more than 2000 faculty members, among whom more than 300 are full professors and associate professors. The inpatients are more than 40,000 and more then 30,000 operations are performed in this hospital every year. Many advanced medical techniques are applied here like organ transplantation and laparoscopy operations.

There are 28 master programs, 22 doctoral programs and 2 post-doctoral research centers. More than 300 postgraduates students are trained and get the resident certifications every year and the intern undergraduate students are around 800. The research funding and academic publications of Union Hospital is situated in the top ten list in China. The hospital has established academic exchanges and technology collaborations with Germany, America, Japan, Britain and France. 28 projects have taken the lead internationally from 1994 to 1998 and at least 100 senior medical scientists will visit or give lectures in Union Hospital.

THE ROLE OF THE HUAZHONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE URO PROJECT

The Tongji Medical College, Huazhong University of Science and Technology inside the Department of Urology has a very remarkable experience in the field of Continence Therapy and, during the last years, has managed various basic training programmes and specialisation courses directed to nurses, midwives and physiotherapists in the area of Urinary Incontinence. Specifically for the URO project, the Tongji Medical College has an established reputation in its scientific work in Urology and Urodynamics.

In the field of Urinary Incontinence, doctors and researchers continuously publish articles, surveys and scientific papers on the main medical journal of this sector. In its didactic activities, teaching about Urinary Incontinence both theoretically and practically, it is highly considered. Particularly, the country leader and his team are working on various research studies related to the field of URO. All the activities are developed with national and international collaboration.

THE FIRST URO MEETING IN SALERNO

Numerous meetings will be held in the course of the URO project, which will give opportunities to the partners to exchange information and share the results obtained during the various activities, both in Italy and in the partners respective countries. The meetings are also the occasion for all the partners to verify their results and establish the next ideas of the project.

On the 19th of May 2006, 09.30 am, at the University of Salerno – ICT Centre, the first Meeting of the URO project was held. This meeting in Salerno was very important for the project. It enabled the participants of the project to meet for the first time in person. It clarified the basic ideas and differences in approach. Besides the official part, the informal discussions were probably even more important to our future collaboration. The meeting was very well organized and we all estimate that the project will be a great success.

One of the most significant moments of the workshop was the meeting of the project partners with the University rector Prof. Raimondo Pasquino. In this occasion he was particularly sure of a fruitful result of the project and took the occasion to highlight the historical moment for the University is - the re-opening of the Faculty of Medicine. Another important moment was the workshop, open to experts in this subject. This session, co-ordinated by Francesco Pesce, allowed a view from those who work daily in this sector of the themes of the URO project, and to verify the relevance of the projects main scopes.