



European Association of Neuroscience Nurses

Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
Belgrade, May 8-9, 2010

PRESENT

Executive committee

Paul van Keeken	President
Thóra Hafsteinsdóttir	Vice President
André Houtman	Treasurer
Ann-Cathrin Jönsson	Secretary

Representatives

Nilsa Fisher	Austria
Christian Klomfar	Austria
Katrin Gillis	Belgium
Lenka Copacevic	Croatia
Anita Mayntzhusen	Denmark
Mette Kurup	Denmark
Johanna Martin	Finland
Helen Meagher	Ireland
Åse Humberstet	Norway
Jasna Nikolcic	Serbia
Ivana Nestic	Serbia
Helena Tusar	Slovenia
Zeliha Tulek	Turkey
Cath Waterhouse	United Kingdom

1. Welcome and introductions

The President opened the meeting by extending a welcome to the board members of the EANN, especially to the new representatives of Denmark, Mette Kurup and Finland, Johanna Martin. Paul also expressed gratitude to Jasna Nikolcic for arranging the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from:

Susann Schultka, Germany; Dorothea Bergs, Iceland; Emanuela Fornasier, Italy; Geert Teerling, the Netherlands; Jörg Gottschalk and Petra Hoffman, Switzerland.

3. Minutes of BOD meeting Opatija, April 2009

The minutes were confirmed by all representatives present.

4. Reports from the Executive Committee

- a) Ann-Cathrin reported that as usual the main activity for her as secretary had been correspondence with board members concerning information regarding place of meeting, travelling, minutes and reminders to the board members regarding sending in reports from the National Associations. As usual Ann-Cathrin has also given advice to some of the board members regarding possible flights to the place for the meeting, i.e. this year Belgrade. There has also been correspondence with possible new members interested in receiving information about the EANN.

The secretary has also been participating in the EC meeting in January, 2010, which will be reported more in detail by the president and the vice president.

An invitation to the BOD meeting had been sent out to Zeliha Tulek to make it possible for her to attend the meeting.

Ann-Cathrin distributed a list to the representatives for updating addresses and new representatives.

b) Thóra Hafsteinsdóttir presented a written report with the following main items:

- EC-meeting at Schiphol Novotel 22.01.2010

- Members of the Scientific Committee:

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Thóra B. Hafsteinsdóttir, PhD | Iceland |
| 2. Katrin Gillis, MN student | Belgium |
| 3. Linda McEvoy, PhD | Ireland |
| 4. Ingrid Poulsen, PhD | Denmark |
| 5. Åse Humberstet, MSc-student | Norway |
| 6. Alexandra Bernhart-Just, PhD-student | Switzerland |

- According to the EANN articles an annual report should be written by the EC, presented and agreed on by all the EC members. In the EANN articles, article 16.1, it says: *The Executive Committee will present its annual report in this meeting, concerning the affairs and policy of the association. It will present the balance and the state of affairs concerning profits and expenses with a motivation, for approval to the Board. The documents will be signed by all members of the Executive Committee; if one or more signatures are missing, then this will be noted with a notification of the grounds.*

The procedure has not been in accordance with this article.

- The EANN articles should be evaluated in accordance with our way of working and our aims

- Communication between the board members and the EC should be improved

c) The president reported on the following items that were presented on a power point:

- Paul had participated in the ESNO meeting in Nov. 2009 with Katrin and he will send out a report from this meeting.

- EC had a meeting in Amsterdam, January 22.

- Hosting NeuroBlend VLE

- Promoting NeuroBlend

- Networking with WFNN

- Congress Blankenberge next year

- Towards the next level of services for neuroscience nurses in Europe (Part 3)

d) The treasurer André Houtman will report under the item entitled Finances.

The reports and power-points from the Executive Committee will be published on the EANN website, with exception of the financial report.

5. Reports from national representatives

The following country representatives had sent written reports to the secretary which had been distributed to the board members. These reports will also be available on the EANN website.

Austria; Nilsa and Christian were particularly pleased to report that they will be celebrating the 25th anniversary of their association this year.

Belgium; Katrin invited the board members to the next meeting in February 2011 in Blankenberge where the EANN congress will take place next year.

Croatia; The representatives of the Croatian Nursing Association in Neurology invited us all to the 4th Congress with International Participation September 15-18, 2010, at Hotel Milenij in Opatija, Croatia.

Denmark; The new country representative, Mette Kurup, reported from the Danish Neuroscience Nursing Association that they have developed a Danish competence profile in Neuroscience Nursing.

Iceland; Dórothea Bergs reported in writing that the IANN is a very active association with about 60 members. Their main goal is to facilitate and promote co-operation between neuroscience nursing associations on an international level and to promote education and knowledge of neuroscience nursing.

Ireland; Although the Irish Association of Neuroscience Nurses is a recently started association, Helen reported that they have now 39 members who are working hard on advertising and inviting new members.

Norway; The Norwegian Association of Neurosurgery Nurses have 130 members and they are also members of the Norwegian Nursing Organization. Åse Humberstet reported that in her hometown Bergen a postgraduate program (60 ECT credits) has been planned to start this autumn, but they are worried that the program will not start due to lack of money at the hospitals which are supposed to pay about 1600 € per semester.

Serbia; In Jasna's report from the Nursing Association of Serbia, Neurological Section, it is shown that the association is very active in organizing education and participating in conferences.

Also Ivana Nestic representing the Association of Neurological Nurses of Serbia reported many activities over the past year including participating in several international conferences.

Slovenia; Helena Tusar representing the Professional Group of Nurses and Health Technicians in Neurology, also reported several activities in the past year including discussions about how to start a training program for Nurse Specialists in Neurology.

United Kingdom; Cath reported for the British Association of Neuroscience Nurses that BANN has been truly recognised as an association representing nurses across the UK and they have been asked to send representation to comment on strategic initiatives and documents launched by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE). BANN also hosted an excellent conference that was well attended, but they are worried for the future because of restrictions in the hospitals regarding funding.

The Board will be very pleased to receive written reports from the associations of the following two countries to make it possible to read their reports on the website:

Finland; Johanna, the new representative for Finland, has been working for four years in Finland. In Finland nurses have their basic education in Polytechnic schools and they have four university hospitals.

The Netherlands; No report had been received from Geert who did not attend the meeting.

6. Finances

Financial balance from the past year

André reported regarding the financial situation for the past year. The audit group of Serbia had controlled and found all financial issues in order. Thus they proposed to discharge the treasurer regarding the finances of the past year. The board decided unanimously to discharge the treasurer for the financial year 2009. André requested that the membership fees should be paid preferably by the end of October. However the fees should be paid in February according to the articles as specified by the President.

Budget 2010

The budget was distributed to the members in writing.

It was proposed to include in the budget what the money could be used for, such as PR, education and so on. This would mean that we will need a more precise plan for the activities in the future.

Paul proposed to have an EC meeting where a more precise plan for future activities could be suggested. This plan should then be sent out well before the meeting to enable everyone to give feedback before the meeting. The plan should be sent out before the 1st November, and feedback should be sent to the EC by December 15. After that the EC will make a second draft and send it to the board members before February 1.

Guidelines EANN Financial Cycle

A question was raised whether the audit group should turn to a professional accountant if they had questions about the financial report. There was also a discussion whether the audit group should have the same members for a specified period or if they should be chosen by the hosting country. If the audit group have any questions they can present them to the board and the board will then decide what to do next.

Suggestions:

- 1) Two from the hosting country
- 2) Two on the board
- 3) One from the board and one from the hosting country

Åse Humberst was chosen to be in the audit group for two years together with a representative from the hosting country.

Costs above € 500 must be signed by the EC before payment.

A question was raised whether we should have our money in an office of the same bank as now in Belgium, i.e. Bank van de Post, but in the Netherlands, because EANN is an official organization under Dutch law. André explained that the rule has always been to have the money in the treasurer's home country. André also had doubts about moving our money since Bank van de Post is a bank of the government and therefore well protected in Belgium. On the other hand EANN will carry out VAT related activities in the near future and it might be easier and more efficient to be registered and have a bank account in the same country according to the President. Besides that, it would be a great benefit to have one EANN account number that does not change when the next treasurer comes in. Andre and Paul will figure out the best solution

It was pointed out that the Board Members are responsible for informing the treasurers of their associations that they have to pay the fee within the time limit. Individual members pay € 10.-.

7. 9th Quadrennial Congress 2011, Blankenberge, Belgium

Katrin distributed a letter to the board and EC regarding the congress from Winny Depaepe, who is chair of the organising committee of the Belgian Association. In her letter several issues regarding the congress were specified including registration fees.

The coming congress was also a main topic in the yearly report from the Belgian Association. It was pointed out that it is important that moderators have knowledge about the actual session.

Thóra and Katrin will discuss if any help should be offered to write abstracts.

The question was raised what should be done about marketing the congress. Anita proposed to send out information to all members. The Austrian representatives suggested having all the information on the website, including EANN website and congress website. There was also a proposal to communicate regarding the congress via Facebook.

Katrin informed that sponsors will be separated from lunch sessions and scientific events like posters.

The board was asked by Paul if they agreed on the proposals from the Belgian Association regarding the congress including the fees. All board members accepted the proposals.

8. EANN website

Thóra and Ann-Cathrin started a discussion about the EANN website with a power-point presentation comparing our website with other websites of Nursing Associations. We pay € 150 a year for our present website.

The conclusion was:

- The EANN-website gives little information to members and non-members
- The EANN-website is not easily accessible – it is a closed site – almost defensive.

The plan was to:

- Add possibilities – similar to the other websites presented
- Add information – education, courses, congresses, articles, research etc
- Involve members more – use the website for exchange of information
- Have access more open – the information should be available to all interested (members and non-members)
- Only special information should be on the login (now everything is behind login)

Conclusion: We can start a new website and € 700 for financing this was agreed on. Ann-Cathrin and Thóra will send out further information.

9. Strategic plan 2009-2014

Paul started by going through the existing goals in our strategic plan with addition of a proposed fifth goal:

1. Neuroscience nursing is recognised as a speciality in Europe by the public and the healthcare systems
2. EANN is part of a strategic network for further developments & implementation of EANN goals
3. The services of the EANN are accessible to every neuroscience nurse in Europe
4. Promotion and public relation (to be formulated).
5. Fifth goal: Evidence-based neuroscience nursing

Paul suggested the following activities to realize our goals:

- NeuroBlend website: making it available to neuroscience nurses
- EANN focus group: Community of teachers to guarantee high quality education and new developments.
- Community of practice, blog, EANN website
- Community of researchers to develop an evidence-based body of knowledge

After some discussion the board agreed with the proposals.

Katrin presented her plan to start with four focus groups. Paul commented that it will be a challenge for the EC to coordinate the four focus groups. The board members were requested to give feedback regarding their specific interest in participating in focus groups.

The board members stated the following specific interests:

Education: Åse, Johanna, Cath, Zeliha, Jasna, Ivana, Helena, Paul, Helen, Nilsa, Katrin, Mette, Ann-Cathrin
 Research: Åse, Cath, Zeliha, Jasna, Ivana, Lenka, Mette (neurorehabilitation), Ann-Cathrin
 Public Relations: Johanna, Lenka, Helen, Nilsa
 Neurosurg. Education: Helen, Nilsa
 NeuroBlend: Helena, Paul

10. EANN Research Interest Group

Thóra presented her suggestion to set up a Research Committee with 4-6 members. The focus for this committee will be evidence-based nursing, naturally with a special focus on neuroscience nursing. The group should have 4-6 members with academic background representing different specialities and the research committee will present a survey at the EANN congress in 2011.

11. New EANN members

Katrin reported that she had lost contact with a representative from the Czech Republic with whom she had planned a meeting. A meeting with contact persons in Greece had been planned, but in the end they did not reply to confirm the meeting. There was also a meeting planned for nurse educators, but it was cancelled because of the volcano.

Ann-Cathrin will try to establish contact with neuroscience nurses in France.

12. Other way of thinking of EANN Congresses

Paul initiated a discussion from the following question:

Congress every four years or more frequently in more regions?

Lenka and her collaborators have presented a way of organizing their congress in Opatija in October inviting members from other countries to participate. This congress has been supported by the EANN and the WFNN.

The following questions will be discussed in the member associations and further discussed at the next board meeting.

- What about themes for congresses?

- Can we organize a congress every second year?

- Can we think more in regions when it comes to organizing congresses?

It was announced that the associations interested in organizing the next congress should send in a nomination by December 1, 2010. The board will decide on hosting for the next congress early next year.

13. Venue, date and time of next meeting

In a congress year EANN organizes two BOD meetings in the congress country, one in the winter (two days) and one at the congress (4 or 5 hours maximum).

The next meeting will therefore take place in Blankenberge, February 5-6, 2011. The board members can consider participating at the meeting via Skype if they cannot come to Blankenberge.

Voting can also be done via email if the subject for voting is clearly established before the meeting.

Before the congress starts, May 4, 2011, there will also be a board meeting.

14. NeuroBlend

Paul reported on the latest news regarding the NeuroBlend project with the following headlines:

- Where do we stand now
- Committee Advising Trademark License
- NeuroBlend activities EC
- Report Dutch Community of Practice
- Report Towards the next level of services (3)

Paul presented the different items on a power-point which will be available on the EANN website.

Several BOD members had questions concerning the feasibility of the NeuroBlend within EANN and the member countries. Thóra Hafsteinsdóttir initiated the following discussions:

1) The fact that EANN is becoming too involved in the NeuroBlend leads to huge financial risks, which is not in line with the aims of the EANN. A lawyer consulted on this issue advised that a professional organisation like the EANN should not be involved in such financial risks. Paul pointed out that this is one of the reasons to create the NeuroBlend foundation. If the foundation goes bankrupt EANN is not involved, so the foundation takes away the financial risk.

2) Thóra had questions concerning the utility of the system in hospitals and universities and stated that most universities and university medical centres already work with such interactive systems as proposed within the NeuroBlend project. The problem with the system is that universities and hospitals are expected to pay a license for using the system, while at the same time the nurses working there will have to develop the material themselves to be able to use it through the NeuroBlend system. There were doubts if this will work, especially in light of the economic crises and resources to pay for such a license. Paul answered that this might be the case in richer countries but not in all European countries. There are more systems indeed, but the neuroscience nursing educational content is very poor from both a quantitative and qualitative point of view. All research results show an enormous need for neuroscience nursing educational materials according to Paul. Other board members confirm again the great need for a system like NeuroBlend. The fee will be low because of the principle of sharing educational content. And yes, there is a financial crisis, but it will not last forever and together with other related problems like an aging population it will underline the importance of an efficient and cheap educational system, concluded the President.

3) There was a discussion how many EANN member countries were planning to buy a license, because in a recently conducted inquiry by Ingibjörg Kolbeins (Iceland), the Netherlands was the only country using the NeuroBlend at the moment and no country expressed any interest in using the system according to her report. Åse Humberst (Norway) had questions concerning the utility and costs of the NeuroBlend system. Helen Meagher

(Ireland) had questions concerning the feasibility of the system. Katrin Gillis (Belgium) questioned the material used on the NeuroBlend website as it was not evidence-based which is necessary in neuroscience as well as basic nursing education today.

It is very logical that only a few people are using NeuroBlend at the moment, because NeuroBlend is only open for the full partners. This is where the whole point is about: NeuroBlend needs a solid organisation to run it before it can be used by other organisations. EANN should work on such a solid organisation (NeuroBlend Foundation) very fast because many countries have expressed their big interest in using NeuroBlend. This was underlined by most of the EANN representatives.

4) This was also highlighted by Ann-Cathrin (Sweden), who emphasized that in her country and other countries with university based nursing education, they would not pay for this system because a) the material is not evidence-based and b) they have already established interactive web based education systems (called distance courses) at the universities. The reply was that not all countries are in this position and luckily EANN offers Europe and not only Sweden.

After that there was a vote on the specified 6 items of the document *List of proposals and decisions to make on the 2010 EANN BOD meeting in Belgrade*. The following was decided:

1. EANN Board agreed with the document *Towards the next level of services part 3*.
2. EANN establishes the NeuroBlend Foundation conforming to the statements in the business model.
The NeuroBlend foundation should be open for future strategic partners like WFNN.
3. EANN starts an Educational Board under supervision of EANN (decision already made in 2008)
Renewed decision: The NeuroBlend Foundation establishes the Education Board in accordance with the statements in the business model
4. EANN asks former NeuroBlend project leader N. Van der Woert to be president of the Educational Board for a period of four years. His tasks are specified in the list.
5. The NeuroBlend Foundation is allowed to take any action to get the business model running. Several actions included are specified in the list.
6. EANN opens NeuroBlend network facilities for other countries.

Among the board members, 12 had the right to vote. A majority of the BOD members (10) voted in favour of all 6 items. The EC (André, Ann-Cathrin, Paul, Thóra) was not allowed to vote. Anita voted on behalf of Geert Teerling who had marked his votes on a copy of the List of proposals. However he had not specified his choice on item 2.

Thóra, vice president, discussed the president's way of handling the NeuroBlend project prior to and during the BOD meeting:

- a) One reason was that he had sent the document *Towards the next level of service for neuroscience nurses in Europe (part 3)* to all EC and BOD members without the document having been discussed and agreed on within the EC.
- b) Also – there was a disagreement regarding the way the 6 items of the *List of proposals and decisions to make on the 2010 EANN BOD meeting in Belgrade* were set up for voting without having been discussed and agreed upon by the EC. The consequences are that the three members of the EC besides the president have no influence whatsoever on the decision making.

The President replied to the items a) and b) as follows: The EC discussed the essence of the document at the Amsterdam EC meeting, but there is no article indicating an EC agreement is needed prior to discussing a document in the BOD.

The President expressed his dissatisfaction with the very destructive intentions the other EC members took part in the discussions. EC members have their influence for example by discussing with a positive attitude and by proposing reasonable alternatives. As a consequence of the disagreement the vice president Thóra Hafsteinsdóttir decided to leave her post by a letter dated 09 May, 2010.

15. End of meeting

Paul thanked all the country representatives for their participation in the meeting and welcomed all to the next meeting in Blankenberge.

Paul van Keeken
President, EANN

Ann-Cathrin Jönsson
Secretary, EANN