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It is an honour to welcome participants to the 9th Annual Conference of INEBRIA and a particular pleasure to welcome you to Barcelona for this event. As many of you know, Barcelona has a very special place in the history of the network. It was in Barcelona that the first INEBRIA conference was held in 2004 and, since then, management and support for the network, without which it could not have survived, has come from the Health Department of the Government of Catalonia located in this city.

You might think it would be appropriate for Barcelona to be the venue for the following annual conference of INEBRIA in 2014 to mark the 10th anniversary of the founding of the network. If so, you would be correct! This was precisely the thinking of the INEBRIA Co-ordinating Committee. However, as some of you will be aware, ambitious plans to locate the 2013 conference in the far east did not work out. As the poet wrote: 'The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men gang aft agley'. Fortunately, our colleagues in Barcelona were able to step into the breach and offer to hold the conference here, as it were, one year early - an offer that was very gratefully accepted.

So I would like to thank Joan Colom and his staff for their generosity and hard work in organizing the conference this year. I would also like to thank all members of the Scientific Committee for their invaluable contribution to the programme, as well as the invited speakers for agreeing to present their work. Last, but by no means least, I would like to thank you all for attending and for making this what I have no doubt will be another successful INEBRIA conference.