



Meeting of Coordinating Committee

Roma

Wednesday 18th September 2013, 15:00-19:00

Hotel Palatino (Sala Tevere) - Via Cavour 213/M, Roma

Notes

Part A: Business meeting

1. Welcome and apologies

Jim McCambridge welcomes all CC members and Lidia Segura explains that there are no apologies and that Telmo Ronzani will join us a little bit later. Marcin Wojnar comments that Krzysztof Brzozka will join us later too.

The session is chaired by the vice-president (Toni Gual).

2. Notes of previous meeting: approval and matters arising

No matters arising. Notes are approved.

3. President's report

Jim McCambridge comments that there has been a reasonable expansion in the network both in the total number of network and google-group members. He adds that as result of becoming INEBRIA's president, SBI/EIBI topic has become more prominent among the research activities he's doing. He emphasizes that the CC, as discussed in the last teleconference, should primarily focus on updating and revising the statutes of the network in order to be able to work better and overcome some of the pitfalls encountered. In this regard, he mentions the possibility to include more explicit criteria in the membership application, instead of the current 'Bona Fide' one, to ensure that the alcohol industry is kept out of the network. He ends saying that he hopes that the extended agenda of today's meeting together with the holding of the consultation meeting on Friday "on INEBRIA and alcohol industry" will be good opportunities to know first hand what the members think and take decisions accordingly.

4. Report of the Treasurer and the Secretariat

Lidia Segura explains that both the network and the google group participation are growing year by year. She also shows the list of new members to be approved during the AGM emphasizing that right now there is no way, other than reading their application and googling applicants extensively, to know if they have any conflict of interest. She shows, as example, how the www.alcoholpolicynetwork has sorted out this matter. At this point it is agreed that some reformulation of the application form is desirable and that no matter the criteria decided, the inclusion of a box to be clicked by applicants before submitting the form would be useful. It is also agreed that this matter should be presented in the specific "alcohol industry" meeting for discussion but that

the membership criteria should be revised under a more general “conflict of interest” perspective. It is acknowledged that the definition of the direct/indirect relation is important and for doing so it will be important to revise existing standards and formulations on this matter already used by different organizations (journals, etc).

Lidia Segura also comments on the difficulties encountered during last year during the virtual CC meetings (Elluminate, Skype and also teleconference) and the importance of finding a better and sustainable solution for this. It is agreed that for the CC meeting to take place in December the technology has to be pre-tested well in advance.

She also comments that it is important to revise the issue of communication with members. She explains that since the disappearance of the Bulletin there is no regular communication, besides the google-group to the members, therefore making more difficult to keep them active and regular connected to what the network is doing. It is agreed that Niamh and Lidia should discuss how best to do this and to act both quickly and on a regular basis to keep the website updated and to allow e-mails subsequently to be sent directly to members.

For the treasurer’s part, Joan Colom comments that besides the equal balance from the Barcelona conference, the Program on Substance Abuse of GENCAT transferred around 2500 to the network, resulting in a positive balance of more than 10.000 euros.

5. Roma Conference

Piero Struzzo comments that he is happy with the developments but the preparation has not been easy due to several matters such as the scarce funding received (only 10.000 from his own budget and 15.000 from the pharmaceutical industry), the problems with the contracted company (website, summer holidays, etc.), the strike of the General Practitioners that forced them to cancel the pre-conference and the lack of WHO co-sponsorship.

He adds that they expect between 120 and 130 participants but the final number is uncertain.

Everybody acknowledges that taking into consideration the number of abstracts received (more than 100) and the number of participants, the conference will be extremely participatory.

Finally, he mentions that, even with the support of the Secretariat and the CC and SC, it would be useful to have a “conference guidance document”, particularly in respect of website requirements where all the practicalities are addressed. This document could help local organizers to be able to anticipate and solve problems.

6. Rotation of CC members

No rotation this year but next year everybody except Jim and Jean-Bernard should rotate. It is agreed that it is important to revisit the CC membership in the light of the expansion strategy (new members, roles, etc).

7. Plans for 2014 conference in Warsaw

Marcin Wojnar presents on behalf of the two organizing institutions “PARPA” and the “Department of Medicine” of the Warsaw University the plans for next conference and introduces a video prepared for the occasion that will be presented during the AGM on Friday. The meeting will be held in the university facilities and PARPA will take care of the logistics work (registration, accommodation, etc) and the University will take care of the technical and scientific part (agenda, etc.). This collaboration is seen as very

reliable one because they have not only organized several meetings before (Alcohol Policy Conferences, ESBRA, etc.) but also they have access to funding from the Polish Government and from the city of Warsaw. They also have the possibility of some funding from the pharmaceutical industry but they are aware that this would mean that again WHO would not co-sponsor the conference.

8. Plans for conferences after 2014

Jim McCambridge comments that the option of India is no longer available but that after the withdrawal of the Seattle group, he has made some contacts and right now there are expressions of interest for 2015 and onwards, none confirmed, from three different groups:

- Paul Seale - US
- Sven Andreasson – Sweden
- Jean-Bernard Daeppen - Switzerland

Richard Saitz comments that besides Paul Seale he has also been in touch with two other groups in the States (California, etc) and that still none has said yes but their response is quite positive. They are exploring possible sources of funding.

Joan Colom comments that there are preliminary contacts with people from Brazil, Chile and Colombia but no further arrangements have been made.

It is agreed that further individual contacts have to be made and that those that are interested should receive a request from the Secretary to fill in the forms and show commitment in order to be able to make a decision by next meeting in December on the venue for the 2015 conference.

It is also agreed that regarding the US proposals, it would be good to approach the NIAAA representative (Bob Huebner) to explore options and possible funding and support. According to Richard Saitz, the applications for funding have to be made well in advance and there are very time consuming.

Toni Gual comments that the decision has to be made taking into consideration the geographical criteria and the type (strength) of the relation with INEBRIA.

It is agreed that it may be preferable to go for the US in 2015 and if we do not succeed we have Stockholm and Lausanne as back-up options.

9. Any other business

None

10. Date and time of next meeting

11th December 2013, 12:00 London time (GMT)

Part B: Strategic discussions including changes to statutes for approval at AGM

11. Relationship with WHO

On the issue of WHO participation in the CC with voting rights, Dag Rekve comments that it has to be seen under three perspectives:

- “legal” - WHO constraints
- “personal “ – conflict of interest deriving from being married to another CC member “capacity” – WHO has not enough resources to ensure a high participation in the CC and to carry on activities other than the ones derived from the liaison itself.

On the legal issues, he explains that WHO is under wider pressure on this matter and that it is right now undergoing a process of redefinition of their relation with what they call “non-state actors” that includes everyone from industry, NGOs etc. Several incidences related with WHO relation with the pharmaceutical industry (vaccines, etc) and non-states (like Taiwan) has forced this process and a political document to be released next year will give some guidance in how to proceed in the case of the relation between INEBRIA and WHO.

Dag Rekve also explains that the current relationship between WHO and INEBRIA is quite unique and that he does not know any other case, at least in the Management of Substance Abuse unit, in which a WHO staff member (or two as in INEBRIA) participates in the CC of a Network.

Regarding the future, he says that there are three options:

- Status quo
- INEBRIA becoming a NGO in an official relationship with WHO (feeding WHO agendas, participating in high level conferences on alcohol and related topics like NCD, Mental Health, etc)
- Somewhere between these two possibilities.

He thinks we are at a crossroads where we can rethink if the current relationship is the right one. WHO gains by keeping this relationship in one way or another since BI has been included in the WHO Global alcohol strategy.

It is agreed that this redefinition of the relation can be a good exercise for both parties. It is also agreed that we have to wait until the “political guidance document” is published but meanwhile Maristela Monteiro and Dag Rekve will circulate the current requirements to become a NGO in an official relationship with WHO and help us to explore the processes as well as the benefits involved.

12. INEBRIA Latina and other regional networks

Telmo Ronzani confirms that he no longer can take care of the network in the region. Everybody agrees that he has done a great job both by increasing the number of members (specifically in Brazil) and by regularly informing them with the two bulletins.

Lidia Segura thanks him for his work and also for coming to the meeting today to facilitate the follow up and transfer of the network.

Maristela Monteiro comments that she has been in positive communication about the possibility of taking over the management of the network with Marcela Tiburcio from Mexico. She says that there are no resources but the team has a long experience on the topic and has developed the e-portal in Spanish. Finally, she

says that PAHO will provide some support but there is not much funding available. She says that the interest for SBI has grown a lot in the region.

Lidia Segura comments that the fact that the Secretariat speaks Spanish can be an advantage in order to help Marcela Tiburcio in her work.

It is agreed to hold an informal conversation with her during the Rome Conference to be able to start working together.

It is agreed that it is too soon to discuss the type of relation (autonomous, etc) we would like to have between the regional networks and the networks. We will focus first in making the regional network work and we will have to keep extremely open to developments, including assisting with regional or network meetings in Latin America. The need now is for organic growth in the region, and for the CC to be responsive to requests for support.

13. Election of Presidents one year in advance of taking office

Everybody agrees.

Jim McCambridge comments that he will serve one term of office and that means that a new President-Elect should be elected next year.

14. Addition of new CC members – how many? and 16. Roles and responsibilities of CC members

It is agreed to expand the CC membership without over formalizing it and retaining some flexibility.

Jim McCambridge comments that there are 4 officers with specific roles (president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer) and 5 others with no specific ones. He foresees at least the following tasks and needs in the short to medium term:

- WHO liaison
- Google group and promotion of communication among members
- Funding lead (not only for conferences but for the network as a whole)
- Conference liaison (support to local organizers)
- Promotional role (co-sponsoring other conferences, increasing numbers attending our conference)

Other work covered by the secretariat includes the library and the website and its contents.

It is agreed that 2 new members are needed for the CC and that the need to involve members more actively in the running of the network will be shared with the members during the AGM. Jim McCambridge will discuss in parallel and individually with the existing members the possible roles that they can undertake.

15. Attendance requirements for CC members

It is agreed that in the case that a CC member does not attend the meetings regularly, the president will first contact the member to explore possible problems and commitment before taking a decision on what do to and possible withdrawal.

16. Alcohol industry and brief interventions

Jim McCambridge comments that over the years there have been some issues regarding the participation of the alcohol industry (e.g. poster explicitly funded by Diageo) in the network that together with the fact that the industry is increasingly interested in the topic (Diageo funding a nationwide workplace SBI project in the U.S.) as a strategy for policy influence has brought us to the need for a broader discussion on this matter.

He adds that the existing membership criteria are not clear enough and do not make explicit the network position on this matter (requirement for prospective members to have a “Bona Fide” interest in brief interventions). In addition to that, he says that we need to think about this very carefully, because the issues are complex.

The CC had previously decided not to propose actions at the AGM other than to hold an event at this conference to consult the membership on these issues. He adds that we need to reach a general agreement on the way forward, not take decisions now.

It is agreed to propose to the members the possibility of establishing a working group to produce a “Inebria Position Statement” about the alcohol industry involvement in the SBI. It is anticipated that this could be important beyond the network..

17. Pharmaceutical industry and conferences support

Jim McCambridge comments that having the pharmaceutical industry as co-sponsor has caused damage in the relationship with WHO with little obvious benefit and that this development has occurred in the circumstances of the financial crisis affecting Europe and there is a need to take a longer term view on this matter.

Piero Struzzo and Emanuele Scafato comment that without the funding of the pharmaceutical industry the conference could have not taken place.

Niamh Fitzgerald comments that she also would like to keep the pharmaceutical industry out of the conference. Richard Saitz comments that it has not been established that conferences are unviable without pharmaceutical industry funding.

Lidia Segura says that having a conference is a huge benefit. The conference is the only activity that INEBRIA organizes regularly.

Toni Gual considers that in some way the pharmaceutical industry is a “safe” travelling companion, as safe as governments and other stakeholders. He emphasizes that there is extensive experience on the relation with this industry and there is no major problems.

Dag Rekve explains that, specifically regarding the co-sponsorship of the conference this year, it was not possible (for legal reasons) due to the fact that the pharmaceutical industry co-sponsoring had a clear interest in the topic of the conference. He adds that WHO position will be clear when the guidance document will be published.

There is no consensus at all in this matter and the CC agrees to continue discussing this matter. It is agreed however that any co-sponsorship has to be done under an “unrestricted funds” perspective and it is also agreed to add in the “conference proposals” forms a more clear explanation about the sources of funding in order to be able to anticipate co-sponsorship issues.

18. Any other strategic issues for discussion

None

19:00 Welcome reception

The meeting closes and all CC members go together to the welcome reception.