

INEBRIA
[International Network on Brief Interventions for Alcohol Problems]

Minutes of Meeting of Steering Committee
Barcelona, 15th March 2004

Present

Dr. Peter Anderson, Dr. Joan Colom, Dr. Antoni Gual, Prof. Nick. Heather (Chair), Ms. Lidia Segura (minutes)

Also attending

Dr. Mauri Aalto, Mr. Rolande Anderson, Dr. Bart Garmyn, Dr. Marko Kolsek, Dr. Leo Pas , Dr. Kaija Seppä,

Apologies

Dr. Isidore Obot

Prof. Heather welcomed colleagues who were not part of the Committee. He explained that they were welcome to join in the discussions of the meeting but, in the unlikely event that any motion was put to a vote, they would not have voting rights.

1. Minutes of last meeting (31/10/03)

Accepted as a true record.

2. Matters arising

a) *Response by WHO Geneva to Prof. Heather's letter of 4/12/03 concerning the network's WHO status)*

Prof. Heather informed the meeting that neither Dr. Obot nor Dr. Poznyak was able to attend due to other commitments. He circulated a letter he had received from Dr. Vladimir Poznyak (Acting Co-ordinator, Management of Substance Abuse, WHO Geneva) dated 26/4/04 in reply to a letter that he (Prof. Heather) had written to Dtr. Monteiro dated 4/12/03.

The main points of Dr. Poznyak's letter were that, although WHO fully supported INEBRIA and will play a major role in it in collaboration with the Directorate General of Substance Abuse of the Catalan Government, the network could not be called a WHO network without formal agreement. WHO recognizes only one category of formal relations, known as official relations, with NGOs meeting specific criteria. Therefore, WHO's relationship with the network would be an informal one until a time when the network is in a position to enter into a formal relationship with WHO. Meanwhile, WHO will co-sponsor the annual conference of the network, send a representative to serve on the Steering Committee and make efforts to provide financial support for WHO-funded SBI project leaders in Brazil and South Africa to attend the inaugural conference.

There was an extended discussion of the letter and the general issue of the network's relationship with WHO. It was eventually agreed that Prof Heather would write to Dr. Poznyak on behalf of the Steering Committee to reflect its response to the points made in the letter and its views on this issue. This letter will be found at an Annex 1 to these Minutes.

b) Membership fees

There was a protracted discussion of this item which was left over from the previous meetings. Various views were expressed. The meeting was reminded that Dr. Monteiro had not liked the idea of membership fees and it was debatable whether WHO would support a network with fees.

Dr. Gual pointed out that, with the exception of PHEPA participants, there was no money to invite speakers to come to the INEBRIA meeting in Barcelona and they would have to pay their own fares and accommodation. Prof. Heather agreed that this would make the task for arranging a good meeting much more difficult but Dr. Anderson maintained it could be done. Dr. Garmyn suggested that speakers should be asked to find funding from their own institutions, as had been done for previous Phase IV meetings, and this was agreed.

For future meetings, Prof. Dr. Heather stressed the importance of organizing a meeting with internationally-recognised speakers because this would increase the prestige of the Network. To attract such speakers it would be necessary to at least cover their expenses.

Dr. Pas suggested that we should first see if the Network could be successful without extra funding and we could then seek funding or the support of institutions later if necessary. Dr. Gual agreed with Dr. Pas on the need to move ahead slowly, while trying to identify possible financial support at the same time.

Dr. Colom was strongly in favour of obtaining funding from drug companies etc. because he believed that, without it, the Network would go the way of other recent attempts to established international organisation which had foundered. Prof. Heather agreed with this and said that this matter could not be postponed indefinitely because it is crucial to hold a good conference, being the first "independent CONFERENCE IN 2005. Dr. Gual suggested that the matter should be further discussed, with a full membership, at the business meeting following the conference in October and this was agreed.

c) Programme for INEBRIA conference, 20/21 October, 2004

There was a full discussion of arrangements for the conference in October, including the timing. It was eventually decided to stick to the original plan and have the meeting on the day before the commencement of the PHEPA meeting on 21 October. The morning of 21 October would be devoted to the INEBRIA business meeting.

There followed a lively discussion of the contents of the conference programme, with many interesting suggestions. By the end of this discussion, the basic structure of the meeting had been agreed and many of the speakers identified. Prof. Heather said that, building on the valuable start, he would be responsible for contacting suggested

speakers and completing the conference programme. The latest draft of this programme will be found at Annex 2 to these minutes.

3. Other activities of the Network

Promotion of the conference will be essential. Ms. Segura agreed to develop a database of interested people, with their contact details. This would be crucial for the Network in general as well as the conference.

It was suggested to include some advertisements for the Network in *Addiction*, *Alcohol and Alcoholism*, *Alcoholism: Clinical Experimental Research*, *Adicciones (Socidrogalcohol)* and other journals. A paragraph should be submitted to a range of journals. Dr. Pas and Ms. Segura will agree a few words as soon as possible for inclusion on different web sites.

4. INEBRIA conference 2005

Prof. Heather suggested that he approach colleagues in Germany to host and help organise a meeting in 2005 at the same time of year (i.e., October). It might be necessary for the Germany colleagues to accept some financial risk and to underwrite any possible loss. In view of the discussion of financial issues earlier, he suggested that funding for the 2005 conference be discussed at the next meeting of the Committee held in conjunction with the 2004 conference. This was agreed.

5. Any other competent business

Dr. Colom suggested the need for continuing reflection on how the Network should operate and how additional resources could be found. WHO is not going to offer permanent resources and EU is also not giving resources. It is necessary to create a core group to consider these matters.

6. Date and time of next meeting

Dr. Gual offered to host a working dinner on the night before the conference (i.e., Tuesday, 19th October) for the members of the Steering Committee. This offer was gratefully accepted.

ANNEX 1

Dr. Vladimir Poznyak,
Acting Coordinator,
Management of Substance Abuse,
World Health Organisation,
CH-1211 Geneva 27
Switzerland

5th April, 2004

Dear Dr. Poznyak,

WHO's relationship with the International Network on Brief Interventions for Alcohol Problems (INEBRIA)

Thank you for letter of 26 February regarding the above. As you know, this matter was discussed at the meeting of the INEBRIA Steering Committee in Barcelona on 15 March 2003. I write now to respond to your letter and to convey the Committee's views.

First let me say that the Committee was fully aware of the support WHO had already given in the process of forming the network and appreciative of your offer to co-sponsor the annual conference and to send a WHO representative to the Steering Committee, both of which offers were gratefully accepted. However, I must also say that there was disappointment that the relationship between the network and WHO would have to be an informal one and that, as a consequence, we could not use WHO in the designation of the network. This was because it was felt that to use the WHO name in the title and to be able to place the WHO logo on our letter-paper would be enormously helpful in attracting attention to the Network and giving it the prestige necessary to make an impact on the implementation of brief interventions throughout the world. It was also thought very unlikely that INEBRIA would ever be in a position to fulfil the requirements for "formal relations" between WHO and NGOs.

There were a number of suggestions for a kind of relationship with WHO that would be more useful to us. It was wondered why there could not be a formal agreement, brought about by an exchange of letters, between WHO and INEBRIA – the kind of agreement, for example, that applied to Phases III and IV of the WHO Collaborative Project on the Identification and Management of Alcohol-related Problems in Primary Health Care. Another suggestion was that INEBRIA could be termed an "advisory group" (or some other acceptable title) to WHO, specifically in the field of brief alcohol interventions. Lastly, it was suggested that WHO could reach a formal agreement with the Government of Catalonia that would cover the activities of the Network.

It should go without saying that the Committee completely respects your judgement on this issue and wishes to make clear that we will work with whatever decision you eventually make. We would merely ask you to look again at the possibilities for collaboration between us that would enable INEBRIA to style itself as some kind of official WHO organisation.

Lastly, I would ask you to inspect the document I have enclosed headed *Aims, Objectives and Organisation* and confirm that you are content with the way WHO's role in the Network is described in that document.

I look forward to hearing from you again on this matter.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Nick Heather PhD,
Emeritus Professor of Alcohol & Other Drug Studies,
Chair, INEBRIA Steering Committee

cc: Dr. Isidore Obot

ANNEX 2

Draft only

INEBRIA

[International Network on Brief Interventions for Alcohol Problems]

INAUGURAL CONFERENCE Barcelona, 20-21 October, 2004

**Co-sponsored by the World Health Organisation
and the Health Department of the Government of
Catalonia**

PROGRAMME

Wednesday, 20th October

09.00 Welcome – Dr. Antoni Plasencia, Dr. Joan Colom & Dr. Isidore Obot

**09.10 INEBRIA: Background, development and future plans
– Dr. Nick Heather**

Symposium: Brief Interventions in a Range of Settings

(Chair: Dr. Joan Colom)

09.30 Primary health care – **Dr. Kristen Barry**

Discussant – Dr. Javier Ballesteros

10.15 Accident and emergency departments – **Dr. Cheryl Cherpitel**

Discussant – Dr. Alicia Rodriguez Martos

11.00 Refreshments

11.30 General hospitals – Ms Maria Emmen & Dr. Gerard Schippers

Discussant – Dr. Mats Berglund

12.15 Educational establishments – **Dr. Jim McCambridge**

Discussant – Dr. Joao Breda

13.00 Lunch

14.00 Economic evaluation of brief interventions – Dr. Dan Chisholm

14.20 **Theory of brief interventions – Prof. Nick Heather**

14.40 Brief interventions and new technology – Dr. Stuart Linke

15.00 Refreshments

Symposium: Brief Interventions around the World

(Chair: Dr. Isidore Obot)

15.30 Developing countries – Speaker to be announced

15.50 Spain – Dr. Antoni Gual & Dr. Joan Colom

16.10 Australia – Prof.. John Saunders

16.30 USA – **Dr. Kristen Barry**

16.50 **Europe – Dr. Leo Pas**

17.10 Discussion

17.30 Implementing Brief Interventions in Real-world Settings

A general discussion led by a panel consisting of Dr. Cheryl Cherpitel, Dr. Antoni Gual, Prof. Kaija Seppa, Dr. John Saunders, Dr. Isidore Obot and chaired by Dr. Peter Anderson

18.30 Close

Thursday, 21st October

09.00 INEBRIA Business Meeting (aims, targets, organisation, membership, structure, activities etc. of the network)
– General Discussion chaired by Dr. Nick Heather

10.30 Election of officers

11.00 Close

