

International Network for Circumpolar Health Research (INCHR)

Sixth Annual General Meeting 2011

Minutes

Date: 15th June 2011
Time: 9h00 – 10h45
Place: Institute for management and technical training (POHTO), Oulu, Finland

Chair: Rhonda Johnson
Secretary: Paul Brassard

Members in attendance:

Canada: Paul Brassard (Secretary), Laura Arbour, Vasiliki Douglas, Amanda Sheppard
USA: Rhonda Johnson (Vice-President), Michael Bruce (Board Member), Jay Wenger
Finland: Tiina Ikäheimo (Board Member), Arja Rautio
Greenland: Gert Mulvad
Norway: Arild Vaktskjold, Siv Kvernmo
UK: Alexander Kumar

Other participants:

Mahesh Bahadur Adhikari, Riitta Aittamaa, Laura Banfield, Amy Colquhoun, Claire Dupont, Katelyn Friendship, Maria Furberg, Janis Geary, Lena Gundersen, Milja Guttorm, Ketil Hansen, Solrunn Hansen, William Hrynkow, Cindy Jardine, Jen Jones, Sandra Juutilainen, Ritta Kamula, Graham Knapp, Maria Kokanova, Lena Kroik, Anneke Kuipers, Maria Kummu, Kirsi Latola, Melanie Lemire, Crystal Lennie, Matti Luonua, Anna-Liisa Mannermaa, Maria Matveeva, Muhammad Hashim Mengal, Jan Norum, Alisa Nurminen, Anna Onnela, Anne Remes, Irina Rinne, Hannele Savela, Sardana Savvina, Dmitri Shakalis, Dmytro Serebrennikov, Victoria Shiryraera, Irina Solodkova, Vappu Sunnari, Anniina Suutari, Megan Tompkins, Maria Tokanova, Natalia Ussinova, Beatriz Valera, Mikhail Voevoda, Kirsi Vähäkangas

The meeting commenced at 9h:05

1. The agenda as circulated was accepted.
2. The minutes of the last meeting in Copenhagen (2010) were accepted.
3. Review of activities

a. 2010 travel fellowship

The executive and board decided as for Copenhagen not to award the annual travel fellowships of \$5000 each to a member and a trainee but instead create smaller fellowships of \$1500 to support INCHR- sponsored students participating at the Summer Institute. Accordingly, 10 students received awards this year: Katelyn Friendship (Chatwood-ICHR); Jen Jones, Graham Knapp, Megan Tompkins (Johnson-UAA MPH); Alexander Kumar, Laura Banfield, William Hrynkow (Rautio-U Oulu) and Melanie Lemire, Claire Dupont and Beatriz Valera (Dewailly-U Laval).

b. Summer school

More than 40 students were registered for the Summer School. The Institute for management and technical training (POHTO) and others partners were acknowledged for their significant in-kind support.

The updated programs of the courses and the annual meeting including the Sámi Workshop via the weekly program at http://arctichealth.oulu.fi/suomi/Programme_INCHR.html.

Information on the practical arrangements is on page http://arctichealth.oulu.fi/suomi/INCHR_practical.html.

c. IPY Meeting Montreal April 24-27 2012

INCHR has signed an agreement of understanding with International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) and will coordinate a 'health track' at the IPY meeting to be held in Montreal in April.

INCHR members are encouraged to save the dates and plan to attend.

d. ICCH 15 August 5-10, 2012

Michael Bruce and Jay Wenger provided brief overview of International Congress of Circumpolar Health-ICCH 15 to be hosted by the American Society of Circumpolar Health in Fairbanks, AK in August 2012 and encouraged active INCHR member participation. Call for abstracts will be out soon.

4. Discussion on the future of INCHR

Rhonda Johnson gave a brief summary of the creation of the network in 2004, highlighted the initial objectives of the network and described activities and accomplishments to date consistent with summary provided by President Kue Young in a recent email to INCHR members. Other board members present provided additional highlights. Consensus was that INCHR provides valuable functions and supports to the circumpolar health research community that should be continued.

The main question was how do we continue doing what we are doing and find support (from the members or other source of financing) to enable us to do so? As noted at last year's AGM and reiterated this year, the network current funding will not continue into 2012. Estimated minimal yearly operational cost at this time is near 40-50,000 Euros (publishing and web site maintenance (10,000 Euros), student fellowship (\$15,000 CDN), Summer Institute cost (over and above registration fees) are so far provided in kind by the host institution but estimated to 20,000 Euros.

Potential solutions were raised such as: membership fee (modulated according to status)? Create a joint membership with other organisations? Change membership to fellowship by invitation only? Hold our annual meeting within other major conferences?

After discussion, the idea of membership fees and/or change of membership status were rejected by members present. Increased coordination with other organizations was supported.

5. Action taken

Two different workgroup were formed, the first (Sustainability work group) will look in ways to expand our search for funding – suggestions from the audience ranged from trying to get support from community organisation/foundations, Arctic Council, University of the Arctic, and other Nordic Societies. The second working group will plan for the integration of the next network summer institute activities into the ICCH 15 Fairbanks (Alaska) meeting to be held in August 2012. Because the Congress will already have many relevant topics and sessions, the institute is likely to take a different, briefer form, such as a possible pre-conference workshop or identified track within the Congress itself. Suggested topics included evidence-based public health interventions, health work force management, and capacity building for research in the North.

Rhonda Johnson is the current primary contact for both workgroups. **If you would like to join a group, please contact her at Rhonda.Johnson@uaa.alaska.edu; new members welcome!**

Sustainability Workgroup

Kirsi Latola
Rhonda Johnson
Tiina Ikäheimo
Arja Rautio
Kue Young

Summer School Workgroup

Rhonda Johnson
Arja Rautio
Gert Mulvad
Amanda Sheppard
Laura Banfield
Jen Jones

The network will also be a responsible for a workshop on health at the next International Polar Year meeting to be held in April 2012 in Montreal, Canada. Susan Chatwood is the primary contact for that effort.

6. Next Annual General Assembly/Summer School

To be held within the ICCH 15 meeting in Fairbanks Alaska, August 2012

The meeting adjourned at 10h: 45.