

INTERNATIONAL BALINT FEDERATION

Officers of the Council (since September 2009)

President: Henry Jablonski (Sweden)
Vice-presidents: Benyamin Maoz (Israel)
Donald Nease (United States of America)
General Secretary: Heather Suckling (United Kingdom)
Treasurer: Michel Delbrouck (Belgium)

www.balintinternational.com

Minutes of the Council of the International Balint Federation

Held on Saturday 2nd October 2010 at 14.30

At **Corpus Christi College, Oxford**

Australia:

Alexa Gilbert-Obrart

Austria:

Hans-Peter Edlhaimb

Belgium

Michel Delbrouck

Denmark:

Tove Mathiesen
Jorgen Stroebech

Germany:

Gunther Bergmann
Thomas Kanzow
Heide Otten
Philipp Portwich
Vivian Pramataroff (Bulgaria)

Israel:

Mark Budow

Netherlands:

Marieke van Schie

Portugal:

Jorge Brandao

Sweden:

Henry Jablonski

UK:

Andrew Elder
Paul Sackin
John Salinsky
Heather Suckling
David Watt

USA:

Don Nease
Jeffrey Sternlieb
Mary Wassink

1. Welcome and apologies:

The President, Henry Jablonski welcomed the delegates from 11 national societies.

The Secretary, Heather Suckling explained that she would record apologies from Officers of the IBF Council and from national societies rather than all individual members.

Apologies have been received from Benyamin Maoz and the societies of the following countries:

Finland, France, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russia and Serbia.

2. Minutes of the meeting of the Council on 29th May 2010 in Gorlitz (previously circulated)

These were approved by the meeting.

3. Matters arising that do not appear elsewhere on the agenda.

There were none.

4. Report from the Board:

- **Henry** reported his activities over the last year, as he had been unable to attend the meeting in Gorlitz.

In **September 2009**, the IBF had run Balint activities at WONCA Basel. Although there were 17 parallel workshops, the room had been very overcrowded, discussion was lively and the work was very well received.

Marianne Puel (France) had introduced Henry and Dorthe Kjeldmand (Sweden) to many GPs working in the academic and scientific fields.

In **October 2009**, he attended the French annual meeting in Strasbourg where there were also participants from Germany, the UK and Sweden. He explained that the French and Belgians work closely together and are very strong on Leadership. It was proposed that there should be a session at the International Congress to put the Latin point of view.

Henry suggested that Michel Delbrouck puts a proposal to the Organising Committee of the IBF Congress.

Heide Otten – on behalf of the meeting, congratulated the IBF on its success at WONCA.

- **Don Nease** spoke of his visit to the Leadership Congress run by the Balint Society of Australia in Auckland New Zealand. The participants were mainly from Australia and New Zealand. Balint was also included in the meeting of the Royal College of General Practitioners of New Zealand where it was well received. He said that New Zealand is organising itself regionally with a view to forming a national society, there is also a project for students.

Marieke van Schie said she was pleased to have been visited by a New Zealand doctor (of Dutch origin) who was interested in forming a Balint Society.

- Henry spoke on behalf of **Benyamin** who has proposed that the IBF produces a film about Balint work to explain (i) the nature of Balint work (ii) Leadership issues. Various suggestions have been made and difficulties discussed. The question of confidentiality is crucial. Mention was made of the American films shown in Charleston, the Germans have done some films and the British Society is planning to produce something, probably for its website. It was suggested that we wait for the Leadership workshop in Copenhagen and then consider proposals.

Action: Heather (Agenda Copenhagen)

4 a. Proposals from the Board:

i. Proposal to clarify the decision-making process:

In view of the fact that the Board and Council meet only twice a year, the Board made the following proposal:

That:

- Decisions (including major IBF economic matters) are decided on in the first instance by the Board where a simple majority decision rules.
- The Board members can make decisions on the internet (email or Skype) –*per capsulam***.
- Failure to answer after at least three attempts over a period of at least 3 months will be interpreted as an abstention (blank vote).
- There are no veto rules in our statutes.
- If an issue has been prepared for the Board meeting and if a Board member is not able to attend - he or she can give a vote on the issue beforehand or by internet - provided the alternatives discussed on the internet are clear-cut and not changed at the Board meeting.
- Another member of the Board, but only another Board member may act as proxy.

- Major decisions are brought to the next Council meeting for discussion, approval or change.
- No member of the Board may single-handedly make economic decisions. (The task of the Treasurer is to implement the Board and Council decisions.)

* *per capsulam through the small box that is, "by letter".*

This proposal was agreed unanimously by the meeting.

ii. Proposal re the Financial management of the IBF:

The Board proposes that:

- The Treasurer will continue to manage the day-to-day work of the IBF and its current accounts
- Investment of funds will be the responsibility of the Board which will be empowered to seek professional financial advice if necessary

This proposal was agreed unanimously by the meeting

In order to protect both the IBF and the Treasurer (Michel Delbrouck) and Assistant Treasurer (Jean Flechet) who make up an "association de fait" an agreement has been signed.

iii. Proposal re the status of the IBF:

Now that the IBF has increased in size and become established as an international organisation, the Board has decided that it is necessary to formalise its status.

The Board proposes that:

- the IBF is registered as a non-profitmaking idealistic society in Sweden.

(This is because of the advantageous tax status of such institutions in Sweden and because it does not insist on having Swedish Trustees, it requires only an address in Sweden that could for instance be provided by the Swedish Balint society. Also, it allows for bank accounts in other currencies in other countries.)

If the Council agree to register the IBF in Sweden, in order to comply with Swedish Law the IBF would be required:

- a. to appoint two Accountancy Revisers who are independent of the Board to scrutinise the annual accounts. (These need not be professional accountants; the Board will suggest suitable individuals for these posts and other Council members may also make suggestions and these will be considered at the next meeting of the Council, in Copenhagen in the Spring.)
- b. to amend the Statutes of the IBF

The Board considers that both a. and b. would be advantageous to the IBF in any case and so makes these proposals:

iv. to appoint two Accountancy Revisers

v. to amend the statutes of the IBF

*The draft amendments to the Statutes are attached to these minutes for consultation, but they cannot be amended without the consent of the General Assembly. This will be proposed at the next meeting of the General Assembly in Philadelphia in September 2011.

The Board will bring Proposals iii, iv and v to the next Council meeting in April in Copenhagen.

Action: Heather (Agenda Copenhagen)

5. Treasurer's report:

Michel presented the accounts to the meeting and referred to the satisfactory year by year increase in funds.

The president thanked Michel on behalf of the meeting for his work and especially his achievement in preserving the funds of the IBF during the financial crisis.

6. Secretary's report Membership:

The IBF membership consists of 22 societies including the AIPB, but there may soon be another member as Vivian Pramataroff informs us that a Bulgarian Society will be founded on 10.10.10. For the first time (almost) every society has paid its membership fee! Therefore, there are no dire warnings today! *Nevertheless, the 2011 fees will be due on 1st March 2011*

Communication with the membership:

Maintaining an up-to-date list of contacts continues to present problems, but these are gradually diminishing. After this meeting a list will be circulated with contacts whose emails have been returned highlighted, please let Heather know of new addresses and if you are in contact with the individuals, please inform them.

It is the responsibility of the people on the Contacts list to disseminate the information to the members of their societies.

The new IBF Board:

Elections for the IBF Board are due in 2011. The new Board will take over in September 2011 immediately after the International Balint congress in Philadelphia.

Voting is by email and the votes will be counted at the Spring 2011 Council meeting in Copenhagen.

Information about the Election procedure and nomination papers have been sent out and will be included with these minutes.

Voting papers will be sent out after the closing date for nominations in i.e. **18th March 2011**.

Members of the present board who will be standing for re-election are: Henry Jablonski, Don Nease and Michel Delbrouck. I have already received two nominations:

Paul Sackin for the secretary's post and

Kristiina Toivola for the post of Vice President

but please feel free to make further nominations.

Action

Heather

7. Wonca 2010 (Malaga) The IBF will be running two workshops at Malaga next week, each of 90 minutes.

There will be three presentations at one workshop, and group work after a brief introduction at the other.

The programme will be run by Henry Jablonski, Marie-Anne Puel, Don Nease and Andrew Elder.

8. Report or the International Leadership Group

Andrew Elder spoke on behalf of the Leadership Group (Andre Matalon, Heide Otten, Don Nease, Michel Delbrouck and Andrew). They, in collaboration with the Danish Balint Society

plan to hold the first international leadership workshop in Copenhagen at the end of April 2011, this will incorporate the Spring Council meeting of the IBF.

They are planning for 40-50 participants. The workshop will be open to established group leaders or people recommended for leadership and to individual members of the IBF. In order to ensure equity two places will be reserved exclusively for each member society for 6 weeks, if they are not required they will be released for others.

The purpose is to provide the opportunity both for Leadership training and for research. There will be an explicit call to bring ideas together. The organisers hope to have two streams, one will have the same leaders throughout the conference, the other will have a changing leadership.

Further information will be circulated shortly.

9. Ascona awards:

Heide requested everyone to encourage medical students to submit essays for the Ascona prize, they are short of papers. The deadline is 31st December 2010, a flier will be sent out with these minutes.

Action

Heather

10. Spring Council meeting: Copenhagen, Denmark 28-30 April 2011

This will be held during the Leadership Conference. Further details of the venue and prices will be circulated shortly

11. 16th International Balint Congress in Brasov, Romania in 2009:

Henry spoke briefly about the on-line feedback on this congress. There were 40 responses out of a possible 160, they were mostly positive. In particular there was praise for the social programme and for the initial lecture. The response to the scientific papers was mixed with comments such as: "The presenters must learn not to read the papers" but the Ascona prizewinners were generally considered "the best." Many commented that it was unfortunate that the accommodation was scattered and that transport was difficult.

12. 17th International Balint Congress in Philadelphia USA:

Jeff Sternlieb, one of the organisers, spoke about the plans for the Congress. The theme is: "**The Heart of Patient-centered Care**". It is to be held in **Philadelphia from 7th -11th September 2011**. Full details are available on a link from the website of the American Balint Society americanbalintsociety.org and will shortly be on the IBF website. The congress will be held in the **Sheraton Society Hill Hotel** in the historic part of the city, within walking distance of the major historic sites. The ABS has negotiated a good deal with the hotel, a double room will cost \$159 per night. The conference fee will be not more than \$560 and includes most meals. The ABS plans to organise a post-congress trip to either Washington DC or New York.

Jeff asked the meeting whether there should be a poster display, the general feeling was that it would be a good idea provided there is a suitable place.

Please watch the website for further details and registration. The Call for papers will be sent out very soon, **the deadline for the full papers is 31st January 2011.**

13. e-international Balint Journal

Marieke van Schie conveyed Marie-Anne' apologies. The next deadline for contributions is the end of October.

Marieke explained that it is a great deal of work to do the e-journal and asked how many people used it. Very few people at the meeting said that they read it, but that does not

necessarily reflect the total readership. Marieke and Marie-Anne will discuss it and report to the next meeting.

Action: Marieke and Marie-Anne

14. Progress of the Comprehensive list of Balint books and Articles

Don said that this has turned out to be Herculean task, but he now has some administrative assistance and progress is slow but steady.

15. Translation Board

Don reminded the meeting that the Translation Board welcomes proposals, these should be made via the website.

16. Website for the International Balint Federation

This will be updated shortly after this meeting.

The deadline is 31st October 2011

18. Forthcoming events

Mark Budow said that the Israeli Balint Society organises two Leadership meetings each year, but there is to be a special one from 7th-9th April 2011 to honour Benyamin Maoz for his 80th birthday. It will be held in a favourite place of Benyamin's on the Sea of Galilee. International participants and their spouses will be especially welcome.

A flier with further details will be sent out with these minutes.

19. Any other business:

Gunther Bergmann suggested that the 18th International Balint Congress is hosted by the German Balint Society in 2013 and that it is held in Heidelberg Germany.

The meeting closed at 17.50.