

INTERNATIONAL BALINT FEDERATION

Officers of the Council (since 5 October 2003)

President: Dr Heide Otten (Germany)
Vice-presidents: Dr Kornélia Bobay (Hungary)
Dr Marie-Anne Puel (France)
General secretary: Dr Heather Suckling (UK)
Treasurer: Dr Michel Delbrouck (Belgium)

Minutes of the meeting of the Council of the International Balint Federation

which was held at

11.00 a.m. on Saturday 12th June 2004

At the Inter University Centre

F.Bulica 4

Dubrovnik

Croatia

Those present:

Heide Otten (President)	GERMANY	heideotten@gmx.de
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Steffen Hafner	GERMANY	shaefner@n.zgs.de
Thomas Kanzow	GERMANY	wth.kanzow@kpp-malburg-sued.de
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Ante Gilic	CROATIA	ante.gilic@zd.htnet.hr <i>previously omitted</i>
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Marie-Anne Puel	FRANCE	mapuel@wanadoo.fr
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Antonia Lavinha	PORTUGAL	alavinha@portugalmail.pt
Vesna Djuric	SERBIA & MONTENEGRO	vesnadr@infosky.yu
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Anders Haggmark	SWEDEN	anders.haggmark@telia.com
Anita Haggmark	SWEDEN	anita.haggmark@telia.com
Andrew Dicker	UK	a.dicker@imperial.ac.uk
John Salinsky	UK	JVSalinsky@aol.com
Lenka Speight	UK	Lenka.Speight@GP-F83021.NHS.UK
Heather Suckling	UK	heathers@doctors.org.uk

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Michel Delbrouck (Belgium), Marieke van Schie (Netherlands), Marion Lustig & Sam Heard (Australia), Helena Nielsen (Denmark), Albert Veress (Romania), Karel Koblic (Czech Republic), Henry Jablonski (Sweden), Vladimir Vinokur (Russia), Erica Jones (UK), Benyamin Maoz, Stanley Rabin & Andre Matalon (Israel), Marja Nick & Eeva Makkonen (Finland), Françoise Auger (France) and Kornelia Bobay (Hungary)

2. Minutes and matters arising

- The minutes of the meeting of the General Assembly held on 5th October 2003 in Berlin had been circulated and amended by email.
- The minutes were agreed to be a correct record of the meeting.
- Matters arising: Heather explained that although the next Council meeting had been scheduled to be held in Orlando (USA) to coincide with the WONCA but so many people had said that they would be unable to go that the Officers of the IBF had

decided to change the date and venue, to be decided at this meeting. (See items 12 & 17)

3. President's report

- The International Congress in Berlin had now been completed and the German Balint Society had made a profit of 36 Euros!
- She was pleased to welcome to the IBF two new Balint Societies: Israel and Austria
- She had received a message from Kornelia Bobay sending her apologies and saying that Balint work is continuing satisfactorily in Hungary

4. Treasurer's report including payment of outstanding fees:

Michel was unable to attend but had sent a summary of the accounts:

- The IBF is in credit with approximately 17,000 Euros in the Belgian account and approximately 1,500 Euros in the British account.
- It was agreed that Heather Suckling will become a second signatory, with John Salinsky, to the British Account which is held with Barclays Bank, London.
- The Treasurer is still having considerable difficulty in collecting fees from many societies. He asks all those present to remind their treasurers to forward any outstanding fees to him as soon as possible, or to pay fees in cash to Marie-Anne Puel today and she will deliver them to Michel.

Action: Marie-Anne

5. Use of IBF funds

This item was included in the agenda at the request of the American Balint Society at the last meeting.

The meeting agreed that the IBF funds should be used as follows:

1. To pay the expenses of the Officers to attend Council meetings twice a year. The amount to be limited to 700 Euros per year per officer
2. To pay the expenses for students who have won the Ascona prize to attend an International Congress in order to collect the prize.
3. To pay the necessary amount to maintain the website of the IBF (up to 1,000 Euros per year)
4. To subsidise non-EU Eastern European delegates to attend International Congresses (the number depending on the funds available)
5. To subsidise medical students to attend International Congresses (the number depending on the funds available)
6. To subsidise the expenses for a delegate from a small society which has low resources, to attend a Council meeting of the IBF
7. To subsidise the expenses of an experienced member of the IBF to travel to countries who invite them in order to establish a new Balint Society.

6. Secretary's report (including the correspondence from Serbia)

The Secretary explained that her report will consist of reports from the individual national societies.

- She began with a message from **Australia** where two members, Marion Lustig and Sam Heard are setting up an Australian Balint Society.

She then mentioned some correspondence from Serbia where a misunderstanding had occurred due to a failure of communication (including within the IBF -embarrassing for Balint doctors!-) However, she was now delighted to report that not only had this been resolved satisfactorily, but it had encouraged the Officers to clarify the criteria for membership of the IBF (Item 7):

Amended paragraph:

- The Balint Society of **Serbia and Montenegro** had been founded in September 2003 with Natasa Vranjes as the president, but not all the Council of the IBF had been aware of this. Ante Gilic had visited Vojvodina, at the request of Dr Ljilja Milivojevic (Belgrade), to provide some Balint

educational activities for a group of doctors there, unaware that the Balint Society of Serbia and Montenegro was being formed . Both Ante and Natasa explained how the misunderstanding had occurred and confirmed that the problem had been resolved amicably. They agreed that the Vojvodina doctors should be invited to join the established society. Natasa thanked the IBF for warmly welcoming the delegates from Serbia to the meeting and explained that the Serbian Balint Society has formally applied to become a member of the IBF.

- Antonia Lavinha told us that in **Portugal** many GPs express an interest in Balint work and they have a society with approximately 100 “members” but many do not pay! There are two leaders, Jorge Brandao and herself who run a successful group for 8-10 (mainly young) GPs. They also ran a very successful demonstration group which led to the recruitment of a new member for their on-going group and now there is some Balint input to the twice yearly meetings of the GP Association. They produce a bulletin and include articles in the medical journals. Unusually they have a Medical Journalist in their group, (they ensure confidentiality is maintained.) Both “The Doctor, his Patient and the Illness” and “What are you Feeling, Doctor?” have been translated into Portugese.
- Sanja Blazekovic-Milakovic reported from **Croatia** that the annual Muradif Kolenovic School of Balint continues successfully and there are many other Balint activities held during the year. Although the Croatian Association of Balint Groups has many members, there are still many who do not pay. She explained that for 15 years Balint training has been obligatory for doctors undergoing post-graduate training for general practice and 150 doctors have now completed this. Many articles about Balint work by members of the Association appear in the Croatian medical journals. She also told us of Balint groups in other specialities such as Palliative Care and Gastroenterology.
- Ernst Petzold referred to the “Outer” and “Inner” realities of the Balint Society in **Germany**. The “outer” reality includes Balint groups in the education of medical students and GPs. There was now more emphasis on small group work. GPs and Psychiatrists are obliged to have 15-30 Balint sessions in their post-graduate training. The “inner” reality concerns the Society. It runs week-end workshops every month and half of those are for leaders’ training. He emphasised the need for research, recently a questionnaire was sent to 500 leaders, so far 300 have replied and 200 are actively involved with groups. They do not yet know how many GPs are in groups. He also mentioned two new books- a new edition of a book about leading Balint groups, which is to be translated, and a new book by Steffen Hafner.
- Marie-Anne Puel reminded us that there is a new delegate from **France**, Michel Nicolle, he was welcomed to the Council. She told us that for the first time the Balint Society gave a seminar at the official meeting for GPs. There are new Balint groups for medical students that will be evaluated. She showed us the latest edition of the quarterly bulletin of the French Balint Society and explained that it will now include international articles, the first is by Dr Tunde Bakar of Rumania.
- Anita and Anders Haggmark explained that in **Sweden** the Balint Society is included in the Society of Medical Psychology but that out of the seven members of the Board five are from the Balint society, they meet twice a year. Many, but not all GPs are members. “What are you feeling, doctor?” has been translated into Swedish. The Swedish Society is looking forward to hosting the 2005 International Balint Congress. (see Item 11)

- Lenka Speight said that Balint work is still alive (if not kicking!) in the UK. She told us that the Balint Society does not know where all the groups are in the UK, but some GP training schemes include Balint groups. She invited everyone to come to the Annual Balint weekend at Oxford, where the British society is always pleased to welcome doctors from other countries. This year it will be from 17th 19th September- and we will be able to celebrate Heide's birthday! She mentioned a book about a Balint group which studied difficult consultations with adolescents by two Balint doctors, Chris Donovan and Heather Suckling. John Salinsky described a Balint research project for which an ethnographer had been employed by the Balint Society to study the Balint group which is run by Lenka and Andrew (Dicker). It is hoped that this will be published shortly.
- John Salinsky gave us news from the USA. He said that although the IBF Council meeting will not be held in Orlando in October, it is hoped that there will be doctors from European Balint Societies attending the WONCA meeting where there will be a session about Balint work in which he is actively involved and he hopes for support. He told us that in the US there are twice yearly workshops for the Training of Balint Leaders, these are held alternately on the East and West Coast of the US. He said that the number of Balint groups in Family Practice Training schemes is increasing.

After these reports a suggestion was made by Lenka. That is that every national society should be asked to submit a short written report, giving the Balint news from their country, before the meeting. This would enable everyone, to read them at leisure and would also give delegates who were unable to attend the meeting in person to send their news to the meeting. The secretary agreed to try this for the next meeting.

Action

Heather

7. Criteria for membership of the IBF

The Officers proposed that the following criteria should be fulfilled for membership of the IBF.

There are two types of membership, National and Individual membership:

I. National membership:

To qualify for National membership of the IBF a national society must:

- Have a recognised Balint Society with criteria for membership and formal Statutes or a Constitution
- Have an Ethical Code (in line with the country's own professional code, in the UK it would reflect that of the General Medical Council's "Duties of a Doctor"- *(copy attached)*
- Pay the appropriate membership fee to the IBF
- Have developed guidelines for Leadership Accreditation in accordance with the Guidelines drawn up by the IBF *(copy attached)*

II. Individual membership:

The individual will need to belong to an appropriate profession
then of the above criteria only b and c would apply.

This was put to the vote and agreed; 15 were in favour, 0 against and there was 1 abstention. (The four Serbian delegates were not eligible to vote).

The secretary will contact all members and ask them to send her the necessary documentation in order to prepare a Register of members which will be published on the IBF website. Members who fail to fulfil the criteria (including payment of the fees) will be removed from the register.

Action:

Heather

8. Statutes of the IBF

These were distributed at the meeting for information.

(copy attached)

9. How to integrate Balint into the proposals for EU criteria for GP/Family Practice training

Heide Otten suggested that, as the IBF recognises the value of incorporating Balint work in training, we should ask for it to be an obligatory requirement for the training of doctors for General/Family Practice in the European Union and any other appropriate organisations.

This was agreed unanimously.

All members are asked to contact the secretary by email heathers@doctors.org.uk with their ideas about how to achieve this, reasons for the inclusion of Balint work and the value they would see for this in their own countries. She would also be grateful for any advice about individuals or organisations that we should contact.

Action:

ALL

10. Leadership Accreditation/Credentialling

The American Balint Society had asked for this to be added to the Agenda as they are interested to know what is happening in other societies.

The secretary asked for each society to send her information about the criteria and training procedures for Balint Leaders in their countries. She will then circulate this to all members.

Action

ALL

11. 15th International Balint Congress, Stockholm 2005

Anita and Anders confirmed that the Congress will be held in central **Stockholm** from the **afternoon Wednesday 24th August until the afternoon of Saturday 27th August 2005.**

The title is

“Balint Work in a time of Change and Crisis in the Healthcare System”

There will be three main discussion points:

1. Everyday situations for the Patient, Doctor and Balint Group in different countries
2. Making space for the doctor-patient relationship and Balint work in a time of diminishing resources
3. The doctor as mediator of social and economic benefits, conflicts and possibilities

The plans are well developed: the venue will be an educational establishment, in the centre of Stockholm, the RBF which has very good facilities.

The fee will be approximately 400 Euros, this will include some refreshments and the welcome party.

The programme: It is proposed to have 1 or 2 long papers (45 minutes) every morning followed by discussion for which 1-2 discussants will be appointed. This would be followed by 2-3 parallel short paper sessions (3 in 1 and a half hours). These sessions could include papers in German, or a fishbowl group. There will be Balint group sessions every evening. The call for papers will go out at the end of June and the full text should be sent by 15th December 2004. The first notice will be sent out in September.

The Council thanked Anita, Anders and the conference organisers for all their work to ensure a successful congress and made the following suggestions:

- That a light lunch should be available in the conference building so that the participants could socialise and continue their discussions informally
- That there should be a Poster Session

Anita asked about subsidised places, it was explained that it is the host country who decides how many places can be subsidised and the amount of the subsidy. In both Oxford and Berlin the standard price had been set a little higher than the actual cost, the surplus being used to subsidise places. The secretary suggested that at the next Council meeting, when the Treasurer is present, we will be able to decide what contribution can be made from IBF funds.

Action **Anita, Anders and the Swedish Congress Organising Committee**
12. WONCA meeting, Orlando, Florida, USA (Balint session on 12th October 2004)

John Salinsky again reminded the meeting that it is hoped that there will be doctors from European Balint Societies attending the WONCA meeting. There will be a session about Balint work organised by the American Balint Society in which he is actively involved and he hopes for support from his European colleagues.

The Americans hope to include an introduction to Balint work, a group and discussions about Balint work for students and residents as well touching on research questions.

The IBF Council wishes them every success.

13. Availability of National Balint Journals

This was suggested by Andre Matalon (Israel) in Berlin and the meeting agree it is a good idea, but there are concerns about copyright and confidentiality issues. It was agreed that this should be discussed at the next meeting when we hope Andre will be present.

Action Andre Matalon

14. Website for the International Balint Federation; www.balintinternational.com

The German Balint Society has been maintaining the website free of charge, but is no longer able to do that. This meeting agreed (under Item 4) that the IBF should pay for it to be professionally maintained and thanked Heide Otten who has agreed to organise this. It will have a link to www.internationalbalintcongress.de and links to the national societies. It will also list Balint literature. Heide reminded the meeting that it is *our* website and asked what delegates would like to see on it and asks everyone to email her heideotten@gmx.de with their suggestions.

Action ALL

14. Ascona awards

Ernst Petzold and Heide Otten are both on the Board which awards the annual Ascona prize for medical students. Ernst said that this year there had been 20 applicants from Hungary, Romania, UK and Germany. Six prizes were awarded, two first prizes to students from the UK and Germany. He asked us to encourage students from our countries to enter next year. There had been a complaint that the flier giving the information for students was not clear, the organisers will ensure that it is clearer next year.

15. Venue of International Congress 2007

Suggestions for a venue for the 2007 International Congress were requested and Antonia suggested Portugal. Everyone present thought this an excellent idea. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

16. Date and place of next Council meeting

The general feeling was that January 2005 would be a suitable time to hold the next Council meeting.

There were two proposals, for a Council meeting in Paris or for it to take place in Palma, Majorca when the German Society is running a Balint Workshop with Leaders' Training from 19th-23rd January 2005, the Council meeting will be in the afternoon of Saturday 22nd January.. After some discussion a vote was taken, firstly for Paris, but no-one was in favour whereas there was overwhelming support for holding the meeting in Palma, Majorca.

The next Council meeting will be held on Saturday 22nd January at 15.00 in Palma, Majorca

A programme is attached. Details about hotels will be provided by the German Society.

Action Heide

17. Any Other Business

The IBF expressed its thanks to the Croatian Association of Balint Groups, in particular to Sanja and Stanka, for their hospitality and an excellent week at the Muradif Kolenovic School of Balint.

The meeting was closed at 13.25

Note:

After the meeting the Officers of the IBF perused the documentation from the Balint Society of Serbia and Montenegro and confirmed that it fulfils the criteria necessary for membership of the IBF. The fee of 70 Euros was duly paid and so the Balint Society of Serbia and Montenegro is recognised as a full member.

HCS 25 June 2004 *amended 7.8.04*

International Balint Federation

Criteria for Membership

*As agreed by the Council of the International Balint Federation on 12th June 2004
in Dubrovnik, Croatia*

There are two types of membership:

- I. National membership
- II. Individual membership

I. National membership:

To qualify for National membership of the IBF a national society must:

- a. Have a recognised Balint Society with criteria for membership and formal Statutes or a Constitution
- b. Have an Ethical Code (in line with the country's own professional code, in the UK it would reflect that of the General Medical Council's "Duties of a Doctor")
- c. Pay the appropriate membership fee to the IBF
- d. Have developed guidelines for Leadership Accreditation in accordance with the Guidelines drawn up by the IBF

All these criteria will need to be submitted to and approved by the IBF Council. (This could be unwieldy so it would probably be sensible to say they should be approved by the *elected Officers* of the IBF Council)

III. Individual membership:

The individual will need to belong to an appropriate profession

then of the above criteria only b and c would apply.

The duties of a doctor registered with the General medical Council (UK)

Patients must be able to trust doctors with their lives and well-being. To justify that trust, we as a profession have a duty to maintain a good standard of practice and care and to show respect for human life.

In particular as a doctor you must:

- Make the care of your patient your first concern
- Treat every patient politely and considerately
- Respect patients' dignity and privacy
- Listen to patients and respect their views
- Give patients information in a way they can understand
- Respect the rights of patients to be fully involved in decisions about their care
- Keep your professional knowledge and skills up to date
- Recognise the limits of your professional competence
- Be honest and trustworthy
- Respect and protect confidential information
- Make sure that your personal beliefs do not prejudice your patient's care
- Act quickly to protect patients from risk if you have good reason to believe that you or a colleague may not be fit to practise
- Avoid abusing your position as a doctor
- Work with colleagues in the ways that best serve the patients' interests

GMC 1998

INTERNATIONAL BALINT FEDERATION

B

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FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE BALINT

GUIDELINES FOR ACCREDITATION OF BALINT LEADERS

Agreed in 1998

1. Leaders should have appropriate basic training e.g. Family Practitioner, Psychoanalyst, Psychotherapist, Psychologist.
2. Leaders should have prior experience of being in a Balint Group.
3. Leaders should have worked with an accredited leader for a sufficient period of time.
4. Leaders should have acquired an understanding of the Doctor-Patient relationship.
5. Leaders should receive adequate supervision.

ALSO

Leaders should be able to demonstrate:

- a) that they create a safe and free environment within the group.
- b) that they focus the work on the Doctor-Patient relationship rather than seek solutions.
- c) that they create a learning environment rather than resort to didactic teaching.

STATUTES OF THE INTERNATIONAL BALINT FEDERATION

ARTICLE 1.

The 'International Balint Federation' association formed in October 1974 groups National Associations aiming to promote the formation and the practice of Balintism. It aims to co-ordinate the activities of the Balint National Societies. Its duration is unlimited. The executive centre is situated at the place of residence of the General Secretary.

ARTICLE 2.

The objectives of the Federation are: bulletins, conferences, congresses, publication of an international newspaper.

ARTICLE 3.

The Federation consists of affiliated Balint Associations which will have to be recognised by the Administrative Council. The Federation can also promote contacts with individuals or groups who have already adopted the formation and the practice of Balintism in the countries where no Balint Society exists. The affiliated associations contribute to the running of the Federation by subscriptions decided every year by the Council.

ARTICLE 4.

The Federation is administrated by a Council in which every society is represented by four of its members. The re-election of the Council takes place every second year. The out-going members can be re-elected. By secret ballot, the Council chooses from amongst its members a committee comprising of a President, a General Secretary and a Treasurer. This committee is elected for two years.

ARTICLE 5.

The Council meets at least every six months and every time is convened by its president or by at least a quarter of its members.

ARTICLE 6.

Council members are not permitted to receive a salary for their office. Re-imbursments of expenses alone are permitted. Justifications must be produced.

ARTICLE 7.

The Federation General Assembly consists of affiliated members of national societies. It meets every second year. The topic of discussion is decided by the Council. Reports on Council's administration are heard as well as the financial and moral situation of the Federation.

ARTICLE 8.

The annual takings of the Federation consist of members' contributions and subscriptions or other acquired means in conformity with the law.

ARTICLE 9.

The statutes may only be modified by the General Assembly on the Council's or at least two national societies' recommendation.

The statutes can only be modified by the majority of two thirds of the members present or represented.

ARTICLE 10.

The dissolution of the Federation can only be voted by the majority of two thirds of members present or represented.

ARTICLE 11.

In the case of dissolution, the General Assembly appoints one or several trustees who have the onus to liquidate the assets of the Federation.