

Minutes from the board meeting on the 3rd of May 2011 at Uppsala Konsert & Kongress

Present: Göran Elinder
Grethe Foss
Firouz Gaini
Ásgeir Haraldsson
Gunhild Isfeldt
Thomas Jensen
Lotta Knutsson Bråkenhielm, *secretary*
Anne Myhr
Salvör Nordal
Janne Rothmar Herrmann
Sirpa Soini
Aaro Tupasela, *chair*

Not present: Titti Mattsson

1. Opening of the meeting

The Chair opened the meeting.

2. Approval of agenda and of minutes from the board meeting on 22nd of March

The agenda and the minutes were approved.

Miscellaneous was added to the agenda.

3. Conference on *Biobanks*

It was decided that Göran will make a short (1-2 pages) draft for a summary after the conference. As usual we will also publish abstracts and ppt presentations on the web site.

The advantages to cooperate with other similar Nordic committees were emphasised.

4. *Public Health: Summary and Publication*

Sirpa's draft for a summary that has been sent out to the committee in advance was discussed. The organising committee will continue to work on this and then send out to the committee for further comments. The summary will be published on the web site.

The report is almost ready for publication which hopefully will be done before summer. Sirpa will write an editorial which will be translated into Swedish by Lotta.

The aim is also to distribute the report in the 10th Nordic Public Health Conference on the 24-26 August in Turku.

5. *Prenatal Diagnosis: Summary and Documentation*

Grethe will complete the summary in a couple of days. She will thereafter send it to the organising committee and then to the rest of the board for comments.

It was pointed out that all summaries should be sent to Nordic Council of Ministers.

It was decided that the summaries should be made more visible on the web site.

An idea was mentioned to have a stand with our publications at the Nordic Council in Copenhagen and at TSV in Helsinki. Lotta will investigate if that is possible.

6. *Conference on Mental Health*

The tentative programme was discussed, and more names and issues were suggested. It was stressed that we mustn't forget that the main purpose for the conference is (as always) to focus on the ethical questions. It is important to have a broad perspective and to problematize the concepts of "illness" versus "normality".

It was decided that Firouz will be included in the organizing committee.

The organizers will continue to work on a short introduction text that could be put on the web site in May.

7. *Conference on "Mammals"*

Gunhild and Firouz gave us a presentation of ideas and headlines, also on possible partners within The Nordic Council network to cooperate with:

- The Fishing Cooperation part of Nordic Council of Ministers
- The Environment Cooperation part of Nordic Council of Ministers
- The Arctic Cooperation

The meeting decided that the conference will take place on Faroe Islands in May 2012; it will be a two day meeting, possibly on a Thursday-Friday.

8. *Continued collaboration with other Nordic committees*

The following comments were made:

- The Copenhagen meeting has been fruitful in the sense that it is more easy and "natural" to contact persons you have met in person.
- We will continue to nurture the contacts/collaboration with other Nordic committees.
- There have been a couple of invitations/collaboration projects thanks to the meeting.
- The various committees and boards have different missions in their countries (e.g.

- We shall focus on specific questions and issues.
- One example of possible collaboration projects is the “Mammals” conference.
- Another topic relates to ethical issues with children, since the Norwegian Committee on Medical Ethics has as its theme this year (2011) “Children in Research”.
- From now on we shall send the minutes and other material, e.g. summaries, to all secretaries in the Nordic committees.

9. Other plans

- Issues with children (research and clinical trials, individual rights, compulsory care, well being); fall 2012 (possibly with The National Committee for Medical and Health Research Ethics, NEM, in Norway)
- Vaccination and screening, synthetic biology, new GM vaccines
- Trust in science and science ethics; fraud possible topic for joint meeting with ethics committees

10. Conference application

The meeting decided to finance Sirpa’s participation in the biannual conference organised by European Association of Health Law.

11. Country reports

Denmark:

- The questions whether parents should be asked what to do with aborted fetuses, is discussed.

Faroe Islands:

- The question whether there should be a ban, governmental or local, on Puffin hunting because the declination in population, is discussed.

Finland:

- As of May 1, patients can choose which local doctor or clinic they want to attend within the limits of special hospital district. Nationwide option to choose will come in force in 2014.
- The results of the parliamentary elections have raised concern over values and future policies on immigration, sexual minorities etc.

Iceland:

- There is a discussion on surrogacy in the Parliament.
- A polar bear was shot in Iceland due to concerns over public safety, which has caused a debate.
- People with complicated diseases are not getting the help they need.

Norway:

- Surrogacy case is raising problems.
- The ultrasound discussion continues.
- There is a discussion on genetically modified organisms (GMO) and sustainability
- Tromsø follow-up study shows a drop in volunteerism in research.

Sweden:

- There is a discussion whether it should be possible to use PKU register to study Somali children.
- The questions whether it should be possible to buy organs, is discussed
- The issue of a doctor who is accused of killing a baby is still in the headlines.
- Revision of the biobank act is under discussion.

12. Next meetings

Monday August 29 in Copenhagen; Monday October 31 in Helsinki, half day.

Miscellaneous

Rotation of chair and conferences were discussed

2011-05-25

Lotta Knutsson Bråkenhielm, secretary