

## International Network for Circumpolar Health Research

### Fourth Annual General Meeting 2009

#### *Minutes*

**Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2009,  
**Time:** 1800-1900  
**Place:** Explorer Hotel, Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, Canada

#### **Members in Attendance:**

*Canada:* Kue Young, (President), Laura Arbour, (Secretary), Paul Brassard, Laurie Chan, Susan Chatwood, Linda Larcombe, Pamela Orr, Amanda Sheppard, Jody Butler Walker

*Finland:* Juhani Hassi, (Vice-president), Tiina Mäkinen, Arja Rautio

*Greenland:* Gert Mulvad (Board member), Birgit Niclasen,

*Denmark:* Anders Koch (Board Member), Peter Bjerregaard.

*Norway:* Jon Øyvind Odland,

*Sweden:* Birgitta Evengård

*Russia:* Evgeny Bojko

*USA:* Alan John Parkinson, Rhonda Johnson, Michael Bruce

#### **Other Participants:**

Ketil Hansen [Norway]

Malene Landbo Børresen, Bolette Søborg [Denmark]

Vappi Sunnari [Finland]

Debbie Martin, Megan Stepushyn, Nancy Doubleday, Ethan Rubinstein, Sarah Peters [Canada]

Tom Hennessy, Lisa Wexler [USA]

#### ***The meeting commenced at 1815***

1. The agenda as circulated was accepted.
2. The minutes of the last meeting in Tromsø were accepted.
3. Review of activities
  - a. **2009 Travel Fellowship**  
 Kue Young announced the successful applicants for the travel fellowship for 2009.
    - (1) Dionne Gesink Law [member], Toronto, Canada – travel to Greenland, hosted by Gert Mulvad, Primary Health Care Centre, Nuuk
    - (2) Charlotte Jeppersen [trainee], Copenhagen, Denmark – travel to Canada, hosted by Eric Dewailly, Laval University, Quebec City

Gert Melvad supported the success of the travel award initiative by announcing that Dionne Gesink Law and her research partners in Greenland were successful in obtaining a research grant from the National Science Foundation in US.

b. **INCHR/IJCH Workshop “Publish or Perish”**

Tiina Mäkinen and Kue Young discussed the pre-ICCH14 workshop that was co-sponsored by the INCHR and the IJCH. This workshop was directed at graduate students and provided the steps necessary to submit manuscripts for publication into scientific journals and also provided tips on how to transform a graduate thesis into a book.

Although the attendance was less than expected (approximately 50 had signed up but only about 20 attended), it was felt to be well received.

c. **Arctic Human Health Expert Group**

Peter Bjerregaard discussed the formation of the AHHEG. The group is a sub-committee of the Sustainable Working Group (SDWG) of the Arctic Council (for more information see: [http://arctic-council.org/working\\_group/sdwg](http://arctic-council.org/working_group/sdwg) ). The members represent the countries governed under the Arctic Council (Canada, Denmark/Greenland/Faroe Islands, Finland, Norway, Iceland, Sweden, USA, The Russian Federation), with permanent participant groups that include the Aleut International Association, Arctic Athabaskan Council, Gwich'in Council International, the Saami Council, the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) and the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON).

The inaugural meeting of the AHHEG was held in February in Ottawa, Canada and a second one in Yellowknife before the congress. Peter Bjerregaard and Kue Young have been elected as co-chairs for the next 3 years. Health priorities were discussed and a workplan developed which will be submitted to SDWG at its next meeting in November.

The first international activity of the AHHEG will be a seminar on suicide prevention to be held in Nuuk, Greenland November 7-8, 2009.

#### 4. Election of Board of Directors

Based on the voting procedure accepted by the board and circulated prior to the meeting, the election for the second INCHR board of directors was held. One proxy vote received by email to the secretary was received. All other votes were carried out in person.

Results:

Alaska: Michael Bruce, Rhonda Johnson

Canada: Kue Young, Paul Brassard

Greenland/Denmark: Anders Koch [by acclamation]

Finland/Norway/Sweden: Tiina Mäkinen [by acclamation]

Russia: Evgeny Bojko [by acclamation]

The Executive council was decided by the Board after the meeting:

President: Kue Young (Canada)

Vice-President: Rhonda Johnson (USA)

Secretary: Paul Brassard (Canada)

Board members: Anders Koch (Denmark), Tiina Mäkinen (Finland),  
Evgeny Boyko (Russia), Michael Bruce (USA)

## 5. Amendment to By-Laws

The amendment to the By-laws dealing with election procedures was approved (moved by Peter Bjerregaard and seconded by Laurie Chan)

## 6. Other matters

### a. Summer School in Circumpolar Health:

Rhonda Johnson led the discussion on the feasibility and the timing of a summer school in circumpolar health. Although there was general support for a one week summer school aimed at graduate students on specific topics, some concerns were expressed, such as: the breadth of the topic to be covered in a week; the short time line to carry out the planning (if scheduled for next summer); funding that would be required; and where the ideal location would be. A working group was struck to explore these issues in detail. The volunteers include: Jon Øyvind Odland (Norway), Rhonda Johnson (Alaska), Susan Chatwood (Canada), Arja Rautio (Finland), Peter Bjerregaard (Denmark), Debbie Martin (Canada), and Amanda Ritchie (Canada).

Students currently registered at the University of Alaska Anchorage MPH distance program and the University of Oulu's Master in Circumpolar Health are expected to be interested in registering for the course. The working group will report back to the board and the membership.

### b. Future of the Network

Kue Young led the discussion on whether there was support for continuing the INCHR.

Susan Chatwood (Canada) observed that there were already a number of circumpolar groups with some overlap of the mandate of the INCHR. These include the IUCH, Arctic Council Human Health Expert Group, International Association of Circumpolar Health Publishers, etc.

Laura Arbour (Canada), Peter Bjerregaard (Denmark) and Jon Øyvind Odland (Norway) pointed out that INHCR had served the purpose of research networking and collaboration well and expressed their support for the continuation of the network in sponsoring research meetings, maintaining the momentum for collaborative research and supporting other Arctic health initiatives.

Financial issues were discussed. The Canadian Institutes for Health Research team grant, which had supported the activities of the network, will expire in over a year. Currently the network provides two \$5,000 travel fellowships and a 10,000 euros contribution to the IJCH. Further discussion will be necessary to consider how these activities might be funded in the long term. The costs of yearly international gatherings will also need to be considered.

The over-all discussion reflected support in principle to continue the activities of the INCHR. There was a decision that the next INCHR research gathering would be held in Copenhagen in May 2010. The organization of the meeting will be led by the local members.

The meeting adjourned at 1915.

**We acknowledge the outgoing Board members and Executive for their dedicated service to the Network over the past three years**