

Minutes of the SSIEM Council Meeting

Held on 14th June 2002 at 11 a.m. at The National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery, Queens Square, London

Council Members Present:

Guy Besley	Jean-Marie Saudubray
Ubaldo Caruso	Graham Shortland (treasurer)
Mick Henderson (secretary)	Kurt Ulrich
Cornelis Jakobs	John Walter (chairman)
Philip Lee	

In Attendance:

James Leonard	Philip Mayne
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2002. 12. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Kim Bartlett

2002. 13. Minutes of previous meeting held on 1st February 2002, London

The minutes were agreed to be a true record and were endorsed as such by John Walter.

2002. 14. Matters arising from previous meeting

There were no matters arising that were not covered by the agenda.

2002. 15. Annual Meeting 2002 Dublin

Philip Mayne submitted a detailed report summarising progress to date. Points of particular interest:

- Short Communications. Some anxiety was expressed about the length of time allotted to each, 10 minutes. This will mean 8 mins presentation and 2 for discussion and will necessitate strict chairing. However all presenters have been warned well in advance and must submit their papers before the meeting so that there should be minimal time between talks. Presenters will not be permitted to bring their own laptops expecting to connect them to the projector. This inevitably causes unacceptable delays.
- Abstracts. Multiple entries of the same abstract again caused many problems this year and cost considerable time to sort out. This happens because either entries are made by more than one route, e.g. e-mail and fax, or revised versions of abstracts are submitted. It was felt that to avoid this in future each submission should be given a unique reference number on receipt and that authors should be made responsible for their own entries.
- E-mail addresses. Delegate's e-mail addresses were frequently, at least 10%, incorrectly recorded. This had led to lengthy delays time wasting. A solution would be to 'capture' the e-mail address from submitted registrations rather than copy them from the written entries on the registration form.
- Dietitians Meeting. John has written to Anita MacDonald, on behalf of Council meeting, and offered to sponsor an invited speaker with a £1000 bursary.

- Opening Ceremony. It was decided that since the meeting starts on the Tuesday there is no point in the official opening ceremony being on Wednesday, as is the tradition. Council agreed that the form of the ceremony would be at the discretion of the local organisers.
- There was some anxiety about the rising number of delegates. The main lecture hall can seat 1000 so that is not going to be a problem. But late registrants may not be able to participate fully in the social programme.

2002. 16. Future meetings

(a) International meeting 2003

- The local organising committee had sent a draft programme to Cornelis for comment. John agreed to copy this to Council members by e-mail. John will write to the organisers requesting time slots, during lunch breaks, for the AGM of the SSIEM and the Council and Corresponding members meeting.

(b) The Netherlands 2004

Cornelis Jakobs presented a detailed outline budget that had been prepared by the local organising committee. The basic registration fee will be about €500. This should be affordable by the majority of the membership. It was agreed that the SSIEM should define guidelines for meetings sponsors which would define the conditions and benefits at various levels of financial support. It would be preferable if the Society could minimise discrepancies between meetings in this regard because it does lead to disputes and can place local organisers in a difficult position. Philip Mayne agreed to prepare a draft document that would be reviewed by Graham, in the first instance.

(c) France 2005

Jean-Marie reported that a local organising committee had been formed and was now looking critically at the choice of venues within Paris. Accommodation will be a mix of student rooms and hotels. A site visit by two council members was proposed for later this year. A professional conference organiser has not yet been commissioned but a favoured option is emerging.

(d) International Meeting, Japan 2006

No further news about the meeting. However, some concern was expressed about the lack of an SSIEM meeting every third year. It is likely that only a minority of the European members will be able to attend the International meetings on another continent. It was agreed that the Society will try to facilitate the travel costs of junior members with additional travel grants. At least £6000 has been set aside to support travel awards for next year's meeting in Australia. It is likely that National IEM groups will fill the gap to some extent but the question was raised as to whether the Society should consider holding a short, maybe two day, European meeting in the year of the International meeting. It would have to be earlier in the year because there would be no desire at all to clash with, or detract from, the International meeting. It was decided to discuss this at the AGM.

(e) Hamburg 2007

Kurt reported that appropriate reservations for lecture halls and accommodation had now been made at the University for the 5th to 9th September.

2002. 17. Training Programme

James Leonard reported that there was now a need to form a training committee with representatives from each participating country. It is proposed that this will convene each year at the time of the SSIEM annual meeting. The first such meeting is being planned for this September, in Dublin to be chaired by James.

Other issues discussed:

- The training committee will report to Council. James and his successors will be invited to attend Council meetings to report progress as appropriate.
- Training meetings / courses that are organised by drug companies must conform to standards which will be defined by the training committee, if they are to be recognised and sanctioned by the SSIEM. This will include a requirement that
 - participation is open to all potential trainees without prejudice
 - the programme must be discussed and agreed with the training committee. This will facilitate integration between potentially competing courses.

In addition the training committee is likely to want to instigate training courses directly run by the SSIEM. For example it might be useful to organise a regular training day to precede the annual meeting. This would have considerable advantages in terms of efficiency and cost effectiveness.

- Training centres need to be established. A system of accreditation by the SSIEM will define which training centres are qualified and adequately supported by staff and other resources. It may be necessary for centres to collaborate in order to provide a full training programme. These would then be accredited as one integrated training unit. It is anticipated that the accreditation process will have a beneficial effect on the centres involved. It may highlight specific requirements that can then be pursued more effectively. But it is important that the process is not seen to be negative, intimidating, unfair or biased in any way. The aim is to raise standards and achieve an equity of training across Europe.
- There will be problems in relation to variations in clinical practice between countries, for example in the various responsibilities delegated to other professional colleagues. There will also be significant geographical and ethnic variation in the types of diseases encountered. These factors need to be taken into account but should not compromise the overall aims of the training committee.
- It is hoped that a lead centre can be encouraged to initiate the process of application and act as an example.

2002. 18. Treasurer's report

Graham Shortland presented a summary report. The surplus revenue of nearly £50,000 from the Prague meeting had now been added to the reserves. It was recommended that a small increase in the annual subscription be made from the current £65 to £70 in anticipation of the additional costs that will be incurred by the training committee and travel scholarships.

A formal financial risk assessment to be submitted to the Charity Commissioners will have to be made before the end of the financial year.

An increase in the fees paid to Mr Malcolm Heron of £50 per month was approved.

Travel awards have been granted to 11 members as detailed in the appendix.

2002. 19. Publications report

Guy Besley informed council that:

- issues 1,2 and 3 of the Journal were now published and should be in the post.

- The editors are keen to encourage the submission of more reviews.
- Progress was being made towards the availability of the Journal on-line.
- Dublin abstracts edition was in press.
- There needs to be discussion with the local organisers of next years meeting about the production of an abstract book. It is the preference of the editors that this should take the form of an edition of the Journal, as usual. However there will be complications related to the site of printing. If this is to be in Europe the cost of shipment would be considerable.

2002. 20. Web site report

Kim Barlett submitted the following report.

1 Dublin meeting.

Since last Council meeting the majority of the work has been related to the Dublin Symposium. A total of 552 submissions were received which include many duplicates and revisions. The total number of accepted abstracts was 349, of which 10 were paper-based. In other words electronic submissions accounted for 97.1% of accepted abstracts.

Paper copies of all abstracts in their final form were sent to the judges Tuesday 30th April and Neil D Hamilton attended the meeting in Dublin Friday 10th May to finalise the list of accepted abstracts. This was then sent to Kluwer in electronic form the following week.

There was only one submission which was virus-infected and we able to remove the virus from the file and the corresponding author was notified of the problem. A number of authors requested minor textual changes on their behalf, with which we complied. Approximately 12 corresponding authors received telephone support, one of which (Dr Cheryl Greenberg, Canada) subsequently requested an application form to join SSIEM.

As in previous years the great majority of abstracts were received in the last three days prior to the closing date. This caused some logistic problems with populating the abstract database in time. We would like to make some suggestions for next year:

- 1.1 The closing date should be a Wednesday rather than a Monday as was the case this year. Many submissions were made on the Saturday and Sunday using home email addresses which resulted in confusion for some of the corresponding authors.
- 1.2 Whilst the closing date was brought forward this year, so too was the Judges' meeting which meant we had no more time to complete the database. This, along with the increased number of submissions and hard copies required, meant that there was no time to sort the paper copies into numerical order - as was done last year.
- 1.3 We think it would be useful for Neil D Hamilton to attend the Dublin meeting and we request financial support to enable this to happen.

2 Diagnostic laboratories database

Neil D Hamilton met with Mick Henderson & Brian Fowler 21st February to discuss the specification of the web-based diagnostic laboratories database. A prototype has now been constructed and is currently being tested and awaiting population (SQL database driven by a Javascript/XML interactive engine). We suggest that we are supplied with a preliminary list of analytes/tests using agreed nomenclature, since it became apparent that different provider laboratories used inconsistent terms for the same measurements. Once we are in possession of this agreed list we shall populate the database and make it available for comment.

We suggest that the beta-version of the facility be made available to the membership at the Dublin meeting. We shall bring three PC's and appropriate networking equipment but we shall

require a small room/area with a network connection. Our preference is for an ISDN line, we shall provide the router and ancillary network hardware. The alternative is three local IP addresses plus at least a single network connection, in which case we shall supply a mini-hub.

3 Web-site

The web-site has been maintained with regular updates of links and texts. So far as we are aware, there have been no interruptions to or problems with services, although we, of course, welcome any feedback. We shall be developing the trial message board service (members only) in the near future. It is possible that it will be available for inspection at the Dublin meeting. We shall also be providing a 'post vacant' public area on the web-site, as agreed at the last council meeting. However, having given this service some further consideration, we would welcome views as to how this should be formatted and presented.

2002. 21. Secretary's report

Mick Henderson reported progress with the joint ERNDIM/SSIEM laboratory database. A draft table had now been sent to Neil Hamilton. When ready, each participating laboratory will be responsible for their own entries. It is expected that there will need to be many corrections and additions in the first instance because the data about test profile offered is two or three years out of date. It will not be difficult for laboratories not currently registered with the project to join in once it has gone live.

2002. 22. Any other business

- Council membership was reviewed. Kim Bartlett has completed two, three year terms and will therefore have to retire at the AGM. Council acknowledged its gratitude to Kim for his support and all the effort that he has put into the website on behalf of the Society. Council would like him to continue to take responsibility for this and may need to ask him to attend Council meetings periodically. There will therefore be a Council vacancy. Nominations will be sought through the Newsletter.
- The following Corresponding members have completed one, three year term and will be invited to serve for three more years:

Elisabeth Holme, Gerry Berry, Frans Trijbels, Isabel Tavares, Eva Pronicka, Jiri Zeman, Jim McGill, Georges Van Den Berghe.

- Ubaldo requested clarification as to who represented the SSIEM Council on the committee for the international IEM meetings. John Walter and Jim Bonham were asked by Council to represent us at the last meeting in Cambridge and will do so again at the next meeting in Brisbane. This committee only meets once every three years to co-incide with the scientific meeting.

Date and time of next Council meetings

Friday 6th December 2002, The Old Board room. National Hospital for Neurology,
Queen Square, London (map available on request from the secretary)

Friday 7th February

Friday 13th June 2003

Friday 5th December 2003

Dr MJ Henderson

Honorary Secretary, SSIEM

June 14nd 2002

Summary of Applications Received and Payments for Travelling Scholarships

2002 Dublin Symposium

Dr GJ Shortland Treasurer SSIEM

Date 10.05.02

Name	Status	Place of Work	Amount of Sponsorship (Euro's)
Dr A Latini	Post –Doc Fellow	Rio Grande do Sul Brazil	1000
Dr R Kleta	Fellow Biochemical Genetics	Bethesda Maryland USA	1000
JH Osorio Orozco	PhD Student	Barcelona Spain	1000
H Peters	PhD Student	Melbourne Australia	1500
Dr J Lee	Consultant Paediatrician	Manilla Phillipines	1000
H Vlaardingerbroek	Medical Student	Maastricht Netherlands	770
K Skoczynska	Laboratory Technician	Warsaw Poland	1000
M Sniekers	Pharmacy Student	Leuven Belgium	650
H Caldeira	PhD Student	Funchal Portugal	700
E Kostalova	Paediatrician	Prague Czech Republic	700
Celia Angaroni	Biochemist	Cordoba Argentina	1000