

## **Report on the 9<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Neuropsychological Rehabilitation Special Interest Group of the World Federation for Neurorehabilitation**

Profit: \$11,376.97

Registrations: 174

37.8% of delegates had been to a previous conference

62.13% of delegates were first time attendees

WFNR members: 41

**Countries represented:** Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Cyprus, Denmark, England, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, NZ, Norway, Romania, Russia, Scotland, Sth Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, USA

### **Of those who declined**

36.02% - Location

29.57% - Schedule conflict

26.88% - Cost

4.30% - Lack of interest

1.61% - Already Familiar with material

1.61% - Do not like the agenda

### **Report from Convenor**

The 9<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the Neuropsychological Rehabilitation Special Interest Group was held from July 2-3<sup>rd</sup> 2012 in Bergen, Norway. The venue for the two day meeting was the stately Hotel Grand Terminus. The conference program showcased 26 oral, 24 datablitz and 49 poster presentations and brought together 174 delegates from 25 countries. One of the many highlights of the conference included the Welcome to Bergen introduction by local neurologist Dr Håkon Hofstad which provided a cultural and historical perspective of our beautiful host city.

For the opening address, Professor Barbara Wilson (President of the Special Interest Group) gave an excellent presentation on tuberculous meningitis (TBM): what neuropsychologists should know. Although quite rare in the developed world, Barbara emphasised the importance of understanding the symptoms, cognitive effects and the delayed recovery often observed after TBM.

The conference program provided a suite of stimulating presentations that depicted some major advances in conceptualisation, outcome assessment, psychometric and statistical analysis, treatment approaches and clinical service provision in neuropsychological rehabilitation. Some of the many noteworthy contributions included the symposium on posttraumatic amnesia (Jacob Kean, Malene Abell and Robyn Tate), new reporting guidelines for single-case experimental designs (Robyn Tate), advances in statistical analysis (Rumen Manolov) and psychometric analysis (Jim Malec), progress towards an international

consensus on outcome measurement (Caroline van Heugten) and research on cognitive reserve and aging (Fofi Constantinidou) and brain stimulation (Oded Meiron).

As a characteristic theme of this conference, the rehabilitation of cognitive and mood disorders received considerable attention. Jon Evans evaluated the existing evidence base and presented guidelines for rehabilitation practice. Teresa Ashman reported interesting results of a randomised controlled trial of interventions targeting depression following TBI. A number of speakers evaluated the application of technology for improving emotional, cognitive and psychosocial functioning (Brian O'Neill, Cath Haslam and Fergus Gracey). New approaches for assessing coping and the utility of existing measures of coping and self-esteem were the focus of a series of talks by Jacinta Douglas, Fergus Gracey and Sara Simblett.

The impact of brain injury on children and adolescents was also a major theme of the conference, with presentations on recovery (Suncica Lah), assessment (Ashok Jansari), long-term outcomes (Mathilde Chevignard, Ravi Katara) and rehabilitation interventions (Anna Adlam, Agata Kasny-Pacini). Jennie Ponsford's presentation on a multi-family group highlighted the benefits of support interventions for family members.

The following prizes were awarded for the best datablitz and poster presentations:

**Best datablitz prize:** Mathilde Chevignard

**Highly commended:** Fiona Ashworth, Gera De Haan, Thialda Vlagsma and Dirk Bertens

**Best poster prize:** Mariam Torkamani

**Highly commended:** Ameer Baird

**Special mention:** Jill Winegardner

Overall, the conference program stimulated great discussions, healthy debates and the exchange of ideas that are so important for moving our field forwards. The Charing baton has now been passed onto Caroline van Heugten, who will chair the 10<sup>th</sup> conference of the Special Interest Group in Neuropsychological Rehabilitation in Maastricht in the Netherlands.

#### **Acknowledgements:**

**Conference Organiser** Margaret Eagers-Rickit and Graham Rickit  
(ME Research Solutions)

#### **Special Interest Group Committee**

Professor Barbara Wilson (SIG President and Convenor), UK

Dr Tamara Ownsworth (Program Chair), Australia

Professor James Malec (SIG Treasurer), US

Professor Robyn Tate (SIG Secretary), Australia

Professor Jonathan Evans, UK

Professor Jennie Ponsford, Australia

Dr Michael Perdices, Australia

**Other Scientific Committee**

Dr Teresa Ashman, US

Dr Tessa Hart, US

Dr Andrew Bateman, UK

Professor Fofi Constantinidou, Cyprus

Dr Fergus Gracey, UK

Professor Caroline van Heugten, The Netherlands

Dr Suncica Lah, Australia

Dr Mathilde Chevignard, France

Dr Ashok Jansari, UK

**Local Organising Committee**

Dr Jan Egil Nordvik, Norway

Dr Eike Wehling, Norway

**Technological Support**

Satu Baylan, UK

Dr Tamara Ownsworth

Chair, 9<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Special Interest Group in Neuropsychological Rehabilitation