

**WORLD FEDERATION OF NEUROLOGY
RESEARCH GROUP ON APHASIA & COGNITIVE DISORDERS
(WFN RG ACD)**

ANNUAL REPORT 2010

Objectives

The main objectives of the WFN RG ACD are:

1. To unite the leading researchers of the field, providing a forum for cutting edge scientific debates and exchange of ideas, in particular at our biennial meetings.
2. To raise the profile and presence of aphasiology and cognitive and behavioural neurology at neurological meetings and in neurological literature.
3. To foment interest in the disorders of language, cognition and behaviour among young neurologists world-wide and to nurture young talent in the field.
4. To establish and maintain close links with the WFN and its research groups as well as with other relevant organisations (e.g. EFNS).
5. To provide expert guidance to clinicians, from informal advice to clinical guidelines and recommendations.

2010 was a year full of activities and this report aims to highlight the most important ones.

Biennial Meeting, Istanbul, May 2010

The Biennial Meeting of WFN RG ACD took place 14-18 May of this year at the island of Heybeliada in the Marmara Sea, near Istanbul. The local organiser was Oguz Tanridag. The meeting was attended by 90 delegates from 21 countries and 5 continents. What was particularly appreciated, according to the feedback we got, was the intimate character of the sessions, allowing a lot of time and space for lively discussion and exchange of ideas. The symposia covered a wide range of topics, addressing clinical as well as scientific questions (for details we refer to the program at the WFN website).

A particular achievement of the meeting was to address two important yet neglected issues: the comparison between vascular and neurodegenerative aphasia and the question how to build up cognitive neurology clinics in countries with different populations, disease profiles, cultures and languages. Both symposia generated a lot of interest and it was decided that the contributions should be published in special issues of "Behavioural Neurology". Moreover, a task force was established to prepare the next symposium on "Cognitive clinics worldwide" at the meeting in Hyderabad, with the objective of proposing recommendations for the establishment of cognitive clinics across the world.

It was decided by a majority vote that the next biennial meeting in 2012 will take place in Hyderabad/India (probably in December), with Dr. Suvarna Alladi as the local organiser.

Forum of Young Researchers (FYRE)

The Forum of Young Researchers (FYRE) was brought into life in 2009 to promote interest in cognitive neurology among young scientists and clinicians. It had its first gathering at the Istanbul meeting and has now its own self-governing structure, email list, website etc.

The first FYRE poster competition at the Istanbul meeting was won by Michal Harciarek (the decision being made by an advisory committee comprising of former presidents of the RG ACD). The prize is a free registration for the next WFN RG ACD meeting in 2012 in Hyderabad. At this meeting we intend to complement the poster competition with a special session preceding the meeting and organised entirely by FYRE members.

The relationship with the World Federation of Neurology & other organisations

The newly elected chair of the WFN, Vladimir Hachinski, has made a better co-ordination of the activities by the research groups one of his goals and Donna Bergen has been nominated as the WFN research group co-ordinator. A meeting of the RG presidents took place at the EFNS meeting in Geneva in September 2010. The highest priorities for the WFN are educational activities and closer links between different RG's: aims, which have been at the heart of our activities since 2008. We have established regular links and joint projects with the WFN RG on Motor Neuron Disease (Albert Ludolph). Our program of teaching courses will be discussed in more detail later in this report.

We are also pleased to report that cognitive neurology (and RG ACD) will be represented at the next World Congress of Neurology (WCN), organised under the auspices of WFN in November 2011 in Marrakesh. There will be one symposium on focal cognitive syndromes (organised by Jean François Démonet) and one on aphasia (organised by Argye Hillis). We have been assured that the RG's will be consulted well in advance and asked to contribute to future WCN's after Marrakesh, the next one taking place in 2013 in Vienna.

Another organisation with which we are currently establishing closer links is the European Federation of Neurological Societies (EFNS), recognised by the WFN as its European partner. We are in contact with their task force, established to set up recommendations for cognitive neurological assessment and we have proposed two joint sessions for the Annual EFNS meeting in Stockholm in 2012. I continue my intensive lobbying campaign to achieve the inclusion of cognitive neurology into the regional EFNS teaching courses (so far, these courses have been largely "cognition-free").

Teaching Courses

One of the main objectives of the WFN RG ACD is to increase the profile of and the knowledge about cognitive neurology worldwide. Teaching courses belong to the most effective ways to reach this goal. To start with, we have identified four regions of interest: Eastern Europe, Central/South America, India/South Asia and China/East Asia. Our long-term goal is to establish regular teaching courses in each of them and expand further.

A modest beginning was a seminar in September 2009 for young neurologists in São Paulo (organised by Thomas Bak and Ricardo Nitrini). This year we will have a teaching course 13-14 December in Hyderabad/India (<http://www.wfn-teachcogn.in>). A teaching course in Croatia will follow in May 2011 and further courses are planned for 2012.

Membership

We have currently ca. 200 members. The requirement for membership is to be proposed by at least two current members of the WFN RG ACD and to provide a CV documenting expertise in and commitment to aphasiology and/or cognitive and behavioural neurology. The biennial meetings are open to members and non-members alike, but the priority is given to members.

The RG ACD has traditionally a strong base in Western Europe and North America and over the last decades it extended its membership and profile to Eastern Europe (Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary), South America (Brasil, Argentina and Chile) and Asia (Turkey, India, Japan). However, there are still large parts of the world in which we are hardly represented, including Africa, China, Russia and Middle East. While we are constantly working on improving our international basis, we would like to encourage our members to identify and propose potential new members, particularly from regions in which we are underrepresented.