



## **Minutes of the General Meeting November 21st 2008, Zürich, Switzerland**

Members present: Maria Arvio (treasurer, Finland), Roger Banks (UK), Felix Brem (Schweiz), Thomas Dorn (Schweiz) Frans Scholte (president, The Netherlands) Peter Martin (secretary, Germany), Frieda de Meij (The Netherlands, minutes)

### **1. Welcome and apologies for absence.**

The president welcomes all members present and asks them to introduce themselves. Apologies for absence were received from Sylvia Carpenter, Jeannie Bormans, Peter Carpenter, Eva Olah, Donna Lougheed, Dana Janotova, Geirmund Skeie, Monique Veendrick and Frans Ewals.

A special welcome and thanks to Thomas Dorn and Felix Brem from the Swiss association who are so kind to welcome us at the Swiss Epilepsy Centre.

### **2. Minutes of the meeting in Potsdam, September 21st, 2007.**

The minutes were approved by those present.

### **3. Matters arising.**

There were no matters to discuss.

### **4. Election Board Members.**

Board members are expected to step down after three years. They are eligible for re-election up to a maximum of nine years.

Frans Scholte and Maria Arvio, having reached the end of a three year period as a board member, stepped down and were unanimously re-elected.

Thomas Dorn was elected to the board, which brings the number of board members to five. Thomas Dorn is a neurologist working as "Leitender Arzt", head of one of the two departments for adults at the Swiss Epilepsy Center, since 2001. Within the field of epileptology his special interests are pharmacotherapy, epilepsy in people with intellectual disability and neurogenetics.

### **5. President's report**

Last year the president expressed worries on the future of MAMH. At that time there were little active members and it was very hard to get in contact with the EU and Eastern European countries. Today the situation is different. We now have several members in Eastern Europe, especially in Rumania which was visited by Frans Scholte in the first week of November. This visit resulted in useful contacts with Rumanian doctors. Also thanks to the help of a Dutch colleague, Talitha van den Heuvel, who temporarily works and lives in Rumania. We hope to be able to make some contacts in Bulgaria next year.

It is hard to find your way within the departments and committees of the European Union as there is no such thing as a special department for the care for people with an ID. Within the EU no difference is made between people with physical and intellectual disabilities. Frans Scholte and Roger Banks had two meetings in Brussels, which seems a good start for further cooperation. They met mr. Johan ten Geuzendam, head of the EC Unit for Integration of People with Disabilities, Directorate-General for Employment, Social affairs and Equal Opportunities in January. In October they met Ms. Nathalie Chaze, European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Consumer Protection, Unit C5 Health strategy and health systems, and Mrs Fiona Kinsman, EMPL G/2, Equality, Action against Discrimination, Legal Questions.

There is European Legislation against discrimination of people with disabilities in employment. Legislation against discrimination in other areas, including health care, is in preparation. We asked for the opportunity to give comment on all draft versions of legislation and recommendations concerning care for people with intellectual disabilities. In a letter to all members of the European Parliament committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety and to mrs. Lyz Lynne, who is vice president of the Disability Intergroup of the European Parliament we asked the same. Finally we asked mrs. Lynne to invite us for a meeting of the Disability Intergroup, to give a presentation on the current state of health and on inequalities in health care for people with intellectual disabilities.

The president will continue these contacts.

## 6. Treasurer's report

Frieda de Meij presented the income and expenditure summary for the past year:

<b>Income</b>	
Membership	1980,00
Interest	38,95
	<b>2018,95</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Bank, transfer & payment charges	45,33
memberships	27,00
Travel cost	2335,91
Translations	533,08
	2941,32
<b>Net result</b>	<b>-922,37</b>

Our financial situation is unchanged and stable, but it is advisable to take measures for increasing our income in order to guarantee that MAMH can continue its activities. Attracting more members is relevant to keep our finances stable. This years negative result is due to travel cost and to the fact that the membership fees for 2008 are not yet included.

Last years suggestion was to pay a part of the balance (i.e. € 10.000) into a savings account with a higher interest rate than the current account. In February 2008 a savings account with an interest rate of 3% was opened at the Fortiss Bank.

As we are not satisfied with the service of the Fortiss Bank, our bank balance will be transferred to the Rabobank, as soon as our registration at the Chamber of Commerce has been updated.

**7. Strategic plan**

The strategic plan that was formulated by Roger Banks is discussed and accepted by those present. We decided to focusing on a few relevant goals, rather than have too many. All board members will be responsible for the progress of parts of the strategic plan. Roger will add their names to the last column. The board members will inform each other every two or three months on the progress. See also the attached strategic plan.

**Next meeting**

Unfortunately we did not succeed in organizing a conference in Liverpool this autumn. Sylvia, the previous president of MAMH, recently proposed to cooperate with us in organizing a large conference in the form of an international best practice conference. Possibly this could take place in the autumn of 2009. Roger suggests to find out if the college unit of the university will be able assist us in organizing such a conference. He will find out if they are available and what the cost are. Peter suggests that we make a planning for the meetings in the years to come and to find out to which conferences these meetings could be linked. Frieda and Frans will do some research.

**8. Closure of the meeting**

The president thanks those present for their contribution and closed the meeting.