

Presidential report – General assembly of SSHNO 2016

It has now been two year since our last general assembly at the annual meeting of the Scandinavian Society for Head and Neck Oncology in Stockholm, and it is time for a short report on the activities of the board during these two years.

The 2014 meeting in Stockholm was successful – many participants, very lively discussions. We decided to launch two important tasks, which we will hear more about tomorrow: The nasopharynx cancer joint analysis and the survey on centralization of HN treatment in the Nordic countries. Both tasks lead by Antti Mäkitie from Helsinki. I will not go into details with these projects now, but will like to thank Antti for his leadership.

Four year ago in Copenhagen six new board members were elected, a very significant change of generation, and I think we see now the importance of continuing to bring new blood and energy into the society. The board has met four times since 2014, in September 2014, February 2015, September 2015 and again this Wednesday. Most of the energy has been put into organizing the annual meeting, and Jakob and Arnar have really been busy with the local arrangements this year thank you very much.

The next SSHNO will be in Finland 2018. We will hear about these plans later. I hope many of you will take this opportunity of combining science, profession and social activities with colleagues at this very interesting venue. Many of us remember with great pleasure the previous SSHNO meeting in Turku in 2008, where we celebrated the 20 year anniversary of the society at the old Turku castle.

On the international side, SSHNO continues to be a strong member of EHNS, the European Head and Neck Cancer Society since Jan Olofsson represented SSHNO in the founding board 10 years ago. EHNS has grown to a large “society of societies”, with member organizations in almost all European countries. The main activity of EHNS is the bi-annual meeting, this year planned for Istanbul last month but moved to Budapest Sep 7-10. Abstract deadline is June 30th, so still time. Participation is strongly encouraged, and members of SSHNO are as EHNS members entitled to reduced fee.

In EHNS SSHNO represents all Nordic countries. But perhaps in the no so distant future, each Nordic country could have its own multidisciplinary HN society. There are certainly interesting initiatives underway. Denmark already for more than 30 years has the Danish Society for Head and Neck Oncology, with the working group DAHANCA. In Sweden, there are several national initiatives, including the new national guidelines as well as the quality assurance register, so the forming of a national society could be a reality in the not so distant future. In Norway, a multidisciplinary society, the “Norsk forening for Hode-Halskreft” already organizes meetings and is working on national guidelines. A Norwegian “Pakkeforløp” has also been introduced. Finland has a working group for head and neck cancer, arranging one meeting per year. Iceland has no society, but a working group. The board of SSHNO strongly support these initiatives, moving towards national multidisciplinary societies, even though you could say that these will undermine the foundation for SSHNO. But in the current situation, it is very important to have strong national groups that can work with the national health authorities, to ensure a strong influence from the profession on the governance and structure of health care services in each country. Perhaps in the future, SSHNO can then focus entirely on what we believe is also a very important role, creating a Nordic plat-

form for exchange of knowledge and science through our scientific meetings and collaborative studies and surveys.

Regarding future events, I have already mentioned the next SSHNO meeting in Finland in 2018. Before that there will be two main European multidisciplinary events: I hope to see many of you in Budapest for the EHNS meeting this September. EHNS is also co-organizing the next ICHNO meeting March 16-18, 2017, now back in Barcelona. I hope Scandinavians continues to be a visible part of this important multidisciplinary meeting, and strongly encourage you to participate and perhaps also submit an abstract.

With this I will end my last presidential report. My term is now over, and I thank all members of SSHNO for their trust and support. I especially thank the board members for many lively and friendly meetings. I wish all the best for SSHNO.

Cai Grau
Reykjavik
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