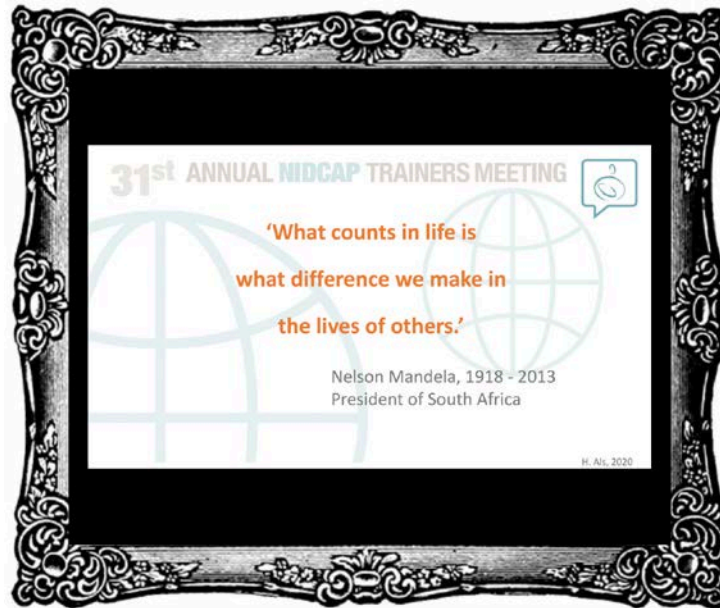
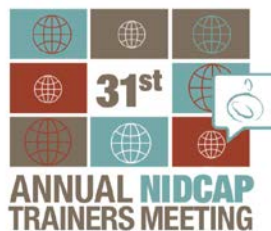


Dear Members of our NFI Community,



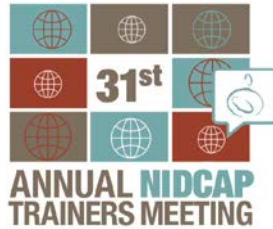
Last week, we held our first ever Annual NIDCAP Trainers Meeting using video conferencing. As befitting the NFI, this meeting was truly international with 167 participants joining from 32 countries representing six continents. While we are still collecting the evaluations from participants, here are some of the ways this virtual meeting was described: “an unexpected intimacy”, “inspiring”, “feeling connected”, “enriching”, and “really powerful.” These were three very full and, by the feedback so far, very successful meeting days. Each day was filled with “pearls” of wisdom, knowledge and support from our incredible NFI community. You truly make a difference in the lives of others every day. Here’s a sampling of what we heard.



#### DAY ONE

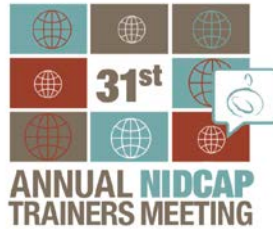
*The Annual NIDCAP Trainers Meeting is so very important for our NIDCAP community... it is an opportunity for connection to bring together NIDCAP Trainers, Professionals and Supporters to reflect, reassure, refuel, learn and advance our shared mission to support hospitalized infants and their families. (Deborah) • We've got a truly global representation. So what we're going to do is move around the globe as we introduce people and the centers and look at the amazing activity that's happened in the past twelve months (Nikk &*

**Kaye**) • We are going to share the multilayered clinical contextual story that led to and exemplified the pearl of wisdom... the NIDCAP professionals who will be sharing their pearl of experience with us are merely representatives of all of us who strive within our clinical context to support development, enhance strength, and minimize stress for infants, family and staff who care for them. **(gretchen)** • I have to speak about Barcelona team, (they) are my family and supporters and I can be here because they are by my side. **(Maria)** • I look at the strengths and always think about the emerging competence and build. And look individually at each person. And that's how I learned. And I think I learned almost as much from every person I've trained as they have learned from me. **(gretchen)** • We need to be flexible in the way we train people because just like babies don't need everything the same way - neither do trainees when we are training them. **(Inga)** • My goal has been to make the trainee understand the concepts. We have many of the documents, we just look at them to understand more and use them as a base for increased understanding. I have used my brain in the very beginning for what is pragmatic. And what is the best for the baby and the family. **(Agneta)** • I (try to do) scaffolding... to keep trainees from really getting too overwhelmed... reminding them that the disruptions of their own integration is going (on)... (and to ) keep it at a good level of stress and not be too overwhelming **(Jennifer)** • Part of the effort that has been underway in the NFI, for the last several years is to think about ways we can continue to support each other as trainees and trainers. And that group conversations even on a virtual platform may be a very valuable strategy for doing that. This in a sense is a pilot for that kind of effort so there's sort of a meta effort here, to have a conversation about the ideas on challenges that have been shared by our group but also to think about how coming together can be valuable. **(Melissa)** • When I ask a baby with APIB, I get a special message from every individual baby. I feel that baby's behavior is not only a response of my maneuver but also reflection of my attitude, manner and feeling. The response, not only in babies but also with families and staff whom I'm involved with, are mirrors of my words and attitudes. **(Noriko)** • Always reminding myself to look for the strength to build on. Storytelling, does it change anything? It also depends on our ability to listen. How do we listen? Do we hunt for facts in the story? Are we curious what happens next? Do we ask why the story happened? Do we feel the story? How does the story excite me or why did I fall asleep? Are you still thinking of the story days afterwards? And do you let it influence you? Or most certainly not... I actively invite parents to tell me their story. **(Nikk)** • I ran into a 42 year old ex-26 week old from the UK ...(he is) just starting out in his advocacy career (and) he is quite profound because he's speaking as an adult and he is only now coming to understand some of his issues and (his words) really affected me... (he) said (former preterm) "babies can't talk about our issues to the care-ers and experts who took care of us... and it's really up to the care-ers at the time to be in the moment to understand that the work they do, the actions they take, do have lifelong effects". **(Mandy)** • ...the pandemic has changed our interactions with each other, with the infants and the families that we work with. Behaviors that I've witnessed not only in our babies and family but in other patients... patients like my mom. I've experienced firsthand the lack of connectedness in human touch ... I continue to be profoundly influenced by the resilience of the family. I am blessed to work with my co-workers and by all of you. **(Debra)** • ...(the) opportunity for hope (and) to get back to the essence of why we do this work and to get back to the essence of the incredible goodwill shared throughout this community. **(Dorothy)**



## DAY TWO

To quote (Winnicott), “the potential space between baby and mother, between child and family, between the individual (all of us) and the world depends on experience which leads to trust. It's here that the individual experiences creative living.” **(Heidi)** • The “angel” doctor was the first one that looked at me as a mother. A real mother, a strong, meaningful, capable mother. I realized that my warm loving touch had a special effect on my baby. This pure moment was one of those moments that made me the mother I am, the mother I am constantly striving to be, gentle, sensitive, hopeful, and yet strong and taking action. **(Adi)** • In summary, (our NFI COVID-19 Survey) found that there were restrictions during the pandemic which increased the separation between infants and families. We found that some units had innovative approaches to actively engaging parents and family in the care of their infant while maintaining safety and security during the pandemic. **(Samantha)** • (There were) incredible restrictions that even the units that allowed parents to be present there were quite a few who had further restrictions that did not support that active participation and infant care practices. (Consider) opportunities for skin to skin holding every day for extended periods (for) mothers being able to provide their own milk. **(Dorothy)** • I was thinking too complex instead of thinking simple. That day, I opened the eyes of two people, the baby and my colleague. And the experience also provided me with a pearl of wisdom related to our NIDCAP work - keep it simple. **(Joke)** • The driving vision for our future directions comes from our Vision Statement... which states... The NFI envisions a GLOBAL SOCIETY in which ALL HOSPITALIZED NEWBORNS AND THEIR FAMILIES receive care in the evidence-based NIDCAP MODEL. **(Deborah)** • We invite you to think about the needs and next steps of the organization and to think about what special skills and experiences you have to contribute to each of these different (NFI next step) topics. **(Dorothy)** • Our (research study) conclusions were that skin to skin contact is a safe procedure for preterm infants in the first three weeks after birth. Skin to skin contact has a key role in the care of the preterm infants and it should be increasingly offered to infants and their families. **(Natascia)** • We learned that well informed parents were not afraid to hold their infants during the COVID pandemic and when allowed the practice of kangaroo session will increase despite the COVID pandemic. Obviously, we had many challenges, namely variation in restriction measures, during this is no fault for anyone but hopefully this will change. **(Lama)** • During COVID, fathers without their mothers’ presence took up the challenge of taking care of the babies as primary caregivers. Staff and parents’ partnership... in challenging situations can produce surprising opportunities for families. **(Natascia)** • ...the whole selfcare is really pivotal to our own success, take a few moments to rejuvenate and recalibrate ... always coming back to the core of why we do, what we do, together. We're so much stronger, to accomplish our vision, to reinforce the need to support infants and their families, especially during this global pandemic. **(Dorothy)**



### DAY THREE

*...the power of listening and making connections are essential in partnerships in the neonatal nursery.*

**(Mary)** • The question is how the NIDCAP Nursery Program can help trainers to face the challenge of NIDCAP implementation and attain the NIDCAP Nursery Certification and at each step training. This model of the NIDCAP Nursery, that I imagine is known by every NIDCAP professional, shows the process of NIDCAP care implementation based on Nursery self-assessment in order to identify strengths and challenges at each step of NIDCAP training to reach highly attuned NIDCAP care and possibly NIDCAP Nursery certification... I see it being used in the preparatory time before starting the formal NIDCAP training to encourage the creation of a multidisciplinary team... **(Delphine)** • (You are invited to) reflect upon and share your personal experiences in the process of considering the (integration of the NIDCAP Nursery framework and resources in your training and hospitals). **(Rodd)** • Results (from the publication presented) have shown the unique balance between an excitatory and inhibitory effects that the immune system has on the perception of pain in some newborn infants undergoing many painful procedures. This balance can be interrupted which can have implications on the pain that the baby feels. **(Nolan)** • So what if the NFI brought everyone together so that we learned from each other to create more than we have now? So if we brought together the people from FiCare, Close Collaboration, Family Nurture, NIDC, the Cope Program, Humane Baby Care, ATVV, Care By Parent, Kangaroo Mother Care, Primary Nursing, MITD, psychosocial support programs... just imagine what we could come up with, especially if NIDCAP was the pollinator. **(Juzer)** • ...even in dark times, NIDCAP can create a priceless legacy. Through observing and learning from Freddy, his parents took joy from his amazing abilities. In spite of his life limitations, Freddy thrived and developed in terms of acquiring new skills and abilities, taking pleasure in company, cuddles and toys. And because of this, it has enabled memories to be made for his mother and father. Memories of a unique little boy and the remarkable everyday things that he did in spite of everything. **(Gillian)** • Recent scientific literature describes indeterminate sleep in considerable detail. Therefore, our recommendation is that indeterminate sleep be incorporated into the NIDCAP observation. **(Nolan)** • ...(a presentation) on the quality improvement project on non-pharmacological pain and stress management... to look at the quality of care given to babies having heel stick blood sampling using the EVIN Scale.. the next steps are to make this program sustainable... a guideline (has been written), practices to be regularly audited with feedback given to staff, training to be provided in all new staff and EVIN will included in simulation sessions. **(Inga)** • Kangaroo Care's been shown to be beneficial to both the baby and the mom. Mothers and fathers in the in ICU undergo quite a lot of stress so the idea came to our mind why don't we just combine mindfulness during kangaroo care to see if that's first feasible and acceptable to the parents and second if that would actually reduce mom's stress anxiety and depression. **(Marc-Antoine)** • Our steps going forward (with the Recommended Standards, Competencies and Best Practices) will be a plan for dissemination. So what are the implications for NIDCAP? And we do feel like it gives a wide band of evidence to support many of the resulting recommendations and strategies that we recommend. Although the NIDCAP work is the gold standard, we do know that we need to provide a lot of evidence that will help the people who are implementing, not only the NIDCAP work but also those who don't have the advantage of NIDCAP work. So the evidence provided in the standards, competencies,

*best practice recommendations, we hope will assist in the provision of support for the ongoing practices in neonatal context within the NIDCAP model. (Joy) • With gratitude for your SMART goal input and your ongoing NFI participation, on we go into this next NFI year to continue to develop and refine our organization and our work together. (Deborah) • Every day in little interactions, moment to moment, do we enrich by being who we really are in the life of those we meet? Do we take away from their being? Do we hold the moment even when it comes unexpected? Can we BE instead of react? Can we hold and contribute therewith to the other's day, next moment, next action to done, to be lived, in a fuller sense. (Heidi) • Hearing our shared path forward, the network and the community that we have, is an inspiration. (Dorothy) • Connecting is establishing a rapport or relationship. We are motivated by the need to come together in common purpose. Seeing the videos and slides, of past meetings, gives fond memories and reminders with the sense of being with others in our organization who share my values and commitment to infants, families, and staff. (gretchen) • It is really good to see you. And to work with you, at least virtually. And although the whole world is shouting "NO - it's impossible at the moment," we have this little voice inside of us that says "maybe". Maybe it will be possible that we can meet next year in person in Germany for the 32<sup>nd</sup> NIDCAP Trainers Meeting. We hope that traveling will get easier again... and then not only the (NFI) elk has the opportunity to drive around with us and to learn something about our home. (Natalie & Birgit) • The joy of connection was felt through our discussions, as well as the comments that filled the (zoom) chat column during these three days. Here's to finding ways to continue to learn and support one another all year long. (Deborah)*

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Tremendous gratitude is extended to our incredible team that worked throughout the year to preserve the goals, needs and essence of our Annual NIDCAP Trainers Meeting with the new Zoom technology: The NIDCAP Trainers Meeting Planning Subcommittee (Co-Chairs **JEAN** Powlesland, MS, RNC, NNIC and **FATIMA** Clemente, MD and Committee Members: **DEBORAH** Buehler, PhD, **NIKK** Conneman, MD, **RODD** Hedlund, Med, **STINA** Klemming, MD, **DEBRA** Paul, OTR/L, **KAYE** Spence, AM, RN, MN and **DOROTHY** Vittner, PhD, RN); and to the NIDCAP Trainers Meeting Logistics Sub-Committee (**SANDRA** Kosta and **GLORIA** McAnulty, PhD).

And with appreciation to our 2020 presenters, facilitators, moderators, and special events planners:

**JEFFREY** Alberts, PhD • **HEIDELISE** Als, PhD • **DIANE** Ballweg, APRM,CNS • **NATASCIA** Bertoncelli, PT • **JOY** Browne, PhD • **DEBORAH** Buehler, PhD • **SAMANTHA** Butler, PhD • **FATIMA** Clemente, MD • **LAMA** Charafeddine, MD • **NIKK** Conneman, MD • **MANDY** Daly, DLDU, ACII • **JENNIFER** Degl, MS • **DELPHINE** Druart, RN • **NOLAN** Dyck, BSc • **ADI** Freund-Azaria, MOT • **gRETCHEN** Lawhon, PhD, RN, FAAN • **LEONORA** Hendson, MBBCh, MSC, FRCPC • **RODD** Hedlund, MEd • **INGE** van Herreweghe, MD • **BIRGIT** Holzhüter, MD • **MELISSA** Johnson, PhD • **GILLIAN** Kennedy, MSC • **STINA** Klemming, MD • **SANDRA** Kosta, BA • **MARC-ANTOINE** Landry, MD, FRCPC • **gRETCHEN** Lawhon, PhD, RN, FAAN • **MARIA** Lopez Maestro, MD, PhD • **SAADIEH** Masri, RN, MPH • **GLORIA** McAnulty, PhD • **NORIKO** Moriguchi, MSN, RN, PHN • **MARY** O'Connor, RN • **DEBRA** Paul, OTR/L • **CHRISTIAN** Poets, MD • **JEAN** Powlesland, MS, RNC, NNIC • **DALIA** Silberstein, RN, PhD • **NATASCIA** Simeone, RN • **KAYE** Spence, AM, RN, MN • **JUZER** Tyebkhan, MBBS, FRCPC • **DOROTHY** Vittner, PhD, RN • **INGA** Warren, MSc, FRCOT, DSc • **NATHALIE** Wetzel, RN • **JOKE** Wielenga, PhD, RN

# 2020 NFI Annual Membership Meeting

October 22, 2020 (1830-1930 GMT)

On October 22, we held our annual (virtual) NFI Membership Meeting. Brief presentations from the President (Deborah Buehler, PhD) and the Chair of the Program Committee (Dorothy Vittner, PhD, RN) were made. The Chair of Finance, Gloria McNulty, PhD reviewed the Proposed Budget for the NFI FY2020-2021. NFI Members were invited ask questions and then to vote on the acceptance of the proposed budget via an online poll during the meeting. The proposed budget was approved. The President's, Program, Advancement, Governance and Finance Committee End of Year Reports are available on the [nidcap.org](http://nidcap.org) Member Services website page.

During the meeting, Governance Chairs, Jean Powlesland, MS, RNC, NNIC and Dalia Silberstein, RN, PhD, reported on the results of the previously held elections for the four open Board of Director seats. The ballot included the four incumbents: *Deborah Buehler, PhD, Gloria McNulty, PhD, Juzer Tyebkhan, MBBS, FRCPC and Dorothy Vittner, PhD, RN*. All four candidates were received a majority vote from the voting NFI members and were re-elected for three-year NFI Board of Director terms. The **2020-2021 NFI Board of Directors include:** *Deborah Buehler, PhD, Fatima Clemente, MD, Mandy Daly, ACII, DLDU, Jennifer Degl, MS, María López Maestro, MD, PhD, Gloria McNulty, PhD, Jean Powlesland, RN, MS, Dalia Silberstein, RN, PhD, Juzer Tyebkhan, MD and Dorothy Vittner, PhD, RN.*

## NFI Updates & News



### Quality Assurance Advisory Council

The Quality Assurance Advisory Council (QAAC) has been capably chaired by *Melissa Johnson, PhD* for the past two years. Under Melissa's exquisite leadership, the QAAC has made tremendous strides in articulating its role and responsibilities within the NFI, and in its effectiveness and productivity to review and recommend policies, programmatic initiatives and next step planning. On behalf of the NFI, we are very grateful for Melissa's expertise and care in guiding the QAAC council and its efforts.



We welcome *Graciela Basso, MD* as the new Chair of QAAC. Graciela's background as a Senior NIDCAP Master Trainer and APIB Trainer and her experience, skill and warmth will bring an exciting next chapter to the QAAC! And as an added bonus, Melissa will support Graciela, which includes Minute-taking for the monthly council meetings. 😊



**About World Prematurity Day**  
Celebrated internationally on November 17th, World Prematurity Day (WPD) acknowledges the journeys of preterm infants and their families as well as raises awareness of the challenges faced by children born preterm and their families. This is ever so important as the incidence of preterm birth worldwide, is increasing rapidly. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), every year an estimated 13 million infants worldwide are born preterm (over 3 weeks early). Sadly, the complications of preterm birth are among the leading causes of death in children under five. All infants born preterm require immediate and significant medical care posing

## Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup>

**World Prematurity Day 2021**, initiated by the European Foundation for the Care of Newborn Infants (EFCNI) and their parent organization partners, will be celebrated on **Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup>**. In honor of this day, the NFI invites you to pay tribute to newborns, and to their families, nursery staff and hospitals around the world who provide essential NIDCAP care.

Please visit the [EFCNI](#) and [our website](#) for information, resources and ideas for how to participate in this international celebration.



## NFI Board of Directors

### Video Conference Call Minutes

When available the full NFI Board of Director Minutes will be posted within our website's [Membership Section](#). The following are **HIGHLIGHTS** from Board discussions from the October meetings.

#### October 7, 2020

- The NFI FY 2020-2021 President's Report and the Finance, Program, Advancement and Governance End of Year Report were approved.

#### October 28, 2020

- The first Board Meeting of the new fiscal year was held.
- Officer elections were held. All officers were unanimously re-elected: *Deborah Buehler, PhD, President; Dorothy Vittner, RN, PhD, Vice President; Gloria McAnulty, PhD, Treasurer; Jean Powlesland, RN, MS, Secretary and Sandra Kosta, BA, Assistant Treasurer.*
- The 2020 Annual NIDCAP Trainers Meeting was preliminarily reviewed.
- Plans for upcoming Board communications and meetings were made.

Your feedback, questions, comments, NFI updates, and membership news written to me personally and/or to the whole board, are welcome.

Sending wishes of health and well-being to our entire NFI community,

Deborah

Deborah Buehler, PhD  
NFI, President, Member of the Board  
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Organization: [www.nidcap.org](http://www.nidcap.org)