



NFI Board of Directors Meeting FY 2024

Toulouse, France
Sunday, November 3 and 4, 2024
0900 – 1700 CET

Attending Deborah Buehler, PhD, Fatima Clemente, MD, Mandy Daly, ACII, DLDU, Jennifer Degl, MS (11/3: arrived 1007-left 1530; 11/4: present 1100-1300, 1500-1600, Jennifer Hofherr, MS, OTR/L, Gloria McAnulty, PhD (11/3: present 1200-1440;), Jean Powlesland, MS, RN, C-NICC, Dalia Silberstein, PhD, RN, Charlotte Tscherning, MD (absent 11/3; 11/4 from 1500), Juzer Tyebkhan, MBBS, FRCPC, Dorothy Vittner, PhD, RN, FAAN.

Executive Director of Administration and Finance: Sandra Kosta (Assistant Treasurer)

Our Mission

The NFI improves the future for all infants in hospitals and their families with individualized, developmental, family-centered, research-based NIDCAP care.

Highlights of the Meeting

- The Board of Directors approved Nikk Conneman to be a Senior APIB Trainer.
- The NFI Vision Statement was revised to substitute the wording “family-integrated” with “family-centered.”
- The Year-to-Date Reports from the Advancement, Governance, Program Committees and the President’s Report were approved.
- The Minutes from the Board of Director’s meeting held on October 9th were approved.
- The Board of Directors approved the formation of a task force to determine the logistics of bringing foundational education programs under the NFI administrative umbrella.
- The Board of Directors approved term lengths for the re-organization of the Officers of the Board. For the initial phase of reorganization, the President-Elect position would be a three-year term, followed by a three-year term as President; however, in the initial phase this may be adjusted depending on the President-Elect’s level of experience.

- The Finance Committee presented the Year-to-Date budget and requested each of the Committees request funding for their activities before the end of November.
 - Challenges posed in recent years with planning the NIDCAP Trainers Meeting were discussed.
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Meeting Minutes

D. Buehler called the meeting to order at 0907 CET and led a short reflection.

Board Business

Mission Statement

The BOD reviewed the NFI Mission Statement. D. Buehler asked if this statement still reflected accurately the NFI mission.

Discussion: The Board discussed that the Assessment of Preterm Infants Behavior is an important part of the NFI yet mentioned in the Mission Statement. The term NIDCAP is used tautologically. These terms may be discussed in an expanded mission statement or a “values” section. There is a desire to wordsmith the mission statement further, yet more discussion is needed.

Outcome: The Mission Statement will remain the same.

Rules of Engagement: The Board of Directors reviewed participation expectations.

Trainer Application

Topic: Nikk Conneman, MD applied to become a Senior APIB Trainer. D. Vittner had circulated documents from the application. She motioned to approve N. Conneman to become a Senior APIB Trainer. F. Clemente seconded. Discussion: A question was raised as to who qualifies as a Senior APIB Trainer.

Outcome:

Upon motion duly made, it was unanimously

Voted: To approve the application of Nikk Conneman, MD to become a Senior APIB Trainer.

Consent Agenda

Goal: To approve the Program, Advancement and Governance Committee and the President’s Year to Date Reports.

Discussion: Edits to the Governance Committee and Program Committee Reports that were identified and agreed upon and remained on the consent agenda.

Outcome: J. Hofherr motioned that the reports from the Program, Advancement and Governance Committees and the President’s Report be accepted. M. Daly seconded.

Upon motion duly made, it was unanimously

Voted: To accept Program, Advancement and Governance Committee and the President’s Reports.

Meeting Minutes

Goal: To approve the Minutes from the October 9th meeting.

Discussion: J. Powlesland had circulated the minutes earlier and there were no requests for changes.

Outcome: F. Clemente motioned to approve October 9th. J. Hofherr seconded. There was no further discussion.

Upon motion duly made, it was

Voted: To approve the Board of Directors Minutes from the October 9th meeting. (5 ayes and 3 abstentions)

Board Evaluation

D. Buehler collected feedback from ten of the Board of Directors members on improving the processes and function of the Board of Directors.

Discussion: The themes from survey responses concerned the Board of Directors' productivity and capacity. The discussion included the following points. (1) The culture of fundraising for nonprofits is inconsistent across NFI countries, so there have been fewer resources devoted to cultivating donations. (2) Board of Director members are encouraged to engage more in strategic planning and less in operational duties for true progress to be made in strategic goals. (3) The Board of Directors could keep focus on strategic goals by: mapping out the events and goals for the entire year to better visualize how progress will occur; having subcommittees report back to the Board using a format of how each activity helps progress to the strategic goal; recruiting members to engage with the Board and to learn facets of the organization; and utilizing the unique lens of Family Members on our committees. The Speakers Bureau could help foster speaker partnerships between NIDCAP clinicians and family members. It was noted that speakers at major conferences often must submit considerable paperwork; the Speakers Bureau might be able to assist family partners with that to reduce the barrier to their participation.

There is a question as to which decisions should belong exclusively to the Board of Directors or to committees, or as committee decisions with Board of Director assent. A suggestion was made to review decisions made by the Board of Directors after each meeting. Another suggestion was to list specific concerns members have with the transition to a Governing Board, and to address these at Board of Director meetings.

The meeting was adjourned for lunch break at 1215 and resumed at 1338.

Vision Statement

It was suggested that the term "family integrated" used in the NFI Vision Statement be changed to avoid confusion with a specific intervention program. D. Buehler requested that each Board member submit their own versions of the mission, vision, and values statement before January 1st.

D. Vittner motioned to change the term “family integrated” to “family centered” in the vision statement. J. Tyebkhan seconded. There was no further discussion.

Upon motion duly made, it was unanimously

Voted: To change the term “family integrated” to “family centered” in the NFI Vision Statement.

Strategic Goals

Goal: To determine whether the strategic plan aligns with the NFI’s current needs or should be revised.

Discussion: D. Buehler referred to the NFI’s latest version of the Strategic Plan and the two goals that were listed as priorities:

1. Increase Opportunities for NIDCAP and APIB Training
2. Increase Organizational Capacity and Sustainability

The Board of Directors agreed that these goals were still priorities and discussed the specific strategies to achieve them that had been identified in 2022. It was noted that there is significant interest in foundational education as seen by the activities of FINE, CLE and Cerena. One program has expressed a desire to be placed under the NFI administrative umbrella, so the NFI will investigate developing a process for that to take place. Several factors related to bringing programs under the NFI administration were discussed, including management of registration, applicable fees, copyrights, and outcomes. The program materials might be housed on the website learning center. A task force to explore what steps are needed and create a process was identified: D. Silberstein, F. Clemente, J. Hofherr, G. McNulty and J. Powlesland.

Outcome: D. Vittner motioned to form a task force to explore bringing the CLE and Cerena programs under the administrative umbrella of the NFI. J. Hofherr seconded. There was no further discussion.

Upon motion duly made, it was unanimously

Voted: To approve the formation of a task force explore bringing the CLE and Cerena programs under the administrative umbrella of the NFI.

Documents and Policies

Discussion: A question was raised regarding whether the transition to a Governance Board would require changes in the existing documents. It was noted that many documents are outdated and should be revised, and that there should be a tracking system to ensure that all documents are reviewed on a regular basis.

Committee Reports

Program Committee Report

D. Vittner presented an overview of the Program Committee’s activities. This included several new Trainers and Training Centers as well as tremendous activity from the eight subcommittees. She mentioned several published papers in the last year related to NIDCAP. Further, D. Vittner described her experience of meeting several NICU Professionals who are not aware of NIDCAP, speaking to the need to promote NIDCAP widely, in the NICU as well as in other infant care settings. She also reviewed

results from a recent survey of the membership and her interpretation of them. An extended discussion concerning various aspects of training, implementation and promoting the NIDCAP organization ensued.

The meeting was adjourned for the day at 1659 CET.

November 4, 2024

D. Buehler called the meeting to order at 0904 and reviewed the agenda.

Survey of Training Capacity: D. Vittner had sent around a survey asking about each Trainer's ability to take on additional NIDCAP training.

Discussion: D. Vittner reported that most NIDCAP Trainers stated they could take on more trainees and a few stated that they could not due to expected retirements or other job tasks. A discussion ensued on whether it would be informative to survey NIDCAP Trainers on what the barriers are to progressing along the next step of NIDCAP and APIB Trainer pathways. Timelines to become certified at any level in NIDCAP was discussed. It was noted that it is important to allow time for Trainers to share their strategies on how they train. It would be helpful to develop forums for Trainers to discuss strategies for teaching. It was noted that the role of a Governing Board would be to determine what is the target number of NIDCAP and APIB Trainers, Master Trainers, and Senior Master Trainers to meet training demands and make progress on advancing our NFI mission. Further, this information would support the formation of plans to support trainer development.

Governance Committee

J. Powlesland and D. Silberstein shared a PowerPoint graphic describing a timeline and steps for the Board transition from the current working board to a governing board.

Discussion: In 2025, the goal is to increase robustness of Committee structures and clarify roles and accountabilities as well as implement plans for leadership succession. There was a request for a clear description of the Officer roles of President and President-elect. The current lack of definition of the role may hinder candidates from pursuing the office. D. Buehler has been President without a Vice President or President Elect for nearly a year, and notes that this has been challenging. It is a priority to define the President and President-Elect role responsibilities; various options have been discussed at prior meetings. The lack of a definitive length of term to serve in these leadership roles is an issue due to the considerable time to acclimate to the position. A one- or two-year term may not be sufficient.

Results of the Election to the Board of Directors

The results will be announced at the Membership Meeting; D. Silberstein announced that M. Daly was re-elected as Family Representative to the Board of Directors, and that J. Powlesland and Monique Oude-Reimer were elected to the two at-large seats. All the candidates have been informed of the results. Seventy-four people voted in the election. Several people had mentioned to a director that they were unaware that electronic voting was the only mechanism for voting. Possible issues are: not

all members are receiving NFI emails, members may not read the emails in their entirety, or members are not members in good standing. D. Silberstein agreed to emphasize that point when announcing the results.

Advancement Committee:

J. Degl updated the Board of Directors on the Speakers Bureau, including the second newsletter she recently sent. She received positive feedback on listing conferences that feature NFI members. There is a request to create a vetting committee to be on the list of potential Speakers on the Speaker Bureau. Another request is to identify a Co-Chair for the Advancement Committee, as D Buehler states that holding both the Presidency and the Chair of the Advancement Committee is difficult to maintain.

J. Degl will be the President of the NICU Parent Network (NPN) as of January 1st, 2025. Recently the NPN invited the NFI, the National Association of Neonatal Therapists, the Family Centered Care Taskforce, the National Perinatal Association, and the National Association of NICU Psychologists to collaborate on a position paper, entitled “Continuous and Uninterrupted Parental Presence in the NICU.” J. Degl thanked D. Buehler and D. Vittner for their contributions to the paper on behalf of the NFI. This paper is almost completed and J. Degl shared the highlights of the paper with the Board of Directors. The Board discussed that various organizations have agreed to share this paper, and how strengthening these relationships with outside organizations may benefit the NFI.

D. Buehler and M. Daly stated a desire to reinvigorate the Family Advisory Council. One project identified for the group for World NIDCAP Day/Month is to create an interactive map focusing on family voices.

Fundraising

D. Buehler noted that the NFI recently gained one corporate sponsor, Dr. Brown’s. She shared that the NFI shop had been recently established. Each Director was gifted an NFI journal and pen by D. Buehler.

Governance Committee:

The discussion that had begun earlier about the appropriate term length for the President-Elect and President was resumed. J. Tyebkhan motioned to start the initial term for the President-Elect for three years followed by a three-year term as President. This term length will be evaluated by the Board of Directors within the first term, as current experienced Board members may not need a full three years in the President-Elect position. J. Powlesland seconded. Further discussion included the implications of changing the term length in how it relates to the three-year terms and the Bylaws.

The meeting was suspended for a lunch break from 1300 to 1413.

The motion posed by J. Tyebkhan before the break was restated.

Upon motion duly made, it was

Voted: To approve the term of the President-Elect for the initial phase of three years, followed by a President term of the three years, with adjustment of the timing as appropriate within the initial transition phase of three years. (7 ayes and 1 nay)

Finance Committee

J. Hofherr presented the FY 2024 Proposed Budget with up-to-date revenue and expenses. She noted that the net margin ratio improved significantly from last year and listed opportunities and challenges for FY 2025. She predicted that there would be \$70,000 for program expenses after accounting for all overhead expenses. The Finance Committee invites the Committee Chairs to increase their active involvement in the budgeting process by requesting funds for specific projects. J. Hofherr had circulated a form for that purpose earlier. She asked for requests to be submitted, by the Committee Chairs, before December 1st, so that these items could be incorporated into the proposed budget that will be presented at the December Board of Director meeting.

J. Hofherr shared a financial presentation and spreadsheet. A discussion ensued on how best to have the Committee Chairs request funds for specific items. J. Hofherr stated that the proposed 2025 budget will be presented to the Board of Directors in December and asked that all requests for funding by Committees be submitted by December 1st.

NIDCAP Trainers Meeting

F. Clemente presented an overview of the plans for the upcoming NIDCAP Trainers Meeting that began the following day, as well as developing plans for the 2025 meeting.

Discussion: The NIDCAP Trainers Meeting budgets its expenses and revenue separately to determine registration fees. However, accommodation had to be made in the NFI budget to be able to make a deposit to hold the reservation for a venue for the 2025 meeting. So, the NFI budget will include general revenue and expense totals from the meeting and detailed meeting budget line items. Determining registration fees was discussed. The challenge of frequent requests for discounted fees for individuals from lower income countries (and general applications for hardship) that are not accounted for in the budget was reviewed. F. Clemente described program challenges, such as presenting meaningful content for those who are new to NIDCAP as well as those who are very experienced. She suggested that extra time might be added onto the meeting that is geared specifically for NIDCAP Trainers, perhaps the afternoon before the meeting starts.

Mid-Year Meeting

Possible dates in April for the Mid-Year meeting were discussed. The meeting was adjourned at 1711.

Submitted by Secretary,

