

**General Assembly Meeting**  
**15<sup>th</sup> Congress of the International Federation of Health Records Organization**  
Held on Sunday, May 27, 2007  
At the COEX Convention Center, Seoul, Korea

**Call to Order:** 9:07 AM by Jean Clark

**Approval of the Agenda:** With minor additions, agenda was approved.

**Introductions:** Executive Committee, Directors, , Alternate Directors, and Observers

Jean Clark, President, IFHRO  
Josephine Raw, Australia  
Lili Levesque, Canada  
Liu Aimin, China  
Darley Petersen, Denmark  
Angelika Haendel, Germany  
Gemala Hatta, Indonesia  
Avni Pnini, Israel  
Sara Marchisio, Italy  
Janice Bryan, Jamaica  
Yukiko Yokobori, Japan  
Robert Wamalwa, Kenya  
Nam Kim, Korea  
Lourdes Palapal, The Philippines  
Lorraine Nicholson, UK, President-Elect  
Margaret Skurka, USA  
Bryon Pickard, USA, alternate  
Keneti Vaigafa, Western Pacific Islands

Observers in attendance: Approximately 28

A review of all documents distributed via email and in person was held.

**Minutes of the meeting of the IFHRO General Assembly held on 9 October 2004,  
Washington, DC, USA**

The minutes of the last meeting of the General Assembly (GA) were previously distributed. Motion to approve minutes. Minutes approved.

## **President's Report**

Jean Clark reported that the Italian Medical Record Association (AIDOS-IMERA) and the Medical Record Association of Kenya joined IFHRO as national members in 2007. DL/HK has replaced the previous Danish association. New Zealand and France have renewed their membership, and an association has been established in the Western Pacific Islands.

## **The Five Key Initiatives of IFHRO were presented:**

### **Education**

The HIM Education Modules were revised and published on the IFHRO web site.

### **Clinical Data Management**

Margaret Skurka, representing IFHRO, served as co-chair of the WHO Family of International Classifications (WHO-FIC) IFHRO Joint Collaboration for international training and certification of coders. As a result of the Joint Collaboration's work to date, 12 mortality coders will be awarded certificates during the 15<sup>th</sup> Congress.

The feasibility of establishing a special interest group for coders within IFHRO will be explored.

### **Privacy**

A Resolution will be presented to the GA.

### **Electronic Health Record**

An EHR status survey will be conducted at the GA and will be published on the Web site.

### **Needs of Developing Countries**

The training modules published on the Web site will be useful for the needs of the developing countries.

## **Accomplishments**

Alliances – Alliances were developed or strengthened with WHO, WHO-FIC/IFHRO, HL7, International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA), and HIMSS.

Web site redesign – The IFHRO web site, [www.ifhro.org](http://www.ifhro.org), was redesigned. Next steps include establishment of a student/education page, providing online member application and payment, and establishing a members-only section. The new Web site was made possible by contributions from ChartOne and Siemens Corporation.

Education modules – Six modules were revised and placed on the IFHRO web site. A module on the electronic health record is in preparation.

Mortality coding certification – The first 12 coders will receive certificates at the 15<sup>th</sup> Congress

Promoting IFHRO – Members of the IFHRO Executive Committee have promoted IFHRO at national and international meetings, for example, the Asian-Pacific Medical Record Congress held in Beijing, China, the World Health Assembly, the EURO regional committee meeting, the WHO-FIC meeting in Tunis, Tunisia, and meetings in Japan, Italy, and Canada.

### **Financial Report**—presented by Jean Clark.

The financial situation Jean Clark presented the financial report as well as a three-year projection of income and expenses that the Executive Committee requested AHIMA to prepare. This information was distributed to all directors.

The reports show that IFHRO has been operating at a deficit and that the reserves will be depleted if the current budget situation continues. Travel has been a major expense item during the period. Member dues are the only source of income and the amount is quite modest. Efforts to obtain contributions from vendors and other parties have been handicapped by the fact that the contributions are not tax-deductible. IFHRO would have to be incorporated as a non-profit organization and this is not considered possible since IFHRO has no permanent address. Both Jean Clark and Margaret Skurka stressed the seriousness of the present financial situation. Revenues are decreasing and expenses have risen.

Suggestions about possible sources of funding were invited. Sue Walker, an observer from Australia, mentioned that now that the Global Polio Eradication Initiative is achieving its objective, Rotary International, one of the Initiative's major financial supporters might have funds available to support other worthy projects. She volunteered to explore this further with Rotary International.

A suggestion was made re: importance of credentialing or certification to the membership for recognition in their countries. Issue was raised re: possibility of incorporation.

## **Report from the Task Groups & Teams**

### **Membership:**

Darley Petersen presented a comprehensive slide report of work for the past three years for the International Membership Team as well as future actions for 2007-10. The group reported success in adding new countries to the roster, and limited success in securing new individual members.

### **Newsletter:**

The newsletter going forward will have a quarterly update from the President and there will be a Global News section on the web site. It is important for the Directors to submit information, news, links to other sites, etc. Margaret Skurka requested the Directors to commit themselves to the concept. The Newsletter will be tried in this new concept for one year, and then re-evaluated. The previous concept of a paper newsletter will not be used for the coming year.

Regions will partner together and Directors will sign up for a quarter per year. A sign up sheet will be started at this meeting.

Global vendors might want to advertise in the global news and on the web site.

Formal reports were not made for the Vendor group, the Web site group or the funding group as Jean Clark had covered these areas in her President's report.

### **Report from the WHO-FIC IFHRO JC:**

Marjorie Greenberg, Margaret Skurka, Joon Hong, Kathy Giannangelo, and Sue Walker presented slides depicting the process of the Joint Collaboration. The speakers presented an overview of the project and accomplishments to date, discussed the pilot process, the contract between National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) and AHIMA, the future, next steps and the challenges.

The help of IFHRO members was requested for outreach for the program going forward.

International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF)—Is there a role for IFHRO in the future of ICF? The view was expressed that IFHRO should promote ICF training programs. Darley Petersen suggested that a first step would be to identify in each country the individuals who are responsible for education within the Association and within the Ministry of Health. Interest was expressed from other countries at the table. Questions were posed and comments received.

Jean Clark presented an award to Marjorie Greenberg and Sue Walker as a thank you for their work with IFHRO on the Joint Collaboration project.

### **History of IFHRO**

Phyllis Watson distributed to all directors in attendance copies of her book – “The Story of IFHRO,” an historical overview, 1949-2004.

### **The IFHRO European Regional Team (ERT)—a report by Lorraine Nicholson**

Lorraine Nicholson presented a review of the establishment of the ERT, the membership, managing the work of the ERT, the objectives, and how national associations can contribute. The strategic objectives going forward were also reviewed, as were the priorities going forward for the next three years. Successes of the team were reviewed.

### **Pacific Island Countries**

Keneti Vaigafa gave a report on the Pacific Island countries. There was a need in the Western Pacific to formulate a group. They have organized and look to IFHRO for direction/guidance.

### **Proposed Amendment to the Constitution**

The following proposed amendment to the IFHRO constitution, which had been previously distributed, was presented to the General Assembly:

“Composition. The Executive Committee shall be the governing body of the Federation. It shall consist of eight (8) members who are the officers of the Federation.

The Officers shall consist of a President, a President-Elect, and six (6) regional Directors; one each from the six (6) regions: Europe, Americas, Africa, Eastern Mediterranean, South East Asia and the Western Pacific.”

This proposal was to separate the African and Eastern Mediterranean regions that currently were combined under one director, thereby increasing the total regions to 6, to more closely align with the WHO regions. Following some discussion about the regional concept, a majority passed the Bylaw change. The change will take place at the close of the 15<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Amendment Approved

### **Ballot**

The ballot for the Executive Committee was distributed and the President appointed Sandra Fuller and Kathy Giannangelo as scrutineers. Voting was undertaken and the ballot slips scrutinized. The following persons were elected:

President Elect:	Margaret Skurka, USA
Director, Americas	Marci MacDonald, Canada
Director, Europe	Angelika Haendel, Germany
Director, Africa/Eastern Mediterranean	Robert Wamalwa, Kenya
Director, South East Asia	none available
Director, Western Pacific	Keneti Vaigafa, Samoa

### **Bid for the 2010 Congress**

A bid was received from Italy to host the 2010 Congress in Milan. A video was presented.

The bid to hold the 16<sup>th</sup> International Health Records Congress in Milan, Italy in 2010 was unanimously accepted.

### **Resolution regarding Confidentiality, Security, and Personal Health Information**

The Privacy and Security of Personal Health Information initiative developed the Resolution that was distributed to the voting members. A suggestion was made to add the word “privacy” in addition to confidentiality, security, and PHI and to correct the date to the 27<sup>th</sup> of May 2007. The Resolution was approved as amended as listed below:

“Whereas, the principles of confidentiality, privacy, security and personal health information are global issues,  
Be it resolved that:

The 15<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the International Federation of Health Records Organization (IFHRO) is committed to the confidentiality, privacy and security of personal health information (PHI)

And

Encourages all countries to promulgate policies that support this resolution.

Sworn below, this 27<sup>th</sup> day of May 2007, in Seoul, Korea.

#### Resolution Passed.

The Resolution will be posted to the web site of IFHRO.

### **Recognition Plaques**

Recognition Plaques were presented by Jean Clark to Lorraine Nicholson, Angelika Haendel, Lourdes Palapal, and Margaret Skurka of the Executive Committee, with thank you’s for the past years of work. A plaque was also presented to Darley Petersen for her membership work.

Awards also presented to Sandy Fuller, representing AHIMA and to Kathy Giannangelo, thanking them for the support received from AHIMA for IFHRO work.

### **Survey on Progress on Electronic Health Record**

Angelika Haendel presented the Survey on Progress on the Electronic Health Record. The summary of the results will be posted on the IFHRO web site.

Discussion Issue: How are we, IFHRO, globally going to influence the adoption of the Electronic Health Record, not in the future, but immediately? We must be at the table to influence the policy, and be involved in the standards setting. Specifically, someone from the IFHRO table should be formally invited to the ISO table. The focus is to think globally, and act locally. There could be a need for different alliances going forward and some suggestions were offered about groups that it might be useful to contact. A discussion followed regarding the electronic health record systems in use, and the stages of development in the various countries represented by the Directors. The US is looking at the legal health record and this could be shared with other countries.

### **Confidentiality and Security**

The Resolution will be posted to the web site of IFHRO

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### **Education**

On 26 May 2007 a half –day session specifically devoted to HIM education was held at the COEX Convention center. All IFHRO directors had been invited to attend.

### **Data Quality**

The WHO-IC-IFHRO JC will continue its work for the next three years.

### **Needs of Developing Countries**

Lourdes Palapal reported on the needs of developing countries:

There is the need to provide training tools through the work of the Education Initiative and also to monitor the Health Information-net list serve for its relevance to the HIM needs in developing countries.

Examples include: HIM education and best practice examples, formal technical education and training to facilitate hands-on training; exploring the establishment of special interest groups within IFHRO.

Individuals need education programs and distance learning in the developing countries. IFHRO could possibly provide much help.

## **IFHRO: THE FUTURE**

Lorraine Nicholson reported on the results of the survey distributed earlier in the day.

### **What three things should IFHRO be doing?**

- Improved communication needed to the National Directors
- The President should provide periodic reports, after the Executive Committee meets.
- Support and develop materials for developing countries.
- Develop products w/ an international focus.
- Credentialing.
- Updates from countries around the world.
- Seeking vendor sponsorship.
- Updating of the modules.
- Progress report to WHO.
- Forging alliances.
- Regional concept---Utilize someone in the regions to do promoting and networking
- Utilize members and other individuals as a resource.
- Do letters w/ Exec. signatures to Alliances—to exert more influence.

### **What should IFHRO's role be going forward?**

- Influencing the global role going forward
- Promoting our profession
- ICD-11
- Education
- Standards, policies
- HIM voice around the world
- Technical advice provided
- Strategies for improving recognition
- Provide the means to promote exchange of ideas, networking.

### **What should IFHRO look like by 2010?**

- World leader in moving from medical records to HIM
- Helping those in the developing world to move from old to new technology

- Recruit more young members.
- Certificates for members to show their membership.
- IFHRO education programs
- Improve IFHRO's profile at the international level
- All members have responsibility.
- Become a stronger organization

Some concern expressed about our future and our future role in the changing world.

Lorraine will summarize and place the summary of this survey on the web site.

Presentation made by Jean to the Korean Medical Record Association in appreciation for a job well done with hosting the Congress.

Adjourned: By Jean Clark at 4:10 PM

Rapporteur  
Margaret A. Skurka,  
Representative from the Americas