Minutes of the General Assembly of the Diabetes and Nutrition Study Group of the EASD - 28th International Symposium on Diabetes and Nutrition, Oslo, Norway, 3 July 2010, 17.00 – 18.00

The general assembly convened in Holmenkollen, Oslo, Norway, at the end of the 28th DNSG meeting. The meeting was attended by over 110 participants. Many important topics were discussed during the 10 sessions held from July 1-3, 2010. A particular focus was on the discussion of the dietary recommendations which were last published in 2004 by Jim Mann and co-authors.

The previous evidence-based recommendations were based on the SIGN procedure (Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network). Many of these recommendations are in agreement with other guidelines and are supported by most members of the DNSG and felt to be valid according to present knowledge. Issues raised during the discussion concerned questions from patients regarding the importance of low carbohydrate diets. Moreover, the role of fibre in the treatment of type 2 diabetes mellitus or its prevention has been studied in many trials over the last years. The members felt that there are an increasing number of studies being published including a large number of meta-analyses of widely differing quality and with very different inclusion and exclusion criteria.

The members felt that it was important to take the following steps:

1. An agreement on the most important questions to be addressed.
2. A detailed discussion on the use of the GRADE criteria, in particular the details for study selection, classification and possible upgrading in their weight.

Rune Blomhoff and Christian Berne presented the current status and their experience with the GRADE system, used for the Northern Countries Nutritional Reviews. They emphasised the fact that the GRADE system allows the use of information from observational studies in contrast to the Cochrane procedure which is restricted to randomized controlled trials.

Nutritional effects on health clearly differ from those of drug/pharmaceutical trials as exposure occurs over extended periods of life and over different ages. Nutritional studies and randomized controlled trials can only be performed during short periods and are more difficult to control than pharmaceutical interventions. Therefore the inclusion of observational studies is meaningful and helpful to represent the current state of knowledge. The weight of studies can be up or down-graded in the GRADE procedure. Advantages of the GRADE system are therefore:
Diabetes and Nutrition Study Group of the EASD (DNSG)

- The classification of studies is more transparent
- It allows studies to be weighted according to their relevance for the target population.

The extensive discussions made clear that there are many points which need to be resolved by the nutritional experts from the DNSG. However, it was felt important that the DNSG positions itself with expert recommendations and should thus start a review process and identify important topics to be assessed.

The general assembly had the honour to appoint two new honorary members:

Antti Aro
Bengt Vessby

Both have contributed to the DNSG from its very beginnings and contributed to its scientific and social success in an outstanding manner which the DNSG wishes to recognize by these honorary memberships.

**New Members**

The following new members were elected:
Elisabet Rytter
Hana Kahleova
Jaana Lindström
Lene S. Mortensen

The following committee members completed their 3 years’ term:

Vladimir Vuksan
Gunhild Heitkamp
Claus Thomsen
Ulf Riserus
Ursula Schwab
Andreas Pfeiffer

The general assembly prolonged the terms of Andreas Pfeiffer, Ursula Schwab and Ulf Riserus. The following new members were elected:

Cyril Kendall
Per Bendix Jeppesen
Salwa Rizkalla
The terms of the members of the scientific committee currently follow almost identical 3-year terms so that every three years a major group is exchanged. In order to facilitate the work of the committee, it was proposed to shift the terms of the chairman and the vice-chairman in order to improve the continuity of the group. The vice-chairman does not, however, automatically become the chairman. The committee is elected by the general assembly and the chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and treasurer are chosen within the committee and the names submitted to the general assembly for approval. The following officers were appointed:

Chairman:  Andreas F.H. Pfeiffer, Germany  
Vice-Chairman:  Ulf Riserus, Sweden  
Secretary:  Anastasia Thanopoulou, Greece  
Treasurer:  Ursula Schwab, Finland

**Himsworth Medal**

The general assembly discussed whether a new medal might be created to recognize the achievements of outstanding members who greatly contributed to the success of the DNSG. Harold Percival Himsworth was born in 1905 in Great Britain and died in 1993. He was famous for his medical research into diabetes mellitus, and in 1935 he already studied the etiological role of nutrition in diabetes. There was general agreement that such a medal would be desirable. The details regarding the financial and artistic aspects were discussed and it was suggested that the medal should not include a prize sum but should cover the travel expenses of the person awarded with the medal.

**Location of DNSG in 2013**

Vladimir Vuksan proposed that the meeting in 2013 might be held in Dubrovnik in Serbia and offered to chair and organize the meeting, provided that the local requirements can be met.

**Young Investigator Award**

The Young Investigator Award for excellent work and presentation is supported by Novo Nordisk.

The recipients were:

Hanne Løvdal Gulseth, Norway  
Markos Giannaris, Greece  
Truus van Woudenberg, Netherlands
Travel Grant

The Travel Grants are sponsored by Nutricia Danone and are also awarded for excellent presentations. The recipients were:

Lene Mortensen, Denmark
Ingiborg Gunnarsdottir, Iceland.

The general assembly concluded at 18.00

Andreas F. H. Pfeiffer
Chairman DNSG