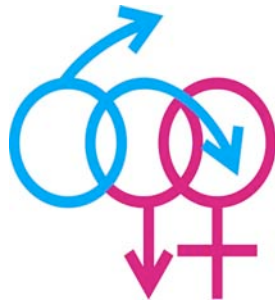


Update



WPATH WORLD PROFESSIONAL
ASSOCIATION for
TRANSGENDER HEALTH

(Formerly Known as the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, Inc.)

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The Update is the official internal membership publication of the World Professional Association for Transgender Health. Items submitted for publication will be edited for clarity, readability, syntax, duplication, grammar, and spelling as well as gender-biased language. Materials should be formatted as a Word attachment and sent to the email address above.

Editors:

Lin Fraser, EdD

Jamison Green, MFA

Bean Robinson, PhD



Update



Greetings to the Membership

Welcome to this issue of the Association *Update*. Through this regular *Update*, we hope to keep you informed of Board and Association activities and to introduce ideas for discussion and dialogue.

Two years ago, the Board of Directors conducted strategic planning for the association and developed an expanded mission statement and vision. This new vision and mission included:

- to become a truly global association
- to focus on Transgender health in the broadest sense
- to better recognize the wide-ranging discipline and therapeutic skills of our members

In keeping with this mission and vision, your elected Board of Directors is determined to increase communication between ourselves and the membership.

Our hope is that with more interaction and information, we can better carry out our mission and purpose to serve transgender people around the world. As your elected board, we are here to serve the membership. This Board is committed to an open process and to the creation of a more active and interactive Association on behalf of the Membership. We hope you will find this engagement beneficial, and we look forward to hearing from you with ideas and concerns that will help us all improve in our ability to serve our transgender and transsexual clients, patients, and colleagues.

Please respond to us, either privately or publicly, via the communication channels available on the Association web site. We are listening.

Missing Board Member

The office has not been able to locate Board member Dr. Cristina Merrigiola of Italy. If anyone knows of her whereabouts, please inform the Association office (wpath@wpath.org) how we might reach her, or ask her to contact us and let us know that you have done so. We sincerely hope she is well and that her lack of contact is not due to unfortunate circumstances.



Board of Directors: Front Row: Bean Robinson, Randi Ettner, Lin Fraser, Jamison Green, Stephen Whittle. Back Row: Walter Bockting, Kit Rachlin, Griet De Cuypere, Stan Monstrey, Missing: George Brown, Michael Brownstein, Cristina Merrigiola

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Board Business Meeting June 13-14, 2008 in New York City, NY

The WPATH Board of Directors met at the Baruch College Library in Manhattan for two full days of discussion concerning Association-related issues. The Board meeting was held at minimal expense to the Membership. Individual board members paid for their own transportation and lodging, and the use of the meeting site was free.

Attending were President, Stephen Whittle; Past President, Stan Monstrey; President-Elect Walter Bockting; Executive Director, Bean Robinson; and Board Members Griet DeCuypere, Randi Ettner, Lin Fraser, Jamison Green, and Katherine Rachlin.

We missed George Brown and Michael Brownstein who had other commitments. We were not been able to locate Cristina Meriggiola to inform her of the meeting.

We want to thank Board Member



Katherine Rachlin and Librarian Michael Waldman, who made the arrangements for us to use this lovely space. Michael hosts the monthly research

group *Trans NYC*. Thanks also go to John Capozuca and Christine Wheeler for a memorable Friday evening get together at Christine's beautiful Sutton Place home, hosted by John.

Introducing Jeff Whitman, Our New Executive Administrator

Jeff is completing his Bachelors of Science at the University of Minnesota. He has a background in emergency care, medical management with a major insurance company and working for a small mental health practice. He also has experience in human resources at a major law firm.

While in college he supported himself with a small online business whose main demographic was the GLBT community.

Jeff lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota with his partner, Zach, and his 3 cats and dog. His hobbies include, watching Drum & Bugle Corps, photography, camping and traveling.

We feel very fortunate to have found Jeff. He's been doing a great job!



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Board Business Meeting Highlights

Communication

Communication within the Association was discussed at some length as we problem-solved issues around implementing an election regarding the name and Bylaws of the Association. Strategies for increasing Board communication with the entire membership were developed. Name change and bylaws ballots should be sent to the membership very soon. This vote will be conducted by mail using an independent organization, *Electoral Reform Services* of London, UK. If the Bylaws changes are approved, future elections will take place electronically through our website

Topics of future issues of the *Update* were set and will include: Transgender Eurostudy, WPATH 2009 Symposium in Oslo, and transgender children. If you have a topic you would like to see addressed in the *Update*, please let us know.

2009 Symposium- June 17-20, 2009, Oslo, Norway

Planning is proceeding. Members should have already received the 1st Call for Papers, which gives all professionals a chance to prepare abstract explaining their relevant work for presentation at our Biennial Symposium. All abstracts will be peer-reviewed by the *Scientific Committee* after the abstract submission deadline of October 31, 2008.

Registration for the symposium has begun and can be done online at <http://www.wpathoslo2009.com>. We encourage all members and professionals in our field to begin planning now to attend, learn, and share the latest research in our field. We plan to invite discussion on DSM controversies and to hold a special forum on legal issues. A *Standard of Care Revision Committee* will be formed at this symposium and this venue will provide an opportunity to engage with members of that group.

Executive Director's Report

Bean Robinson gave an extensive report about Association business including budget and income statements, membership, and website statistics. In response to member requests, we have developed an expanded *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)* section on the webpage to make website navigation easier. The office is seeking feedback on sections of the website that are unclear or confusing.

Membership Development & Outreach

The Board reaffirmed that: 1) our Association is the only international and interdisciplinary organization in the world focused on the Transgender specialty and 2) we provide the most widely known standards for treatment. We discussed several strategies to meet our need to reach more practitioners worldwide and encourage them to join us, including asking the membership to invite their colleagues to join us. We agreed that we need more fundraising capability and outreach and we committed to explore more opportunities to improve our prospects. We plan to develop our web access and explore more web outreach.



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Board Business Meeting Highlights (continued)

Committees

The Board reviewed committee reports as well as the mission of each of the current standing committees. We recognized the need for timely public position statements has increased. Thus the *Advocacy & Liaison Committee*, chaired by Jamison Green, was renamed the *Public Policy, Advocacy, & Liaison Committee*, to reflect that new emphasis. In his first act as Chair of the newly renamed committee, Jamison requested that a process be developed to allow the Association to issue timely policy statements. The new process agreed upon was that all such policy positions must be submitted to this Committee followed by Board discussion and review. Finally, a new committee chaired by Katherine Rachlin was established to oversee the creation of internal operational policies and procedures for the Association.

Medical Necessity

The board agreed to release a statement of *Clarification on Medical Necessity of Treatment, Sex Reassignment, and Insurance Coverage in the U.S.A.*, which was recently posted on our website. The statement was proposed by board member Jamison Green as a response to the difficulty transsexual people face with respect to access to both basic medical care and insurance reimbursement for necessary treatments. The process of developing the statement was a collaborative one, with many board members making suggestions and debating various points---the *Medical Necessity* letter took over 6 months of communication to reach consensus. Jamison wants to recognize the significant collaborative assistance he received from student member André Wilson, one of the transgender community's foremost experts on the inner workings of insurance companies, and a very successful campaigner in negotiations to win insurance coverage, along with Jamison himself. This document has received a very strong, positive response from the wider transgender community, and from allies who are engaged in both health care access work and insurance reform. As Jamison explained, "This document will be used best in collaboration with other resources, such as the recent AMA resolution on transgender health and insurance coverage (June 17, 2008), and in coalitions with other groups to leverage change, not to force it. Taking a document like this to a provider and demanding treatment won't work; but I believe using it to support a reasoned request to the proper negotiating bodies ultimately will succeed."

2011 Symposium in Atlanta, Georgia, USA

After reviewing a detailed proposal from Vin Tangpricha, the Board selected Atlanta as the site of the 2011 Symposium with Vin Tangpricha as *Local Organizing Committee Chair*. Vin successfully chaired the Association's first foray into a pre-conference at the 2007 Symposium. Reasons for selecting Atlanta included excitement about exploring this rapidly growing southern city with a large middle class African American population, its historic significance as the birthplace and final resting place of Martin Luther King, as well as the possibility of coordination with the Southern Comfort Conference.

International Journal of Transgenderism

Editor Walter Bockting reported that plans are in process for a special issue on Legal matters for transgender and transsexual people, as well as a special issue on the next revision of the *Standards of Care* (see next article). We discussed the controversy brewing in the transgender community regarding the American Psychiatric Association's update of their bible, the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* (DSM). It was agreed that our association should attempt to give input into the DSM process.

Update



Toward Version 7 of the Standards of Care

Eli Coleman, Ph.D.

Chair, *Standards of Care Revision Committee*

The current version of the *Standards of Care* (2001, Version 6) continues to be a useful resource for promoting and insuring high quality health care for transgender persons around the world. The *Standards* are used by clinicians and laypeople to understand minimal guidelines for the administration of hormones and the provision of surgical care. They detail other guidelines for mental health and medical care. The *Standards* are also used as a reference to explain the nature of gender identity disorders and how they can be treated. In addition, the *Standards* have been used over and over again to fight legal battles to insure transgender rights for equality, access to care, and to recognize a person's gender status as a legitimate indicator of an individual's sexual identity.

While the *Standards* have been helpful in many ways, they have been surrounded by controversy. Criticisms have fostered healthy debate and have influenced revisions of the *Standards* over time. We are currently in the process of revising the *Standards* once again. In order to accomplish this, I have formed a "work group" of individuals to examine various sections of the *Standards* and review the literature pertaining to those sections. I have commissioned review papers to 1) review the evidence and provide references; 2) point out where research is lacking and needed and 3) and make possible recommendations, significant and cosmetic, to the *Standards* based upon new research. The following individuals were invited and submitted papers: Walter Bockting, PhD, LP, George Brown, MD (USA), (USA), Michael Brownstein, MD, FACS (USA), Peggy Cohen-Kettenis, PhD (Netherlands), Griet DeCuypere, MD (Belgium), Petra DeSutter, MD, PhD (Belgium), Aaron Devor, PhD (Canada), Jamie Feldman, MD, PhD (USA), Lin Fraser, EdD, MFT (USA), Arlene Lev, LCSW (USA), Stephen Levine, MD MPH, (USA), Walter Meyer, MD (USA), Heino Meyer-Bahlburg, Dr rer.nat. (USA), Stan Monstrey, MD (Belgium), Loren Schechter, MD (USA), Mick von Trotsenburg, MD (Netherlands), Sam Winter, BSc, PGCE, MEd, PhD (Hong Kong), Ken Zucker, PhD (Canada)

These individuals have written scholarly articles, still undergoing review and revision, which will be published in a forthcoming *Special Issue* of the *International Journal of Transgenderism*. Once these papers are completed, we will use them as the scientific basis of the revision of the *Standards*. Recruiting members for this *Standards of Care Revision Committee* will be considered at the next Board meeting of WPATH at the 2009 Symposium in Oslo, Norway. This Committee will consider the route and pathway towards a revision of the *Standards* and publication of Version 7.

I welcome members to submit comments, opinions, references to me or any other member of the workgroup over the coming months. We held a plenary session at the 2007 Symposium in Chicago and solicited input on the revision at that time. We received valuable feedback from the members in that forum. We continue to look forward to hearing from you.