HPH GENERAL ASSEMBLY APPROVES THE NEW INTERNATIONAL HPH SECRETARIAT

By a decision of WHO, Collaborating Centres will no longer have designated secretariat roles for external organisations (such as the International HPH Network) in their Terms of Reference. This means that there are no longer agreements in place for our two WHO CCs (in Copenhagen and Vienna) to provide services to us. Therefore we, as the International HPH Network, need to develop formal agreements to ensure our two secretariat functions continue.

This is the first time ever that we will, independently, prepare formal agreements with organisations that host our secretariat functions – in the past, agreements have been between WHO Regional Office for Europe and the WHO CCs.

After discussions in the GB, contracting an organisation to host the HPH Secretariat was prioritised, and the Congress Secretariat will be considered later. We used a process of open tendering whereby appropriate organizations with experience and understanding of HPH (e.g. by working in countries/regions with national/regional networks) were invited to apply to operate the HPH Secretariat.

Following this open tender process the General Assembly, at its meeting in Warsaw on 29 May 2019, decided that the new HPH Secretariat will be hosted by OptiMedis AG based in Hamburg, Germany, under the direction of Oliver Groene. Oliver Groene will be known to many as the main author of the first WHO HPH Standards and was previously Manager of the Quality of Health Systems Programme at the WHO Regional Office for Europe.

Staff members from OptiMedis contributing to the International HPH Network: Oliver Groene (Vice Chairman of the Board), Carla Weber (Coordinator of the German HPH Network), Helmut Hildebrandt (Chairman of the Board), Anneka Tiede (Accounting), Indra Rojahn (Communications).

We warmly welcome OptiMedis AG in taking over this important work for us. OptiMedis is a management organisation setting up regional integrated care networks in which public health, health promotion and disease prevention strategies are put into practice.
OptiMedis is also coordinating the German Network of Health Promoting Hospitals. Among the board members of OptiMedis are social impact investors as well as highly respected academics and health promotion ‘thought leaders’ such as Professor Ilona Kickbusch. Based on the experience of OptiMedis and the plans they proposed in their application for developing the International HPH Network, the GB has high expectations for the coming period in the history of the Network.

OptiMedis AG shall start running the secretariat September 1 2019. We have been happy to see that a constructive discussion between the Clinical Health Promotion Centre (the WHO CC in Copenhagen) and OptiMedis AG has already started which promises a smooth and efficient transfer of HPH assets and duties to the new HPH Secretariat. Networks, individual members and affiliated organisations, taskforces and working groups can expect to receive more communication about this change shortly.

Please note that for this transfer, the Governance Board may need to ask you all for your explicit approval to transfer your organisational/network member data to the new secretariat. This will ensure we are operating strictly in line with the EU GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation).

Importantly, HPH networks and members can be assured that this change in the host of the HPH Secretariat will continue to enhance the International HPH Network and its value to members, stakeholders and the populations they serve.

At this stage, we wish to sincerely thank the Clinical Health Promotion Centre staff in Copenhagen, under the direction of Professor Hanne Tønnesen, for their ambitious work and devotion to the International HPH Network over so many years.

Margareta Kristenson  
Chair, Governance Board, International HPH Network

If you have any questions or comments on this matter please make direct contact!  
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