



Minutes NFOG Board meeting

Time: Friday (09:00-17:00) - Saturday (until 11:30) 15th-16th, February, 2019.

Place: Reykjavik, Hotel Centrum

Participants:

- **From the Board:** Karen Reinhold Wøjdemann (President), Espen Berner (Treasurer), Maija Jakobsson (Secretary General), Niels Uldbjerg (Guideline Committee), Hulda Hjartardóttir (Scientific Committee), Mervi Väisänen-Tommiska (Educational Committee Chair), Hanna Lilja Oddgeirsdóttir (NFYOG), Ragnheiður L. Bjarnadóttir (President NFOG 2021), Hanne Brix Westergaard (DSOG), Hannu Martikainen (SGY), Alexander Smáráson (FÍFK), Eva Uustal (SFOG), Nils-Halvdan Morken (NGF), Lars Ladfors (Webmaster), Ganesh Acharya (Chief Editor AOGS)

Excuses: Antti Perheentupa (Scientific committee), Elisabeth Frederika Rosen (NFYOG chair), Bjarne Rønne Kristensen (President NFOG 2018)

1. **Opening** The President Karen Reinhold Wøjdemann (KRW) opened the meeting.
2. **Agenda Approval** The agenda was approved with small adjustments.
3. **Minutes Approval from the previous Board meeting** Minutes were approved with small adjustments.
4. **NFOG 2018** Bjarne Rønne Kristensen was not attending the meeting. EB told that congress has resulted in surplus.
5. **NFOG 2021** Ragnheiður I. Bjarnadóttir (RB) presented plans for the next congress. The Board discussed whether congress dinner (15.06.2021) could be held in congress center Harpa. It would then be more informal than usual, because there is no room for dinner tables. Themes and ideas were discussed: AOGS-celebrating 100 years, medical training in obstetrics and gynecology, violence against women, ethics, controversies, NFOG collaboration with NVOG,

RCOG, subspecialty symposia. (If more time is needed, subspecialties or other groups can reserve time for adjacent meetings the day before the meeting like Nordic conference on endometriosis did in Odense). The value of Nordic medical registries could be highlighted. Some political issues can be highlighted. Nordic subspecialty collaboration such as NUGA could be highlighted. Patient perspective should be taken into account. President session could be on Nordic registries. Comments on the program will be asked also from the National Societies. Sustainable medicine could be one topic. RB showed the meeting rooms that have been reserved. Posters area cannot be near the exhibition area. **It is very important that national societies should not have their national Board meetings during the congress.**

6. **Educational Committee (EC)** Mervi Väisänen-Tommiska presented the program for the Educational Course in Stockholm (April 2019) The Board will get a link where to register for the course. They are expecting 100 participants. EC are planning to participate actively to the NFOG congress program. They are planning to recreate training system that is based on competence based learning. The next Educational Course will be in 2022.
7. **Scientific Committee (SC)** Hulda Hjartardóttir presented a SC meeting on 7-8, March, 2017 with an interesting program in Stockholm. The theme is Nordic-Dutch register meeting. Each country will have two representatives. This meeting is a very important working meeting and the Board discussed if there could be even more representatives, but accepted that SC find few participants important for the process. The Board suggested that the next president should be also invited. The Board was very interested in feedback from the meeting.
8. **Guidelines Committee (GC)** Niels Ulbjerg (NU) presented the GC committee. The NFOG guidelines include 47 guidelines in obstetrics and 13 in gynecology all available on the NFOG website. NU suggest that all national guidelines have an English recommendation and link to the original page for the full-text in the national languages. The Board encourages the National Societies to link all their guidelines to the NFOG webpage. The guidelines are graded according to either Oxford or GRADE and other types of recommendations. There were 1907 visits on guideline website last year. The NFOG-guideline work has been very expensive, but with interesting results – discussion about how to continue Nordic guideline work must proceed. Guideline on progesterone in the prevention of the preterm birth is nearly finished for publication. Guidelines can be published in the AOGS if they are regarded as systematic

reviews. Guidelines must be updated regularly. Topic selection is essential. Relevant topics could be suggested from the national societies. Vaginal cerclage has been suggested as the next topic.

9. **NFOG website** Lars Ladfors told that he tries to update all the changes without delay. A lot of refreshment work has been done, which has improved the website substantially.
10. **NFYOG** Hanna Lilja Oddgeirsdottir told that this committee has very many new members. The president is also stepping down. EC and NFYOG are planning a common meeting during the Stockholm meeting
11. **FIGO** KRW has sent our concern about an eventual coming FIGO-congress in Dubai. The Board discussed how to influence FIGO about this decision. Kristina Gemzell Danielsson has been nominated to the Committee for Human Rights, Refugees and Violence Against Women in FIGO. There has been a request for publication of FIGO cancer classification on the NFOG website, but the National Societies could not agree on this.
12. **Report from AOGS (Acta Obstetricia et Gynecologica Scandinavia)** Ganesh Acharya presented the Editorial Board. There are two new Swedish editors and a new Danish Editor. John Thompson, a very skilled pediatric and perinatal epidemiologist working in Auckland New Zealand, has been appointed as the Statistical Advisor and member of the International Editorial Board (IEB). Prof Jim Thornton from Nottingham, UK has agreed to be included in AOGS IEB as a Public Relations and Communications Advisor. He will contribute towards educating the Editors in the AOGS Editorial meetings and help in reviewing the manuscripts. AOGS had adopted a new standardized format and layout for publishing accepted articles as suggested by Wiley to try to reduce production time. The number of submissions is quite stable, and it was 1034 in 2018. The rejection rate is increasing, currently around 81 %. At present the average time taken from submission to first decision is 17.8 days and from submission to final decision 25.7 days. International Board Performance is evaluated regularly. The performance of associate editors is evaluated every 6 months. Of the accepted articles, nearly 50% come from the Nordic countries. Impact Factor was 2.649 for 2017. Next AOGS board meeting will be held in Copenhagen on 21-22 March 2019.

Future of Publishing and how it will affect us was discussed in the board after presentations by Ganesh Acharya and Nils Halvdan Morken.

The AOGS is currently funded mainly by the subscriptions. This comes partly as the annual fee from the members of NFOG and mainly from institutional subscriptions that are handled by our publisher Wiley. Many funding organizations demand that articles should be published open access (OA). Currently, the cost for OnlineOpen in AOGS is US\$2,500 for NFOG members and US\$4,000 for non-members, which can be paid by the author, the author's funding agency, or the author's institution.

This fee (US\$4,000) is substantially higher compared with some other OA journals with similar impact factor. This article publishing charge (APC) will need to be reduced if we change to OA publishing. Our publisher, Wiley, is quite reluctant to change OA publishing model for our journal. Wiley has been also reluctant to make articles that are more than 12 months freely accessible even though it has done so for some other journals, such as Ultrasound Obstet Gynecol. There are arguments for and against OA publishing. However, it seems to be the future, and funders including those in Nordic countries are increasingly demanding it. Going OA might increase visibility and impact of the journal. However, most of the journals with high IF, such as The Lancet, BMJ, JAMA, NEJM have not gone OA yet. Until now, they have operated as hybrid journals but have also created parallel OA journals with their brand names. Going OA may be perceived by some as a compromise in quality, and it may lead to reduction in the number of submitted manuscripts as cost of OA might be an issue, especially for articles based on non-funded research. Options are no change (i.e. remain a hybrid journal), go OA now, start a parallel OA journal, delay decision by 1-2 years, in the meanwhile, make articles older than 12 months OA. See below regarding further plan.

Plan S, which is a radical OA plan which aims that after 1st January, 2020 publications funded by national or public grants must be fully OA (green and hybrid models are not acceptable according to their mandate). European commission has not signed up, but supports this. Most important funding organizations in the Nordic countries and the UK have signed up. Criticism voiced towards the plan S is: too short timeframe, lack of good OA journals, controversy about the cost of OA publishing/price cap as well as who will pay the bill and how it is going to be paid. Would the journals and publishers change their business model? Quick enough? A financial agreement called German Deal has been negotiated by Wiley recently, which means that all German articles will be published as OA without any article

publishing charge (APC). This may result in reductions of income from these articles to AOGS. Sweden has a similar deal with Springer Nature.

Consequence analysis by the Wiley shows that shifting to OA leads to reduction of income in the first few (3-4) years. Thereafter the income will increase and stabilize. NFOG had had very good income from AOGS in the previous 6 years but the situation is likely to change if we switch to OA publishing. However, to make AOGS sustainable in future we need to react to changes. One option could be to offer NFOG members OA publishing free or at reduced rate. Another possibility is to increase the membership/subscription fee. **In the future NFOG fund might also be used to support OA publishing charges for NFOG members.**

The contract with Wiley will stop at the end of next year and a new contract needs negotiating.

The Board decided that articles older than 12 months should be made freely available to read and download and Wiley was informed of this decision. The Chief Editor should start to negotiate with Wiley about transition to make articles freely available before the end of 2019.

GA agreed on participating in national meetings if needed for clarification of the OA discussion. Presentation from the meeting would be available for the board.

13. **Economy, budget, and accounts** Espen Berner presented key figures on accounting The total income was 1 298 950 DKK. The total cost was 3 233 350 DKK. Some of the surplus is referred to the Fund. Board reserve is 903 147 DKK that has not been used. In total equity and liabilities is 14 348 950 DKK. Income fee is higher than earlier 1 350 816,00 DKK. Board cost is 367 245,61 DKK, which is more than budgeted. From AOGS income was higher than expected. We will probably end into positive result. **When treasurer sends the final accounts, President, Secretary general and Chairs of the national societies must return this document electronically signed.** It has to be ready 1st April, 2019.

Budget for 2020 and 2021. Editorial expences are 240 000 DKK. The Board discussed salaries for AOGS. The Chief Editor salary was suggested to remain the same in 2020 and increase by

5.5 % in 2021 and **this was approved by the board for the budget proposal**. The Chief Editor was not present when the Board discussed about his salary. The editorial expenses will increase by 3.8% in total in two years. The cost of editorial meetings will increase, if the meetings will be held abroad to educate the Editors. A new Textbook committee was suggested in the Budget with 100 000 DKK annual costs as other committees in NFOG. For the EBCOG and FIGO meetings 100 000 DKK are reserved. AOGS transition fund for OA publishing was added to the Budget.

Hanne Brix Westergaard asked for a proper bill from the accountant on the money from the societies to NFOG. The now send bills are from 2015 and with handwritten corrections of dates etc. This is not acceptable, and was also commented on last year. Unfortunately, it has not been amended.

14. **Textbook** Niels Uldbjerg (NU). On a previous meeting the NFOG board asked for reliable variables on which they would evaluate the use of the NFOG electronic textbook suggestions. NU answered the demanded questions. Number of page views at each chapter, unique page views, average time on page, country on page view. Questionnaire of medical students of selected medical schools. There are approximately 4500 medical students in the medical schools and if one-third or half of them will use it, it can be considered to be successful. It is essential to advertise this book and even put this in the curriculum for the medical schools. The Swedish Board has still some concerns about this project. They are afraid, that textbook will not be used. They believe that there will be no interest in the developing world. In Norway they are happy that several electronic platforms are studied, and the financial issues are considered. They can support this project for five years period and then a proper evaluation of the project. This project cannot be financed by the national societies. Denmark will support this project, they also support Sundhed.dk as the platform. Icelandic board has discussed also this project and support it. NFOG wish for the future to get some material also for the trainees. In Finland a new Finnish textbook has been published. Finland will, however, support this project. **The Board decided to suggest to GA to support the Textbook project.**

Textbook Budget. Board reserve has not been used for several years, therefore 1milj DKK can be used for the project the total costs will be 1.4 milj DKK. For the textbook committee there is reserved 100 000 DKK annually.

15. **Preparing for the General Assembly** KRW. The candidate for the next President is Oskari Heikinheimo (Finland), for the General Secretary Espen Berner (Norway), treasurer Kristina Renault (Denmark).

The number of voting members should not go equal (which results into a lot). Sweden address that they have many paying members, but the number of votes is still five. They pay a large membership fee, but their activity attending NFOG activities, or applying NFOG fund could be better. It was pointed out that NFOG consist of five equal members, namely the national societies. The Board find that that a strategy meeting for the future will be an important task for the coming board.

Amendments do the statues regarding Privacy Policy should be added to the Statues, but can wait for later revision. The Norwegian society proposes that The NFOG Congress President 2023 would be Pepe Salvesen from Trondheim. The NFOG board supports that. Two different dates for NFOG-congress (June or late August) s will be suggested and decided upon the next meeting . The preliminary Agenda was presented to the Board.

16. **News from the National societies**

Hannu Martikainen (SGY) told that major problem in Finland was that number of births is declining, last year it was 47-000 deliveries last year.

Eva Uustal (SFOG) told that abortion issues discussion has still been active In Sweden.

Midwives association used to part of the nurses association, but now they are making their own association. Training program for ST doctors. Recertification process has been discussed. They are planning continuous medical education (CME) curriculum. Currently SFOG takes care of the all the trainees education and in the future they will also arrange recertification courses for specialist. The has been discussion about centralisation of the rare operations.

Nils-Halvdan Morken (NGF) told that in Norway education is regulated by the health authorities. In Norway conservative party has had major impact on legislation. Changes in the abortion law, however, were minimal. Fetal reduction can be done beyond week 12. Egg donation is not allowed now in Norway. The nuchal translucency ultrasound and NIPT will stop

in two years if this conservative party proceeds with their aims. Decreasing number of deliveries is a problem also in Norway. The number of births was 58-000 in 2018, fertility rate was 1.61. The norwegian society will try to get more sponsors for their national meetings, since financial situation is poor.

Hanne Brix Westergaard (DSOG) told that the number of deliveries is increasing. It is now 65 000 annually, fertility rate was 1.7 in 2018. Therefore, recruiting midwives and doctors has been challenging. IVF were previously allowed for one child, now for two children. There is therefore an interest from investment companies outside DK to facilitate more IVF services. Fertility clinics, private sector and private hospitals attract doctors which contributes lack of doctors in the public hospitals. A new approach for subspecialisation for young ob-gyn's has been agreed upon, it has to be financed by the departments. A fertility and health counselling program for 23 year old women will be implemented if the new national plan for pregnancy and delivery program is accepted. Centralization of hospitals is also discussed in Denmark. There is was a law proposal against reconstruction of hymen.

Alexander Smáráson (FÍFK) told that problems in a small country are different with short distances between people where for instance FÍFK was consulted early by the ministry of Health in the preparation of the new proposals for changing the abortion laws. At the Medical week in January FÍFK organized sessions on violence against women and fertility awareness. There is need to education women early about the effect of lifestyle and age on fertility. Fertility rate has never been lower and is now 1.7 in Iceland. There are plans to offer NIPT to all pregnant women or at least to the risk groups. Electronic Maternity record system is under reconstruction.

17. **EBGOC.** The president will write a letter to EBCOG, asking if the rumors regarding a plan for a EBCOG congress every year is true. The Board discussed about topics for the Nordic session on EBGOC congress 2020 in Bergen, suggestions: how to prevent prolapses after delivery, vaginal integrity. We suggest an obstetric and one gynecological session like the FIGO session in RIO. Similar topics was suggested. Screening in the Nordic countries, Swedish quality registers were suggested. Randomised trials about partograms. Suggestions should be send to KRW within the next week.

18. Upcoming Board meetings – Earlier decided on: The educational course Stockholm 25-26, April, 2019. Board meeting will be on Thursday morning on 25th at 09:00. This means that some board members have to arrive already on Wednesday evening. The new Board has to meet immediately after the GA (13.30-15:30) on Friday 26th, April, 2019. Meeting will end latest at 18:00. The next meeting will be in November, 04.11.2019 (-05.11.2019, meeting starts on Monday 9:00 and stops 15:00 Tuesday) in Norway. Sunday evening dinner will be provided for the Board.

19. **Other business** no other issues.

20. **Closing** KRW closed the meeting.

Reykjavik, 16th February, 2019

Karen Reinhold Wøjdemann

President

Maija Jakobsson

Secretary General