

**WORLD FEDERATION OF NEUROLOGY  
RESEARCH GROUP ON APHASIA & COGNITIVE DISORDERS  
(WFN RG ACD)**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2012**

**RG ACD Objectives**

- 1) Providing a forum for debates and exchange of ideas through the biennial meetings.
- 2) Raising the profile of aphasiology and cognitive/behavioural neurology world-wide.
- 3) Promoting young talent in the field through the Forum of Young Researchers (FYRE).
- 4) Providing expert guidance to clinicians through teaching courses and publications.

**Educational Activities 2012**

Thanks to the WFN grant “**Cognitive Clinics Worldwide**”, we were able to organize three **teaching courses**, in collaboration with the WFN RG on Motor Neuron Disease: in January 2012 in Kolkata/India and June 2012 in Beijing/China and Ulan Bator/Mongolia. The courses were highly successful, attended by over 100 participants coming from all over their respective countries. The feedback was very positive, with most participants wishing to attend further events of this type in future. The courses generated wide interest in their respective countries and were reported in the press as well as on national TV news. Reports from the courses can be found on the WFN RG ACD website:

<http://www.wfneurology.org/wfn-applied-research-groups>

In India, the formation of the WFN RG ACD-affiliated Local Network of Expertise (LNE) was followed by the creation of a dedicate **information website**:

<http://www.wfn teachcogn.in/>

This website will contain information about future teaching courses as well as a directory of cognitive tests translated and adapted for Indian languages and cultures. In future, we intend to establish similar webpages for other countries and languages.

**Biennial Meeting, Hyderabad, December 2012**

The Biennial Meeting of WFN RG ACD took place 9-12 December in Hyderabad/India. The local organisation was taken care of by Dr. Suvarna Alladi. The meeting was attended by 89 delegates from 14 countries and 5 continents. According with our tradition, most attendees were active participants, with over 40 scientists speaking in the symposia and a dozen more presenting posters. The meeting started with a lively discussion about recent diagnostic criteria in cognitive neurology. The following three days of symposia covered a **wide range of topics and methodologies**, including single case and large group clinical studies, neuroimaging, genetics, TMS, neuropsychiatry, bilingualism and cognition, cross-linguistic and cross-cultural studies and many more. During the dinner we commemorated one of our most prominent members, Luigi Vignolo, who passed away the previous year.

Apart from the high scientific level and the versatility of the programme, the feedback from the participants emphasised the efficiency and **enormous hospitality** of our Indian hosts. The general meeting of the Group decided the venues for the next two biennial meetings: 2014 in Hong Kong and 2016 in Varenna (please see the end of this report for details).

**Forum of Young Researchers (FYRE)**

A particularly important part of the meeting was the promotion of young researchers, organised in the Forum of Young Researchers (FYRE). The participation of FYRE members was supported by a special programme offering **free accommodation** with Indian families. As last time in Istanbul we had a FYRE **poster session and competition**.

Ten young scientists participated in the FYRE poster competition. It was won by Jwala Narayanan from Bangalore, India, with the poster “Verbal fluency in Indian context: language and cultural influences”. As the award, the winner will have free registration for our next biennial meeting. For the first time we had also a separate **FYRE symposium** organised entirely by FYRE members, in which 4 participants presented their work.

At the general meeting of FYRE, its funding president (from 2008), Marco Cavallo from Italy has stepped down. We would like to thank him for his enthusiasm and hard work. In acknowledgement of his contribution he has been invited to become a full member of the WFN RG ACD. The general meeting of FYRE has elected Zhenzhen Zeng from Chengdu (China) as the new president and Anna Jones from Edinburgh (UK) as the secretary.

Following the inspiration of Audrey Holland, the RG ACD general meeting has decided to establish a **mentorship programme** for FYRE members. Senior members of the group will be invited to put forward their names, so that FYRE members can “adopt” a mentor from a place different from their own, who can advise them in their careers and professional development. The idea received full support of FYRE members.

### **Collaboration with the WFN RG on Motor Neuron Disease**

We have continued our close collaboration with the WFN RG MND. We conducted jointly teaching courses in Kolkata and Beijing, are organising a course in Colombia and plan to put a joint bid for a further WFN grant, which would allow us to continue our activities.

In recognition of the growing awareness of the overlap between MND and FTD the official journal of the WFN RG MND, “Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis”, has changed its name from January 2013 to “**Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis and Frontotemporal Dementia**”. Our general meeting welcomed this decision and decided that our group is happy to support and endorse the new journal. Several of our members became co-editors of the journal.

### **Membership**

We have accepted 16 new applications for membership from 10 different countries, bringing the number of our members to over 200. The requirements for membership remain the same: proposal by two members of the WFN RG ACD and a CV documenting expertise in and commitment to aphasiology and/or cognitive and behavioural neurology.

### **Activities planned for 2013**

The third Indian teaching course in cognitive neurology is due to take place in Bangalore (with satellite courses in Mysore and Manipal) in April 2013, followed by a symposium in Colombia in summer. We will be represented at the World Congress of Neurology (Vienna, September 2013) through a symposium on “Brain and Behaviour” and teaching courses.

### **Next Biennial Meetings 2014 and 2016**

Our next meeting, in **2014**, will take place in **Hong Kong**. Brendan Weekes has kindly agreed to be the local organiser, to be assisted by Vincent Mok. One day will be dedicated to the topic of “Bilingualism, cross-linguistic and cross-cultural studies” and one to therapy, rehabilitation and topics of clinical relevance. We will continue our special commitment to FYRE members by offering affordable accommodation at students’ residences.

**2016** will mark the **50<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of our group. To celebrate this special occasion we decided to have our meeting at the very place where the first meeting in 1966 took place: **Varenna, on the Lago di Como** in Northern Italy. Stefano Cappa from Milan has kindly agreed to take on the local organisation.