



Monthly Newsletter From the International Clearinghouse

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What's going on regarding birth defects

A **new study from NBDPN and CDC** investigates the relationship between race/ethnicity and 27 major birth defects, pooling data from 12 population-based birth defects surveillance systems in the United States that included 13.5 million live births (1 of 3 of US births) from 1999 to 2007. This large population-based study systematically examines the prevalence of a range of major birth defects across many racial/ethnic groups, including Asian and Hispanic subgroups. The relatively high prevalence of birth defects in American Indians/Alaska Natives warrants further attention.

Canfield MA, Mai CT, Wang Y, O'Halloran A, Marengo LK, Olney RS, Borger CL, Rutkowski R, Fornoff J, Irwin N, Copeland G, Flood TJ, Meyer RE, Rickard R, Alverson CJ, Sweatlock J, Kirby RS; for the National Birth Defects Prevention Network. The Association Between Race/Ethnicity and Major Birth Defects in the United States, 1999-2007. *Am J Public Health*. 2014 Jul 17:e1-e10. [Epub ahead of print]

News from the Headquarter and Executive Committee

The **41st Annual Meeting of ICBDSP** took place in Helsinki, Finland, hosted by Anukka Ritvanen and her team from the Finnish Registry at National Institute of Health and Welfare (THL). A brief report on the meeting contents and events:

- Twenty-seven ICBDSP programs were represented and a total of 70 attendees participated in the meeting.
- The **J. David Erickson Lecture** was delivered by Dr. Juan Pablo Peña-Rosas from WHO, and the **Alessandra Lisi Award Winner** was Matthew E. Oster from USA, who presented on congenital heart defects across the lifespan. The **Distinguished Service Award** was presented to Professor Paul Merlob, from Israel.
- Professor Juha Kere from Karolinska Institute and Helsinki University, and Professor Kristina Aittomäki from Helsinki University Central Hospital were the **Keynote Lecturers**.
- There were **25 oral and 14 poster presentations** on the main themes of the meeting: Surveillance and Methodological issues, Risk Factors, Congenital Heart Defects, Medication and Pregnancy, and Epidemiology of Specific Birth Defects.
- A **Workshop** on Human Genetic Epidemiology, Population Genetics and Biobanking included five presentations from Finnish experts in the field.
- A **Scientific Session on New Collaborative Project Proposals** included presentations on 1) Prenatal diagnosis of CHD –an international collaborative study using surveillance data (P.I.: Lorenzo Botto and Marian Bakker); 2) Genital defects (Mark Canfield); and 3) Survival of children born with selected birth defects (Mark Canfield).

The **Abstract booklet** of the 41st Annual Meeting is available at www.icbdsr.org. All participants in the Helsinki meeting will be invited to evaluate the meeting through a “**Survey Monkey**” form that will be disseminated soon. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey. Your feedback is important to the Annual Meeting Committee.

A brainstorming Meeting on **World Congenital Anomalies Awareness Day** was held during the Annual Meeting, with all the important organizations' delegates in attendance. At the meeting it was decided to use the name “World Congenital Anomalies Day” (However some concerns were raised a few days later, so there is an ongoing consultation about this issue). At present, the following organizations agreed to participate: CDC (Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention), ECLAMC (Estudio Colaborativo Latino Americano de Malformaciones Congénitas), EUROCAT (European Congenital Anomalies Surveillance), ICBDSP (International Clearinghouse for Birth Defects Surveillance and Research), IFSBH (International Federation of Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus), MoD (March of Dimes), NBDPN (National Birth Defects Prevention Network, USA), and PAHO (Pan-American Health Organization). A couple of possible promoting partners have been contacted for the first year event.

March 3 was the agreed date, and application for endorsement by WHO and recognition by United Nations should be prepared in the near future.

The Clearinghouse welcomes the **new member program “Birth Defects Prevention and Surveillance Program- DPSP, Nuevo León, Mexico**. Its application was approved at the 2014 Annual Business Meeting. The Program Director is Dr. Jesús Zacarías Villarreal Pérez. Three delegates attended the Annual Meeting in Helsinki: Dr. Laura Martínez, Dr Patricia Arredondo, and Dr Rafael Hernandez.

ICBDSP Annual Meeting 2015: It will be hosted by the ICBDSP Centre Staff and will take place in Spoleto, Italy, on September 10-13, 2015. Take note in your agenda! More information will be distributed and uploaded to the website.

Upcoming deadlines

- **November 20**, : data for the 4th Quarter 2013
- **December 31**: last call for payment of 2014 annual dues from missing programs, in order to maintain the voting right