



The International
Marcé Society
for Perinatal Mental Health

International Marcé Society “Away Day” Meeting Minutes
January 21, 2021 7:00 pm GMT

Present

Louise Howard	President, Meeting Chair
Carolina Borja	Representative, Colombian Regional Group
Elena Crespo	Representative, Spanish Regional Group
Malin Eberhard-Gran	Representative, Nordic Regional Group
Bárbara Figueiredo	Representative (Portugal), Portuguese Regional Group
Jane Fisher	Past President, Honorary Board Member
Nine Glangeaud	Past President, Honorary Board Member
Vivette Glover	Treasurer
Jane Hanley	Past President, Honorary Board Member
Sarah Kittel-Schneider	Board Member
Lavinia Lumu	Board Member
Jeannette Milgrom	Past President, Honorary Board Member
Catherine Monk	Board Member
Ibone Olza	Board Member
Lauren Osborne	Board Member
Jennifer Payne	President-elect
Nicole Reilly	Board Member
Sarah Sananes	Representative, Francophone Regional Group
Lisa Segre	Immediate Past President
Susanne Simen	Representative, German Regional Group
Deborah Sims	Secretary and Representative, Australasian Regional Group
Alina Uribe	Representative, Colombian Emerging Regional Group
Melita Walker	Representative, UKIMS Regional Group
Kathie Wisner	Past President, Honorary Board Member
Laura Miller	Executive Office

Welcome and Introductions

- President and Meeting Chair Louise Howard provided an overview of the purpose of a longer strategic “Away Day” meeting to discuss and brainstorm around key challenges and opportunities for the International Marcé Society, many of which were raised by Marcé members through the Virtual Biennial General Assembly associated with the 2020 Virtual Conference.
- There is a need for the Society to be a valued resource and ongoing relationship between conference years.
- A key initiative to provide this connection is through webinars hosted by the Society and featuring members of the current and former Executive committees. This would be a pilot

program with webinars offered free to members as an incentive to continue or to join the Society.

- Brainstorming around new initiatives should be focused on income generation rather than programs that call upon constrained funds.
- As a governance update, the Society will now maintain a Conflict of Interest register for the Trustees, and publish the Executive meeting minutes on the International website.
- A new initiative has been created to support the Society's social media communication. Junior members of the Society were recruited to form a Communications Committee. Teams within the group will manage different social media channels. President-elect Jennifer Payne will hold a preliminary meeting to give instructions and expectations, and then follow up in a month to check in on the new program. A diverse group of countries is represented on the committee. This is an opportunity for younger members of the Society to work closely with the leadership team.
- Immediate Past President Lisa Segre will carry forward a portfolio of two key initiatives developed during her presidential term. The IMMP, International Marcé Mentorship Program, has matched over 40 pairs of mentors and mentees over the past two years, and provided an outstanding opportunity for members to build international relationships. To ensure that the program is sustainable and visible going forward, the President-elect of the Society will have Mentorship committee participation as part of the position's portfolio.
- **ACTION:** New mentors are needed for the next round of matches; if any from the leadership team are interested, please advise.
- **ACTION:** Create a page on the International Marcé website to feature the IMMP as a benefit of membership.
- Special Interest Groups, including the Concealed Pregnancy, Perinatal Loss, and Fathers SIGs, have been developed. A key factor and goal of the groups was the offer of a guaranteed symposium at the 2020 Biennial Conference. This arrangement can be incorporated in the 2022 conference to source content and provide an organizing principle to the SIGs. Workshops which focused on topics supported by the SIGs provide wider visibility and can generate revenue for the biennial conference.

Creating networks and content through webinars/workshops

- Partnering with other groups for joint webinars can increase the reach of our message and build connections with affiliated organizations.
- Partnering with Regional Groups can drive membership within the featured groups.
- Workshops can be free for Marcé members and carry a nominal charge for non-members.
- The registration process should be streamlined to facilitate participation.
- The membership can be queried for suggestions of workshop topics.

Improving and leading on diversity and inclusion/Expanding membership for World Bank Low and Middle income countries

- The term LAMI (Low and Middle Income countries) is used because the World Bank has established a quantitative standard for categorization. World Bank categorization is widely used for establishing policies.
- Since hospitals are the only care facility available in many locations, the Society should consider an organizational membership rate that would allow multiple staff members to benefit from membership without incurring individual cost.
- Efforts to expand diversity should also include a gender balance within the Society.
- An exchange program from colleagues from LAMI countries to visit and work with colleagues from high income countries could be sponsored by the Society. This program could be developed as an extension of the existing Mentorship Program.
- Scholarships for conference registration for LAMI colleagues should be a component of all biennial conferences.
- In many locations, traditional healers or community health workers are the only conduit for perinatal mental health care. The Society should consider how to best engage and work with these caregivers. UNICEF's Caring for the Caregiver training module could act as a template.
- There is broad support for an African perinatal mental health virtual conference sponsored or co-sponsored by the International Marcé.
- **ACTION:** Louise Howard and Lavinia Lumu will lead this effort.
- International Marcé members should be encouraged to donate funds that will support membership fees and conference registrations.
- The Society should also continue to advocate for equitable access to existing health care services, which is a known shortfall across countries of all economic categories.
- Videos of the Marcé leadership discussing the importance of diversity and inclusion, as well as the Society's strategies to improve, could be featured on the International website.

Producing and sponsoring position papers and letters of support

- There is currently no policy specifying which topics would be appropriate for a position paper or letter of support. However, any communication undertaken must align with the mission of the Society and only address issues that fall within the Society's expertise.
- Many of the topics requested or suggested for official response by the Society have the potential to be polarizing.
- Therefore, any statement produced must rely on facts and scientific evidence.
- If there is consensus within the Executive that a topic is appropriate for a position paper, it is recommended that the Board appoint a committee to gather facts and then write the paper in a two step process.
- Papers must address a broader situation and not be tied to an individual case.
- The paper must acknowledge that the stated view represents the Society but does not encompass the entire Society. There must be acknowledgment that there may be differences of opinion within the membership.

- The paper or letter must address that the situation is urgent and therefore the Society has an obligation to speak out.
- **ACTION:** Board members and officers should consult other organizations they affiliate with for existing statements that can be used for reference.
- Letters of support may be more appropriate from individual members (can be coordinated by the Board to have multiple colleagues sign) rather than from the organization.

Building connections between Regional Groups and the International

- Currently there are no start-up funds available from the International to support new Regional Groups. The organizing committees must bear the financial responsibility of incorporation tasks such as creating a constitution, holding an election, and establishing a bank account.
- There should be a greater understanding about the amount of time needed to establish an official Regional Group. The process realistically takes between two to four years.
- Like the International Society, the Regional Groups are challenged to maintain membership between conferences. There is a need for greater communication and tangible benefits to ongoing membership. The Groups would like to collaborate on best practices to retain members.
- Regional Groups based on geography, which include different languages within the same group (such as the Nordic) face additional challenges with communication.
- Targeted opportunities for growth in membership are Africa, Russia, and China.
- The Regional Group summaries shared with the leadership team were helpful to generate new ideas and recognize similar challenges. Adding contact information for Regional Groups can increase communication.
- **ACTION:** Executive Office to continue to update and distribute Regional Group reports.
- The groups requested a follow up meeting in a few months to focus specifically on Regional Group issues.

Integrating lived experience and cross-disciplinary connections with arts and humanities

- To enrich the conversation about perinatal mental health, the Society could feature links to portrayal of perinatal mental health in the arts (films, podcasts etc.)
- Colleagues with connections to art therapy can inform the membership of their use and efficacy.
- In support of diversity and inclusivity initiatives, Society communication and branding should address a variety of backgrounds (not strictly scientific).