

Minutes from the NorPEN Executive Committee Meeting

January 15, 2023, 10.00-11.30 CET, on Teams

Present: Lotte Rasmussen (chair of the meeting), Carolyn Cesta (note taker), Maurizio Sessa, Jacqueline Cohen, Heidi Taipale, Chaitra Srinivas, Heini Kari, Bjorn Pasternak, Saad Hanif Abbasi, Mika Gissler, Maarit Leinonen

1) Welcome to old and new faces of the EC

Brief introduction from each participant and welcome to new committee member Saad (student representative)

2) Approval of minutes from last meeting (see attachment)

Approved

3) Election of chair and co-chair

Lotte and Carolyn were elected as chair and co-chair, beginning in January 2023, under the old bylaws which have no specified term length. In the new bylaws, the chair positions are for 2 years. Lotte and Carolyn propose to continue for a second year until the end of December 2024. In November 2024, all positions in the EC will be up for nomination.

- All in attendance were in support of Lotte and Carolyn continuing for a 2nd year in the chair and co-chair positions, respectively.

4) Orientation from chair and co-chair

a. Overview of our members

Lotte now has received more complete information about the NorPEN member groups and will update the website accordingly.

Bjorn Wettermark's group in Uppsala was recently established, however Bjorn has been a member of NorPEN almost since it's beginning. So while he has submitted a completed membership application, we decided it was not necessary to have it evaluated and voted on in the EC.

b. Folder with previous funding applications

Lotte will share a folder which contains the BCPT funding applications from previous NorPEN meeting organizers.

c. Bylaws and signatures

The new bylaws that were approved at the last meeting are being circulated for signatures from the main representatives on the EC. Hopefully this will be completed soon and will then be posted on the website.

d. Nordic common data model

Background: At the previous meeting, we discussed establishing a subcommittee to investigate which common data models are being used in the Nordic countries. One NorPEN research group has been active with

developing a common data model and propose to take the lead on implementing and test a Nordic CDM via NorPEN.

Discussion: Many EC members support the initial idea of establishing a subcommittee within the EC (including both EC and non-EC members) to collect information about the *many parallel* CDM initiatives in the Nordic countries (e.g., NorPreSS, COHERENCE). It is believed that this information is of interest to the NorPEN community and researchers would like to know further details of each of the CDMs before choosing. NorPEN should prioritize harmonizing CDM efforts and not necessarily support just one. Further, there is interest in knowing who has adopted the OMOP CDM, which has developed/matured over the years (e.g., a research group in Norway has done some work mapping the medical birth register to the OMOP CDM, in Finland secondary care data has been mapped to OMOP, and are planning to extend to primary care data).

- At the next meeting we will aim to identify EC member who are interested in leading this CDM subcommittee initiative.

e. Society representative

Miia Artama is the substitute societies representatives on the EC, and the main representative position is still open. Mette Bliddal from Danish Pharmacoepidemiology Society has proposed a potential candidate; however she has an affiliation within the industry. Previously, an EC member has had conditions from her work institution which prevented her from being a member of a committee where other members had connections to the industry. While this may not be the case with the current EC members, should we maintain that EC members cannot have an industry affiliation? Discussion summary: Since we restrict the activities of individuals within the industry in other scenarios within NorPEN (e.g., member groups, abstract submission, etc) then we should keep this common line across all activities, including the EC.

- Lotte will ask Mette Bliddal if there is someone else from the Danish Pharmacoepidemiology Society who would be interested, and if not, then we can reach out to Angela Luppattelli from the Norwegian Pharmacoepidemiology Society for candidates.

f. Annual newsletter

Lotte has started to draft the 1st annual NorPEN newsletter and shared the outline, welcoming input. Suggestions were:

- Create an updated logo for NorPEN? Lotte will ask a student in her group with logo creating experience to draft something up.
- Add table of contents at start so readers know what to expect
- While we want to keep the newsletter short, it should still contain some interesting content for the readers. We can aiming for 1-2 longer feature

items, with this year's focusing on the results from the Edu Student Survey.

- Lotte and Carolyn will finalize the first draft and send to the EC for input.

5) Update on NorPEN meeting 2024

Maurizio and his NorPEN 2024 organizing team have been working hard to set the program and made the logistical plans. The University of Copenhagen has a venue with capacity of 150-200 people, with capacity for posters, which will/has been booked.

Maurizio shared the draft program, in brief:

- Nov 18 – afternoon preconference workshop, proposed topic: AI for individualized treatment effects (Anders Hviid). It will include both theory and practical sections, with shared code and demonstration
- Nov 19 – a second 2-hour pre-conference workshop with senior data scientist from Novo Nordisk. Official conference start of 11.30. Key note speaker is Mihaela van der Schaar from Cambridge Centre for AI in Medicine.
- Nov 20 – includes sessions on educational activities in AI pharmacoepi (perhaps based on a survey to be sent by Morton Andersson) and a session on Bias and Fairness in AI (speaker to be determined)
- There are 2 sessions dedicated to oral presentations selected from the submitted abstracts, a Pharmacoepi RapidFire presentation session, and option for posters
- Workshops will be recorded and material shared

Question for EC:

- Volunteers for session moderators – Bjorn Pasternak has volunteered. Can ask us again later in the planning
- Has anyone applied to both the larger and smaller BCPT grants? (No- only the smaller grant).
- Volunteers or suggestions for panellists for the 'round table' on the program (Nordic Pharmacoepi studies and AI: opportunities and challenges) – would prefer to have representatives from each country. EC members will think of suggestions.
- Volunteers for abstract review – will ask later in the planning

EC meeting during NorPEN 2024

- Currently planned in parallel to the 2nd preconference workshop, however many may want to attend – could another time be found?
- Perhaps a meeting in combination with dinner for the EC after the welcome reception?
- Preferable not to have it at the end of the conference since many have to leave to catch trains/planes, plus it would be good to be able to announce the new norpen EC committee during the meeting.

Other suggestions

- Bias and fairness in AI session – Maarit suggests potential speakers from the ISPE 2023 session on a similar topic

6) Update from Edugroup

At our meeting last week, we discussed inviting new members to the EduGroup, specifically, student representatives and a researcher from Finland to balance out the country representation. Chaitra and Saad have agreed to join, as well as Heidi. The next meeting will be in March.

Brief summary of the results from the student survey to assess the pharmacoepidemiology education needs of students in the Nordic countries:

- There were only 24 respondents, despite circulating it widely and extending the deadline -> the EduGroup will discuss how to better reach students
- 1/3 of the respondents answered that their needs in advanced pharmacoepidemiology methods were not being met -> the EduGroup will continue to promote that course organizers make their courses as open to as many as possible.
- Survey respondents suggested links to education materials and resources (e.g., recommended papers, reading lists, etc) on the Education section of the NorPEN website. -> the EduGroup will be going to compile a list of resources and key papers to post on the website and invite the NorPEN community to make suggestions.

7) Discussion of incoming applications

none

8) Update from members of EC

Bjorn will contact Anders Hviid in Denmark to see if he would like to have his group become a member of NorPEN.

9) AOB

NorPEN webpage responsibility: Morten Olsen at SDU is our webpage master, but we would like someone to be responsible for ensuring the content is up-to-date and to communicate edits/updates with Morten.

- Jackie volunteered (thank you!)

10) Next meeting

To be held in mid-late February.

Chair: Larus

Note taker: Lotte

Rotation of the Chairmanship: DK, NO, IS, SE, FI, societies, register holders.