**YOUNG WFNR SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP ANNUAL REPORT 2021**

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| Name of Special Interest Group | Young World Federation for Neurorehabilitation |
| Chair  Email | Elia Fischer, MD  [elialuca.fischer@insel.ch](mailto:elialuca.fischer@insel.ch) |
| Co-Chair(s) where applicable | - |
| Number of Members | 1 |
| Key objectives and action plan | The primary aim of the young WFNR is to spark interest in the field of neurorehabilitation among young professionals from various backgrounds (physicians, therapists, researchers). By building a global community of young fellows, the SIG offers a unique opportunity for networking and establishing long-lasting and fruitful collaborations. Furthermore, creating a group of young professionals will promote the exchange between generations, ultimately leading to mutual benefits for both the junior and more senior members of the WFNR.  Within the SIG itself, the core aims will be to promote both education and clinical research in the field of neurorehabilitation. To this end, the young WFNR seeks to collaborate with existing programs within the WFNR and to establish new initiatives to foster education and stimulate research activity in young fellows. |
| Activities during previous 12 months | In March 2021, Elia Fischer, a 29-year old resident of Neurology at the University Hospital in Berne, Switzerland, has been elected chair of the young WFNR SIG. In the months following the election, the new chair and the WFNR Presidium met several times to discuss the primary aims, tasks and responsibilities of the SIG (see above).  One of the first actions of the restructured SIG was a contribution to the 25th anniversary newsletter of the WFNR published in fall 2021, describing the reorganization and the key objectives of the SIG and calling for young readers to join the young WFNR.  Advertising a career in the field of Neurorehabilitation was also the main goal of a Round Table organized by the young WFNR at the virtual implication of the European Congress of NeuroRehabilitation (ECNR) 2021. Six speakers with extensive clinical and research experience in the field of neurorehabilitation were invited to talk about the ‘Chances for young neurologists in neurorehabilitation’. The discussion primarily covered the speakers’ own clinical and research experience, benefits and pitfalls of a career in neurorehabilitation, as well as a critical description of the current career pathway to becoming an expert in this field.  In December 2021, the young WFNR chair drafted a letter to the other SIG chairs to have them suggest potential junior members to join the young WFNR. The letter was revised and approved by the WFNR presidium and is projected to be distributed in January 2022. |
| Proposed activities | The priority of the SIG in early 2022 is to recruit committed members to develop, promote and implement projects to reach the key objectives of the young WFNR. Of note, despite the name of the SIG, the eligibility for membership is not restricted to biological age, but will be available to all physicians, therapists and researches with up to 10 years of professional experience.  Once the vacant positions in the executive committee are filled, the young WFNR will develop a framework in close collaboration with the WFNR Presidium. The framework will ultimately be discussed during the WFNR general assembly at the World Congress for Neurorehabiliation (WCNR) 2022 in Vienna.  Besides presenting the framework, the young WFNR will actively participate at the WCNR 2022. First, a ‘Career Symposium’ similar to the ECNR Round Table will be held to provide insight into a clinical and research career in neurorehabilitation. Second, the ‘young WFNR Symposium’ will focus on the advances in technologically driven neurorehabilitation, including non-invasive brain stimulation, robotics, virtual reality and augmented reality. Importantly, the invited speakers themselves are at a relatively early stage in their career, which will further motivate people in the audience to choose a similar pathway. Furthermore, an exchange between the speakers and the audience will be a unique opportunity for networking, fostering future international collaborations. |
| Publications | None |

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