

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Members of pretac⁺, association genevoise pour le dépistage tactile.

Location : Star Logistique, rue Eugene Marziano 33, 1227 Carouge

Date/Time : 30 June 2020, 17:30

1. Welcome

The meeting is introduced by (CS), who starts by thanking all private donors and the four main foundations for the donations received since April 2019, as well as the members of the pretac⁺ team for their contributions, currently focused on the training of the manual tactile examiners (MTEs).

2. Quorum

(CS) begins the meeting by noting that the quorum is reached and that the general assembly is therefore validly sitting.

3. Members

Committee members present: Chrystèle Schoenlaub (CS), Marcel Niederer (MN), Barbara de Castro Marugan (BCM); Isabel Garcia-Gill (IGG), Nathaly Moro (NM); Eugenia Carrelli (EC) by Zoom

Committee members excused: Nadia Jonsson (NJ), Salomé Sommer (SS)

Other participants: Jeanne Terracina (JT), Julia Quintanar (JQ), Luisa Muscianico (LM); Giacomo Montagna (GM) by Zoom

4. Approval of the agenda

(CS) reminds the assembly that the agenda of the meeting is the following:

1. *Approval of the agenda*
2. *Report on the activities of the Association since its creation on 12. 11.2019*
3. *Election of new members of the Committee*
4. *Setting the amount of the 2020 contributions*
5. *Varia*

The agenda is approved unanimously by the members.

5. Report on the activities of the Association since its creation on 12. 11.2019

(CS) presents the Activity Report 2018-2019, which outlines the project and explains the pretac⁺ mission, the total budget amounting to CHF 406 000.- for the training of 4 MTEs over a period of 15 months.

(CS) expresses her gratitude to the generous donors, whose donations and commitments of further donations will enable pretac⁺ to carry out its initial project of training 4 MTEs.

(CS) goes on describing the creation of pretac⁺ Geneva on Nov 12 2019, to ensure the running of the pilot project in Geneva, as requested by the main donors. (CS) clarifies that since the donations were specifically meant to enable the pilot phase of the project to be run in Geneva, the corresponding funds had to be transferred from the Zurich bank account of the Swiss umbrella Association to a new account opened by pretac⁺ at Bank Migros in Geneva.

(CS) further mentions the change of name of the Swiss umbrella Association to pretac⁺ and the appointment of Dr. Giacomo Montagna as its President at the AGO held in Berne on 23 September 2019.

(CS) continues outlining the latest developments, particularly the Letter of Intent signed on the even day (i.e. 30 June 2020) with dh International, outlining the main terms of the Pilot Phase Agreement, which is expected to be signed after the summer holiday, possibly in September 2020.

In addition, by reference to the Activity Report 2018-2019, (CS) recalls some of the most important events:

- a. The meeting held in June 2019 with Dr Lilly Gutnik, ambassador of DH Germany, to present the DH method to donors and to introduce Ebby Hailay, our first candidate for the training in Geneva.
- b. The letter of intent (LOI) signed in August 2019 with Dr Frank Hoffmann, whereby the parties committed to sign the pilot project contract for Geneva as soon as possible.
- c. The last donation received by pretac⁺ in 2020 from a generous foundation based in Geneva, which joined the list of our supporters, together with a new partner, "Swiss Risk Care", an insurance broker which kindly accepted to help us *pro bono* with insurance matters relating to the new project (contracts with trainers and MTEs, liability insurance, etc.).
- d. An office space suitable for training purposes that was identified at "*la Maison du Bonheur*", rue de Lyon, near the Cornavin train station.
- e. A meeting held with Dr Frank Hoffmann in Vienna to understand the challenges of running the project. (CS), (EC) and (MN) attended a three-day workshop to learn from previous experiences in other countries (Austria, Colombia and Mexico), exchange ideas and experiences with other teams, identify potential pitfalls and possible remedies, etc.

6. Election of new members of the Committee

The members unanimously approve the appointment of two new members of the Committee, namely Jeanne Terracina (JT) and Julia Quintanar (JQ). (JT) acts as legal adviser of the association and (JQ) as communications adviser, also in charge of fundraising and interview/training of candidates.

7. Setting of the amount of the 2020 contributions

An annual membership fee of CHF 60.- per member is unanimously approved by the members to cover the costs of the association.

8. Varia

a. Introduction of Doctor Giacomo Montagna

(GM) introduces himself, via Zoom from New York, as a Swiss MD specializing in gynecology and obstetrics (FMH), who attended medical school in Lausanne and did his medical training mainly in Basel, particularly with Professor Dr Walter Weber. He also has a background in public health. (GM) is currently based in New York, participating as research fellow in a research program at the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. He was admitted for the SSO (Society of Surgical Oncology) clinical fellowship 2020-21. He is now about to start a second year of investigation on breast cancer surgery, his main interests being the de-escalation of axillary surgery and the epidemiology of breast cancer in young women (i.e. women aged under 40).

(GM) mentions that as a breast cancer surgeon, he is particularly keen to avoid any unnecessary harm. Hence, in his research he intends to cover any strategies available that could reduce the amount of surgery required to fight against breast cancer, which is still the first cause of death of many women in many countries, despite apparently good prognoses.

(GM) describes his activity during the recent lockdown, due to the pandemic, as a difficult experience, since the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, one of the biggest centers of cancer research in the USA, had to shut down 90 per cent of its activity. Hence, many women could not carry on with their planned cancer surgeries. As a result, a vast majority of diagnoses were delayed, few mammograms were performed and tests and screenings were postponed, consequently risking the life of many patients who could be in an advanced cancer phase.

(GM) sees this situation as a new challenge that the world will have to face after the COVID-19 crisis. He expresses serious concerns about its future consequences.

(CS) invites (GM) to kindly share with the association any paper he will publish or contribute to while in New York. (GM) points out that the pandemic should not affect his plans to continue his research in New York as planned.

b. 2020-2021 Outlook

(CS) reminds the assembly that the association currently has approximately 110 members and donors between Zurich and Geneva, most of the members being based in Geneva.

(CS) intends to update the donors and supporters and will send them shortly the Activity Report 2018-2019, together with fresh news outlining the progress made lately by the association. (CS) emphasizes that the support for the project provided in 2020 by donors and new members is especially noteworthy, given the difficulties experienced since the month of March following the lockdown and the delays caused by the Covid 19 epidemic.

(CS) encourages the members of the Committee to assist her to find as soon as possible 4 visually impaired women willing to follow the DH training to qualify as

EMTS, as well as two trainers and two doctors prepared to participate in the training of the candidates, so that the pilot project can hopefully start in October 2020.

(CS) informs the assembly that she will shortly contact by email Dr Giang-Thanh Lam, a gynecologist who is a member the Swiss Society of Senology (SSS) (one of our partners), and is working at the HUG (*Unité de sénologie chirurgicale*). (CS) met Dr Giang-Thanh Lam in September 2016 at the department *Centre du Sein* at the HUG to inform-her of the proposed launching of the DH project in Geneva. As Dr Giang-Thanh Lam reacted favorably to the project at that time, (CS) intends to request a meeting with her at the HUG to present her the advancement of the project, the idea being to explore the possibility of organizing at the HUG internships (for 3 to 9 months) to the benefit of MTEs, as required for their practical training. In addition (CS) wishes to inquire with Dr Giang-Thanh Lam as to any assistance she could provide - given her professional relations with gynecologists in Geneva - to enable [pretac⁺](#) to identify physicians who may be willing to offer internships to MTEs.

(GM) replies to (CS) that he does not expect difficulties to obtain Dr Tam Lang's support, since she is a gynecologist interested and active in various aspects of the diagnosis of breast cancers. (GM) adds that, if necessary, he could request the support of Professor Walter Weber, who acts as Vice-president of the SSS.

(GM) insists that having everyone on board is of utmost importance for the feasibility of the project and to ensure its running and development in Switzerland. (GM) believes that counting with at least two doctors sharing our mission would be immensely beneficial.

(CS) adds that assuming, as anticipated, that the Pilot Phase Agreement is signed in September 2020, further contacts should be made with potential donors to raise additional funds, in particular the Lions Club and the Rotary Club and also several Communes in the Canton of Geneva. (CS) believes that the support of public institutions could help convince doctors to contribute to the project without hesitation.

(CS) mentions that we are currently working on a business model covering, particularly, the practical training that the MTEs must undertake under the supervision and responsibility of a physician. (CS) adds that a draft Cooperation Agreement has been prepared, with the assistance of (JT), to serve as a framework defining the cooperation between the physician and the MTEs during their practical training. The draft Cooperation Agreement is currently being reviewed, on a *pro bono* basis, by the Geneva law firm Lalive. It will be a useful basis in future discussions with doctors willing to contribute to the project.

(GM) intervenes and adds that it should be stressed that there is enough evidence that proves the effectiveness of this new methodology, hence the importance for doctors to discuss its benefits with their patients during consultations, with the objective to keep them informed of these innovative procedures and make them aware of other alternatives and new methodologies which, combined with other tests, could lead to earlier accurate diagnoses of breast cancers.

(GM) reiterates that a survey conducted after completion of the pilot project would be an excellent initiative, to make the project a more interesting idea from an academic point of view.

(GM) mentions that during the pilot phase, data could be collected and their integration could be defined, enabling institutions to evaluate results and analyze the findings, hence offering the opportunity to scholars to publish any interesting and innovative findings. He adds that this academic setting would be a very good argument and could indirectly add value and offer everyone involved something in return.

c. Update on MTEs and trainers

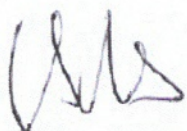
(CS) describes the job profile of the MTE candidates and explains in detail the case of Ebby Hailay, our first MTE candidate.

A discussion follows on the search for possible MTE candidates and trainers, contacts with ABA (the "*Association pour le Bien des Aveugles et malvoyants*", i.e. Association for the Well-being of the Visually Impaired), interviews, etc.

(CS) Thanked the participants to the Assembly and closed the meeting at 7pm.

Genève, le 19.08.2020

Chrystèle Schoenlaub
President



Barbara de Castro Marugan
Secrétaire

