

Special Interest Group on Measurement, Assessment, Classification

SIG-MAC of WFNR

Chair: Professor Matilde Leonardi, Italy.

SIG-MAC Background and rationale

The outcome of rehabilitation has scientific implication that, in many countries and health systems, are social and political too. The ageing of population and the burden of neurological disease are growing in Europe and worldwide, and the possibility of treatment and rehabilitation have been seriously influenced by recent available techniques and tools for rehabilitation. **Today one of the most relevant points of weakness is represented by the difficulty in measuring and classifying what is the ongoing rehabilitative process and the achieved results, together with the difficulty of having cross-country comparable data and a common language for the multidisciplinary teams working with the neurological patient.** One of the most important problems to be faced, in the public health sector, deals with the disharmony of definitions and measurements of disability. In this moment, worldwide comparable data about functioning and disability are simply not available. The primary reason for this is that data on disability are not consistently gathered because some countries define disability in terms of performance levels in employment or other social activities, while others define it exclusively in medical or rehabilitative terms. This lack of homogeneity reflects the lack of a common model of disability, which is preventing countries from taking common initiatives in clinical and rehabilitation practice, so as in the fields of disability policies, employment, health and social interventions.

SIG-MAC Purposes:

SIG-MAC scope is to implement the knowledge and the use of WHO International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health, together with assessment instruments In order to discuss all the critical points regarding the utilization and implementation of ICF, ICF-CY, ICF-based neurorehabilitation assessments and measurements tools, the WFNR SIG-MAC group has been established and it works through linking WFNR members. Members are invited to share the experiences, to collect the evidences for neurorehabilitation techniques efficacy and to discuss ideas and solutions on these themes. The ICF biopsychosocial model of functioning and disability is a necessary cultural and scientific background for WFNR and its members, given that it takes the centrality of disability in the human condition as core concept, that in ICF terms is called the “universality of disability” which is then to be defined as the interaction between a health condition and environmental factors. **SIG-MAC members will be invited from specializations that span from childhood to the whole life-span.** Once the ICF model is firming in place within the methodology of risk analysis, it will become obvious that there is another set of risk factors that should be investigated, namely those associated with decreased levels of participation. Environmental barriers are risk factors for disability, and should be investigated as such. **Outcome of rehabilitation, qualitative analysis, performance and participation evaluation will be main focus of SIG-MAC group.**

AIMS

The aims of WFNR SIG-MAC group are:

1. Encouraging awareness on burden of neurological diseases using common classification and assessment tools.
2. Sharing and comparing clinical innovations and research in the fields of disability, ageing and neurology that are becoming increasingly important, both because of the number of cases and because of the enormity and complexity of the challenges that they produces;
3. Making available up-to-date, validated scientific information to all Members, to support the establishment of the structures and centres that are ever more frequently required;

4. Creating suitable conditions such that the WFNR and Members of the Special Interest Group can rapidly become reference figures at an international level in this sector;
5. Offering a further reason for joining the WFNR and the member National Societies, for all those who are involved or interested in the process of data comparability, clinical measurement, outcome evaluation and rehabilitation of neurological patients;
6. To link WFNR work through an increase knowledge of ICF use to the UN Conventions of the Rights of People with Disability.
7. Create collaboration with other Scientific Societies and different International bodies, particularly with those involved with ICF and related tools implementation and use.

To achieve these aims the instruments could be :

1. periodic meetings within the WFNR Congress, but also at other scientific (national or international) events if appropriate;
2. a web-site dedicated to creating a continuous forum for information and exchange of ideas, a data-base and a mailing-list;
3. organization of specific scientific initiatives (events, journal and publications) both internationally and nationally, also perhaps in collaboration with other interested Scientific Societies and other international bodies (WHO, association of patients, families and NGOs).

The Special Interest Group- Measurement, Assessment, Classification has an organization based on:

1. Coordinator, referent for the SIG-MAC Management Committee and at the meantime to WFNR
2. Management Committee composed by some active members from different Countries,
3. General Board, including all members interested to collaborate and willing to devote some of their time to the necessary activities, representing all different countries and selected among the members of the WFNR.

Benefits of joining WFNR SIG-MAC group

To facilitate and strengthen multidisciplinary communication and collaboration between researchers and clinicians by: disseminating international research practices and evidence-base concerning NR and promoting interdisciplinary and cross-cultural partnerships. There are inadequate resources for treating patients with neurological disorders in most parts of the world, and highlight inequalities in access to neurological care across different populations, and in particular in those living in low-income countries and in developing regions of the world. It is indeed clear that results of high-income countries research will be of benefit for the whole international community and that worldwide commitment on solving the public health impact of brain disorders will also benefit from investments done in these countries and widespread to all the other countries.

A common language in neurorehabilitation would be useful to reduce the gap between countries and to serve patients' needs better. SIG-MAC bridges the gap between theory, research and clinical applications of ICF classification, its related instruments as well as it evaluates the links between neurorehabilitation assessments instruments and ICF domains **so as to improve global rehabilitation practices and outcomes.**

For further information please contact Dr. Matilde Leonardi: leonardi@istituto-besta.it

**Head Neurology, Public Health Disability Unit- Scientific Director Coma Research Centre;
Foundation IRCCS Neurological Institute Besta, Milan, Italy**