

Editorial

World Nutrition 2012 – a global Public Health Nutrition opportunity

Those of you reading this might be on your way to Brazil for the World Nutrition *Rio 2012* congress, or you may already be there. How lucky we are that we have this opportunity to travel and collaborate with colleagues world wide! For those of you who cannot afford the travel, the material presented at the conference will be made available online at <http://www.worldnutritionrio2012.com>, and maybe next time the congress will be held at a location closer to you. In order to meet demands for more sustainable congresses and fewer flights, the next conference should have a cyberspace location, or at least have a majority of the plenary lectures available live or taped online.

The theme of the congress is **World Nutrition: Knowledge, Policy, Action**. The congress will focus on six issues: 1. Equitable food systems with dietary diversity 2. Food and nutrition policies 3. Environment and food and nutrition security for all 4. Determinants of and threats to health 5. Successful strategies and interventions 6. Nature and strengthening of public health nutrition.

Recent research shows that stakeholders in several European countries still lack knowledge regarding the professional identity of a public health nutritionist and what this workforce can do in the community⁽¹⁾. The same research shows the importance for the future of public health nutrition of building a solid identity and a strong network to support advocacy for the main public health nutrition issues. This network now exists in the form of the World Public Health Nutrition Association (www.WPHNA.org). Linking global events such as this congress to sustained networking and local action is a key to further success.

Public health nutrition is a multi-faceted area and needs a multi-faceted workforce – trained to meet basic competencies and specialised areas depending on professional level and functions. This workforce also has a great need for collaborative skills in working with other professionals, as well as for developing leadership and advocacy for the profession and for the cause. In order to do that, we need inspiration, we need to work on our professional identity, we need to identify collaborators and friends from around the globe. All this we can get from a congress like World Nutrition *Rio 2012*. To identify one or two new important acquaintances, to meet up with those dear friends and colleagues we knew from before, to take home one or two messages from the congress is often enough to keep us going until next time.

Maybe the most important take-home message from this congress will be how to build on the congress momentum in building national policy and keeping regional and local work going – in workforce development, advocacy, policy development, implementation and evaluation.

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Reference

1. Margetts BM, Yngve A, Hughes R *et al.* (2007) *Promoting the public health nutrition workforce in Europe, the JobNut project*. Southampton University.