

THE HBIGDA UPDATE



July 2005

The HBIGDA Update is the official publication of the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association. It is published every two months. Items submitted to the editors for publication will be edited for clarity, readability, syntax, duplication, grammar, and spelling as well as gender-biased language. All materials should be sent to HBIGDA at the e-mail address above.

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First HBIGDA Update

Dear Friends,

Those of you, who attended the 19th HBIGDA Meeting in Bologna last April will agree with me that it was an absolutely great meeting.

Bologna is a wonderful historical city. The Aula Magna di Santa Lucia was a unique venue and most of all; the organization and scientific program were outstanding. Again, I would like to thank and congratulate Christina Meriggiola and Marcella Di Folco for doing such an excellent job.

At the 2nd Board Meeting in Bologna, the new Executive Committee was installed. It is an honor and a pleasure for me to serve as President of HBIGDA for the next two years. Attached you can find information about the new Executive Committee Members, the new Board Members as well as the different Committee Chairs. As you can see these are all absolutely great people and I am sure it will be a pleasure to work with them.

But of course not everything within our association is 100 % positive.

Although we are a unique organization trying to gather all professionals dealing with gender dysphoria and transsexual people and although our Standards of Care are almost universally accepted and respected, it is surprising that we still only have 339 members. And although we know that for most Americans it was rather expensive to attend the meeting in Bologna, still it is also surprising that only 227 people attended this very interesting meeting.

So what are the new challenges for me, the other Executive Committee Members, the Board of Directors and the Committee Chairs?

1. We have **to increase the number of active members**: this is not only financially profitable for our Association, but we are also convinced that an international Society such as HBIGDA deserve more members. Several methods and strategies have already been discussed by the Board Members and the Executive Committee to achieve this goal.
2. Since the Biennial HBIGDA Meeting is the only international congress covering all aspects of gender dysphoria, we should be able to reach **a larger number of participants**.
3. HBIGDA should **“reach out”** more to its members and other associations. More emphasis will be put on improved communication towards the members as well as getting other organizations to endorse HBIGDA's Standards of Care, which may need to be reworked and revised.

To achieve all these goals, HBIGDA will move towards electronic and web-based communication with the entire membership. As an international organization, upgrading our web-page and moving toward electronic communication will be most efficient and effective in providing services to members as well as ultimately cost effective.

Instead of the biannual HBIGDA Newsletter, we are converting to the **HBIGDA Update** which will be e-mailed to you every two months and posted on the new website. This HBIGDA update will consist of news from several committees and will always contain a short article concerning a topic related to gender dysphoria.

In addition, it has been decided that the Executive Committee Members and the Board of Directors will get together in Chicago in September 2005, not only to prepare the next Biennial Meeting, but to also have a strategic planning meeting to further elaborate and focus on the goals we want to achieve as an international society.

So what you find here is the first HBIGDA Update with a summary of the survey performed by Dr. Tom Mazur, Chair of the Intersex Committee.

I hope you will appreciate our more intense communication and please feel free to make any additional comments to me in care of hbigda@umphysicians.umn.edu.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Stan Monstrey', with a large, stylized flourish above the name.

Prof. Dr. Stan MONSTREY

SM/ad (update.0705)

Intersex Committee - Dr. Tom Mazur, Psy.D.

Results from the Intersex Committee's Survey of the HBIGDA Membership

A Sketch

Eli Coleman called for the creation of a HBIGDA Intersex Committee at the 17th Biennial HBIGDA conference in Galveston, Texas, in 2001. A committee was created. Its first task was to formulate a mission statement.

As approved by the Board, the Intersex Committee's mission is to "educate and provide consultation on the current state of knowledge, research, and clinical practice regarding individuals born with sex-atypical variants of genital differentiation to professionals and the lay public."

The second task was to determine how best to execute this mission. The Intersex Committee turned to the HBIGDA membership to help with this task. Committee members created a survey with cover letter asking HBIGDA members about their interest in, and treatment of, individuals diagnosed with various conditions of intersexuality, as defined by the mission statement. Members were also queried about how the Intersex Committee can best serve HBIGDA, especially those individuals treating or performing clinical investigations on persons with "sex atypical variants of genital differentiation." This questionnaire was mailed to all HBIGDA paid members (326) as of July 23, 2003. There were a total of 241 paid members within the USA and 85 outside the USA. A second mailing was done to increase the response rate. Each mailing contained a self addressed stamped envelope to the Intersex Committee Chair who tabulated the responses.

HBIGDA members (231) from all over the world responded with an overall response rate of 71%. The responses indicated that there were 93 members (40% of respondents) who for the previous two years had been providing services to persons with intersex conditions and that these professionals wanted to receive continuing education on this topic.

Professional involvement was far ranging, including such services as medical, psychological, and psychiatric evaluations; both individual and group therapy. Services were also reported for parents of children with intersexual conditions. While the majority had seen just a few such individuals, there were 10 members who had seen “10+” persons with an intersex condition. Fifteen members said that they were part of a gender team involved in deciding gender assignment in the newborn with an intersex condition.

When asked “what activities do you think the Intersex Committee should undertake to be helpful to HBIGDA members” regarding intersexuality, 73% of respondents said “general periodic updates.” Thirty-three percent requested education on “research methodology”. A number requested training on how to manage infants (30%), adolescents (41%), and adults (58%).

The survey achieved its purpose and provides information that will be useful to the Intersex Committee in developing future educational programs for HBIGDA members.

*~ Dr. Tom Mazur, Psy.D.
Intersex Committee Chair*