

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR PROSTHETICS AND ORTHOTICS

23 November 2009

RE: Important news about the administration of ISPO affairs

Dear ISPO Colleagues:

Thanks to your continued support and participation, our Society has grown from a 1970s small group of visionaries into the world's largest and most impactful association dedicated to improving the quality of life for persons who may benefit from prosthetic, orthotic, mobility and assistive devices. We now have over 3000 members in more than 90 countries, with new National Member Societies forming almost every month, and have developed a prioritized list of important strategic Goals to be accomplished. Yet, even with the tremendous efforts of our loyal Secretariat staff in Copenhagen, we have been unable to accelerate the pace of these positive changes.

Simply adding new staff is not an effective solution, because ISPO also needs special expertise in Web site development, membership recruitment, fund raising, marketing, and similar professional organization development skills. Our Society has outgrown the traditional Secretariat model of a small office of dedicated part-time staff, yet we are not large enough to support the cost of an office filled with full-time experts in all these critical areas.

In recent years, the Society has explored outsourcing by employing part-time consultants in Information Technology, web site development, business management, and finance. However, managing a growing number of independent consultants is a challenge in itself, and it is difficult to effectively control costs as the Society's need for expert input changes.

Like many other successful professional groups, ISPO has reached the stage in the development of the Society where consideration of different management models makes sense. Over the past two years, the Board has been conscientiously evaluating the potential value of engaging an experienced and internationally focused Professional Association Management Company, based upon a worldwide Request for Proposals from accredited and experienced firms with proven track records. The multiple respondents were gradually narrowed down to the three groups that best met ISPO's needs.



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After a rigorous competitive interview process and careful consideration of all implications, the Executive Board has unanimously recommended the selection of **Interel Association Management** in Brussels, Belgium [www.interel.eu] as the new Secretariat for ISPO. Mr. Thomas Reiser, **Interel's** Director for Healthcare and Life Sciences, will be leading our multinational team of professionals beginning January 1, 2010. [<http://be.linkedin.com/in/thomasreiser>] This new "shared services" administrative structure will provide flexible access to specialized staff as ISPO's changing needs require.

Of course, it is important for the Board to control overhead expenses because that makes more funds available to support our important programs and activities around the world. According to the best comparative data available, obtaining our administrative support within Interel is projected to cost approximately 5% less than continuing with our present Copenhagen structure. I want to make it very clear, however, that the Board did **not** recommend this change simply as a cost-containment measure but also as the most effective way to secure the specialized expertise necessary to achieve the Society's ambitious strategic Goals in a timely manner.

Thanks to the highly effective collaboration between our Copenhagen staff and our new team in Belgium, a seamless transition is already underway. Niels Petersen will remain involved during 2010 to continue his expert management of the Society finances, in collaboration with our Honorary Treasurer, Mads Harbo. ISPO will continue to be a Danish corporation, but the day-to-day administrative tasks will be handled in Belgium from January 2010. All email addresses & the ISPO website address will be unchanged, and mail to the Copenhagen address will be forwarded to Belgium for one year to insure there is no lapse in communication.

ISPO's future accomplishments will be built upon the successful foundation laid over many decades by our Secretariat. Please join me in thanking our departing Copenhagen staff for their loyalty, dedication and exemplary service to the Society. We are very grateful for everything that Birte Nielsen, Rikke Thorup and Karen Schmidt have done on behalf of the Society, and wish them all things good in the future.

Sincerely,



Dan Blocka,
President, ISPO



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