



**Report 2015-2017**

**of the**

**Task Force on Clinical Neuropsychology**

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**To the EFPA General Assembly in Amsterdam on  
July 15-16, 2017**

## **Report 2015 -2017**

### **Executive summary**

In July 2015 EFPA established a Task Force on Clinical Neuropsychology (decision of the General Assembly in Milan) for the period of 2015-17. The tasks were to analyze the situation of the field of clinical neuropsychology, to collect information on the current situation on the specialization training within clinical neuropsychology, and to collect information on the legal and professional status of clinical neuropsychologists within the profession of psychologists in different European countries. The information and best examples were to be presented to the EFPA Member Associations and based on the information, recommendations were to be made as how the specialization training in neuropsychology can and/or should be developed in the future.

The first TF meeting in February 2016 agreed that the goals are best met by conducting a survey to the member countries. The survey targeting psychological associations and neuropsychological societies on an organizational level was launched in September 2016. By spring 2017, 31 countries had responded. The results confirmed the wide variability in the legislation, regulation and training models of neuropsychologists across countries. This information will be disseminated to the EFPA members in conference symposiums and in published articles.

Common guidelines were generally considered an important goal according to the survey responses. More work is needed however before recommendations on harmonized models can be presented. The work carried out by the Task Force on Clinical Neuropsychology needs to be continued and the work would best continue as a Standing Committee of Clinical Neuropsychology.

### **Introduction**

This report covers the activities of the Task Force on Clinical Neuropsychology, performed during the period July 2015 – June 2017.

Clinical neuropsychology is a specialty in professional psychology dedicated to enhancing the understanding of brain-behaviour relationships and the application of such knowledge to human problems. The European Brain Council has estimated, based on a total cost of 798 billion in 2010, that disorders of the brain constitute the number one economic challenge for European health care, both now and in the future. There is a great and increasing need for neuropsychological services in today's society.

The level of training and the practice of clinical neuropsychology throughout Europe is quite variable however. Some European countries offer extensive training leading to a specialist title or certificate in clinical neuropsychology.

Typically, in these countries clinical neuropsychology has developed from a marginal clinical discipline to a specialty in great demand. In these countries the practice of clinical neuropsychology is also now expected to be conducted only by trained specialists. There are however several countries where special training programs do not exist and neuropsychological tasks are performed by varied professionals. Also the legal status of neuropsychologists as a subspecialty of psychology varies between countries.

To systematically explore the situation, EFPA in its 2015 General Assembly in Milan established a Task Force on Clinical Neuropsychology.

The aims were:

- 1) to analyze the situation of the field of clinical neuropsychology in Europe
- 2) to collect information on the current situation on the specialization training within clinical neuropsychology in the different countries of Europe - both in the universities and in the clinical practice.
- 3) to collect information on the legal and professional status of clinical neuropsychologists within the profession of psychologists in different European countries.
- 4) to present the information and best examples to the EFPA Member Associations.
- 5) to make recommendations as how the specialization training in neuropsychology can and/or should be developed in the future.

## Activities

1. Activity as planned: Collecting information on the current situation of the specialization training within clinical neuropsychology, and the legal and professional status of clinical neuropsychologists in different European countries.
  - 1.1. Activity as performed: A survey to the European associations regarding the above information
    - Generating and reviewing questions
    - Performing a pilot survey
    - Launching the survey on an online electronic platform
    - inviting participation from 36 EFPA Member Associations and 16 Neuropsychological Societies in these countries
  - 1.2. Achievements: Survey was launched in September 2016; 31 countries replied
2. Activity as planned: Analyzing the situation of the field of clinical neuropsychology in Europe and presenting the information and best examples to the EFPA Member Associations.

- 2.1. Activity as performed: Analysis of the survey results from 31 European countries
  - discussions within the TF
  - submission of symposium presentations
  - preliminary preparation of an article to be published
- 2.2. Achievements: Symposiums accepted to be presented at the European Congress of Psychology in Amsterdam in July 2017, and at the Meeting of the Federation of the European Societies in Neuropsychology in Maastricht in September 2017
3. Other activities
  - 3.1. Activity: plan of applying for funding for the future work and networking through EU's COST Action proposal
    - the next collection date is expected to be 7 September 2017
    - see [www.cost.eu](http://www.cost.eu)
  - 3.2. Achievements: first draft of the grant application is being prepared

### **Meetings (also videoconferences, or skype meetings) during term 2015-2017**

- 1) 12<sup>th</sup> February 2016, Brussels, 9 participants
- 2) 6<sup>th</sup> May 2016, Vienna, 6 participants
- 3) 12<sup>th</sup> November 2016, Vienna, 8 participants
- 4) 10<sup>th</sup> March 2017, Vienna, 9 participants

### **Important: Information & recommendations for GA & Member Associations**

The General Assembly is asked to take notice of the following:

- a. Full competency in clinical neuropsychology requires advanced knowledge of psychology, neurology, psychiatry, neuroscience and neuropsychology. Currently, according to the survey, programs in different European countries vary in their length from 1 to 60 months, and in 30% countries there is no commonly agreed model for specialization.
- b. According to the survey respondents, common guidelines for practicing and training in neuropsychology would be seen as beneficial in reducing the heterogeneity of professional work, in enhancing common competency levels and patient safety when either patients or professionals move from one European country to another, and in delineating the status of clinical

neuropsychology within the field of healthcare systems as well as in translational science.

- c. The final aim of the TF, to make recommendations as how the specialization training in neuropsychology can and/or should be developed in the future, is feasible but requires more work. The models need to be discussed taking the unique situation (societal structure, educational and health care systems etc.) of each country into account.
- d. If / when common guidelines are prepared, it is likely they need to be monitored, updated and maintained in collaboration with member associations in the years to come. This requires active existing structures within EFPA.

### **Proposals for decisions by GA**

The General Assembly is advised to accept the following proposals:

1. The work carried out by the Task Force on Clinical Neuropsychology in 2015-2017 needs to be continued
2. The work would best continue as a Standing Committee of Clinical Neuropsychology

### **Members of the group:**

Laura Hokkanen, Convenor	Finland
Erik Hessen, co-convenor	Norway
Sandra Lettner, secretary	Austria
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Active members:		Corresponding members:	
Marios Constantinou	Cyprus	Mladenka Tkalčić	Croatia
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