Connecting Health and Humans – International Nursing Informatics 2009 Congress

The 10th International Nursing Informatics Congress (NI2009, www.ni2009.org) sponsored by the International Medical Informatics Association Nursing Informatics Special Group (IMIA-SIG NI), will be held in Helsinki, Finland at the Helsinki Fair Centre June 26 to July 1, 2009. The Finnish Nurses Association co-sponsoring the conference together with IMIA-SIG NI is supporting the conference with its organization. The submission of papers, posters, workshops etc. was of high quality and wide views, which we think will guarantee an interesting conference for everybody: nurses, managers, physicians and informaticians irrespective of are they clinicians, teachers, researchers or students. NI conferences have been a major activity of the IMIA-SIG NI. These conferences are held every third year changing from one continent to another. Each country responsible for organizing the conference has been able to give its own touch in other respects sharing the global view of nursing and health informatics.

This year the 10th international nursing informatics congress will be in Helsinki, Finland. Last time in Europe in 1997 the congress venue was Stockholm, Sweden. Following the western continental bloc represented by Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2003) and Seoul, South Korea (2006) from the eastern, we have an excellent opportunity to invite more Europeans to participate and share their experiences and knowledge with colleagues all around the world. We hope also to arouse the interest in nursing informatics in Russia, the Baltic countries and the new European Union (EU) states. The theme for the conference: Nursing Informatics – Connecting Health and Humans was chosen not only based on EU eHealth initiatives but on global activities to strengthen the role of consumers in health information management.

The scientific programme committee received in all more than 400 submissions. After the reviewing process we were able to accommodate 140 papers and 130 posters to be presented during the conference. The conference programme follows 10 themes: Clinical Workflow and Human Interface; Patient Safety; Consumer Health Informatics and Personal Health Records; Education for Consumers and Professionals; Evidence Based Practice and Decision Support; Health Information Technology; National eHealth Initiatives across the Globe; Patient Preferences and Quality of Care; Strategies and Methods for Training, and Terminology, Standards and NMDs. All in all the presenters represent more than 35 countries. Thus each theme will have a wide scope of discussions in the sessions.

The NI conference has a certain organizational model starting with a pre-conference followed by the main conference and finished with an invitational post-conference. The pre-conference with tutorials offers a wide range of educational possibilities both for beginners and advanced participants. Over the years participants have been able to acquire new knowledge and skills regarding quality or safety assessments or project management. During recent years also terminology and standards have been popular topics for tutorials. This year along with the traditional tutorials a special ACENDIO pre-conference will take place as a joint event with NI2009. ACENDIO – the Association for Common European Nursing Diagnoses, Interventions and Outcomes has since 1995 served as a platform to promote the development of nursing’s professional language and provide a network across Europe for nurses interested in

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the development of a common language to describe the practice of nursing. The theme “Documenting the future of nursing – the case of nursing minimum data sets (NMDS)” will give an overview of the existing developments in NMDS, and argue how a NMDS can contribute to these forthcoming agendas, further discuss the role of ACENDIO in developing a strategy on systematic documentation and the use of standardized terminologies in relation to a NMDS.

As all scientific conferences NI conferences are based on high quality, with a growing number of pre-reviewed submissions. The variation of papers and posters accepted for presentation in the main conference have followed the advances in health information technology, but certain important topics such as ethics, education, management and clinical practice applications remain. This reflects to the submissions of the highly international participants with different informatics and health care development in their countries.

The posters presented at the conferences offer a great possibility also for newcomers and students to test their study designs and discuss their results with advanced colleagues. A student poster competition, as a tradition, has been most rewarding for students giving them a platform for an early start on networking. Poster sessions also serve experts an excellent place for piloting and sharing new ideas through describing and modelling them on posters.

The objective of the post-conference is to guide nurses in informatics during the next triennial with recommendations for practice, education, management and research published in post-conference proceedings. Over 27 years the conference programs have reflected the state of art of advances in nursing and health informatics education, management, research as well as in the clinical area. Based on the conference and post-conference themes nurses have been visionary, innovators leading the development and discussions of timely concerns (Table 1). The conference themes reflect futuristic, technical, social as well as interdisciplinary perspectives in the field of nursing informatics. It seems almost unrealistic that already in 1988 the post-conference in Dublin focused on decision support systems. However, the development has not been so smooth and still nurses often lack both evidence-based information and technical support in daily practice, management and education. As can be seen in Table 1, the idea of a post-conference was already born together with the first conference in 1982. The purpose of the post-conference is to bring together, immediately after the main conference, an invited international group of health care and informatics professionals with wide expertise in nursing and health informatics to draw up a synthesis of a special topic. This year the theme is Personal Health Information Management: Tools and Strategies for Citizens’ Engagement reflecting the consumer’s importance of involvement in health care. In many countries eHealth strategies emphasize a huge demand to develop means to engage citizens more thoroughly to manage their own health-related information.

Scientifically NI conferences have always had an important part in knowledge generation for the field of health informatics. The priorities for nursing informatics research have been assessed by the National Institute of Nursing Research in 1993, reported also in the Delphi study of nursing informatics research priorities in 1998. According to Bakken et al. (2008) many research priorities described in 1993 continue to be relevant even today, e.g. user needs, informatics support for patients/families and consumers as well as nursing and health care practice. However, the authors emphasize that in the next decade 2008–2018 the research agenda must expand and highlight the importance of interdisciplinary and translational research. Further they state that “a nursing informatics research agenda must support integration and use of genomic data for nursing care and for nursing research”.

The organizing committee has worked actively to have the most comprehensive program and venue for the conference speakers, participants and exhibitors. In addition to all

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Table 1  Themes for NI conferences and post-conferences 1982–2009

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<tr>
<th>Year and place</th>
<th>Conference theme</th>
<th>Post-conference theme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1982 London</td>
<td>The Impact of Computers on Nursing</td>
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<tr>
<td>1985 Calgary</td>
<td>Building Bridges to the Future</td>
<td>Challenges for the Future</td>
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<tr>
<td>1988 Dublin</td>
<td>Where Caring and Technology Meet</td>
<td>Decision Support Systems</td>
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<td>1991 Melbourne</td>
<td>Nurses Managing Information in Health Care</td>
<td>Health Care Information Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>1994 Austin</td>
<td>Nursing Informatics: An International Overview of Nursing in a Technological Era</td>
<td>Informatics the Infrastructure for Quality Assessment and Improvement in Nursing</td>
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<td>1997 Stockholm</td>
<td>The Impact of Nursing Knowledge on Healthcare Informatics</td>
<td>Nursing Informatics: Combining Clinical Practice Guidelines and Patient Preferences Using Health Informatics</td>
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<td>2000 Auckland</td>
<td>One Step Beyond: The Evolution of Technology and Nursing</td>
<td>An Informatics Basis of Evidence-Based Practice Through Clinical Pathways</td>
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<td>2003 Rio de Janeiro</td>
<td>eHealth for All: Designing Nursing Agenda for the Future</td>
<td>Patient Safety</td>
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<td>2006 Seoul</td>
<td>Consumer-Centered, Computer-Supported Care for Healthy People</td>
<td>Nursing Informatics 2020: Towards Defining our own Future</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009 Helsinki</td>
<td>Nursing Informatics – Connecting Health and Humans</td>
<td>Personal Health Information Management: Tools and Strategies for Citizens’ Engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012 Montreal</td>
<td>To be announced in 2010</td>
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paper, poster, panel, workshop and scientific
demonstrations presenters there will be se-
lected a number of first-rate keynote speak-
ers. Each of them is expert in their own field,
e.g. Dr. Leena Palotie in genomics, Dr. David Bates in patient safety, and Dr. Helena Leino-
Kilpi in ethics. We are also very pleased to have Dr. Reinhold Haux and Dr. Evelyn Ho-
venga as keynote speakers with their wide and long-term experience in health informatics education and research. All previously men-
tioned will expand different perspectives to nursing and health care informatics. The scientific programme starts on Sunday after-
noon June 28th, with the first keynote speech,
followed by the traditional opening cere-
mony. On the first evening there is also possi-
bility to join the welcome reception and the opening of the exhibition area. According to the selected congress themes the three-day program is organized so that the different presentations complete each other.

The social program has its important role during the congress. The welcome reception, the Helsinki City reception as well as the gala dinner will offer great experiences in Finnish culture and tradition. The events will make it easy to enjoy the atmosphere and allow time to network with colleagues. There are also various possibilities to be acquainted with Finnish nature with our thousands blue lakes and green forests by travelling in Finland. You can also easily reach the whole Scandinavia, not to forget the short distance to St. Peter-
burg in Russia or Tallin in Estonia.

Welcome to Helsinki

Kaija Saranto, Chair of the NI2009 Scientific Program Committee
Marianne Tallberg, Member of the NI2009 Scientific Program Committee
Anneli Ensio, Chair of the NI2009 Organizing Committee