



We have taken another important step towards harmonising treatment and care for preterm and ill newborn babies across Europe: at the 4th Chair Committee Meeting of the *European Standards of Care for Newborn Health* project in Freising, Germany. More than 200 experts have been working hard to develop standards of care for selected topics in newborn health. Next to this milestone project, many other activities and congresses are keeping us in motion. Learn more about last month's highlights in this newsletter. Happy reading!



Your EFCNI team

A powerful group at the 4th Chair Committee Meeting

From 21 to 23 May, more than 40 experts from 17 countries formed a powerful multidisciplinary international group at the 4th Chair Committee Meeting of the *European Standards of Care for Newborn Health* project in Freising, Germany. In different working groups, they intensively discussed and finalised the first part of the submitted standards in eleven key areas of newborn health. We will keep you up-to-date about the next steps. In total, 220 experts from 35 countries are working on this milestone project voluntarily. Thank you very much for your commitment!



[View more](#) (Project website)

RECAP preterm: New project website

The brand new website of the project *RECAP preterm* (*Research on European Children and Adults born Preterm*) is online. In a clear and user-friendly design, visitors will find useful facts on the background, methods, topics, people, upcoming events, and a recommendable Q&A section about this EU-funded project. The *RECAP preterm Cohort Platform* will bring together extensive data from 20 population-based cohorts of children and young adults born very preterm from 13 European countries as well as further cohorts around the world.



[View more](#) (Website *RECAP preterm*)

Useful health advice for preterm born grown-ups

POPS (Project On Preterm and Small for gestational age infants) from the Netherlands is one of the cohorts of the RECAP preterm project. The expert team around POPS actively informs their participants about the research outcomes and possible long-term health effects of preterm birth. We thank them for providing us with a translation of their useful health advice for preterm born grown-ups. If you are concerned, learn more about which regular medical check-ups are recommended for you and how a healthy lifestyle can positively influence your quality of life.

[View more](#)



Insights into the neurodevelopmental tests used in the SHIPS project

The overall aim of the EU-funded project *Screening to Improve Health in Very Preterm Infants in Europe (SHIPS)* is to assess the impact of follow-up and screening programmes on health, care and quality of life for very preterm infants and their families. In addition, new knowledge about assessment tools and methods will be generated. How the neurodevelopmental tests in SHIPS take place, what activities are performed and what they aim at is described by Dr Samantha Johnson in her guest article.

[View more](#)



Welcome to the EFCNI family

EFCNI's communications department is growing. We are very happy to introduce you to Sarah Katharina Fügenschuh who joined us in May as a Junior PR Manager. Sarah studied International Relations, Law and English Literary Studies in Munich and Copenhagen, holds a Magister Degree in Political Science from the LMU Munich and a Master of Science Degree in Welfare Policies and Management from Lund University in Sweden. Warmly welcome!

[View more](#)



Welcome on board

A heartfelt welcome also to the pharmacist Johanna Walz, our new Senior Project Manager Maternal and Newborn Health. She joined the Scientific Department at EFCNI in May. As a Ph.D. candidate at the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology at the University of Regensburg and as a junior medical advisor for the pharmaceutical company Novartis, she is experienced in the field of retinopathy of prematurity (ROP). She was involved in the clinical study CARE-ROP and the Retina.net ROP registry (both in cooperation with the Eye Center at the Medical Center of the University of Freiburg). Welcome on board!



[View more](#)

Welcome to our network volume 1

We welcome the Kazakhstan charity organisation *Club "28 petel"* in our network. Their volunteers knit socks for preterm infants. Currently, there are local groups in 16 cities. Since 2014, the members have knitted more than 19,000 socks for preterm infants.

[View more](#)

Welcome to our network volume 2

We are pleased to introduce the second new collaboration partner this month: The *Child Health Foundation (Stiftung Kindergesundheit)* is based in Munich, Germany, and actively involved in the healthy development of children and adolescents. It informs the public on key health issues and, in collaboration with partners and specialists, explains preventive strategies that can be implemented in day care, kindergartens and schools.

[View more](#)

50th annual ESPGHAN congress

From 10 to 13 May 2017, healthcare professionals gathered for the 50th Annual Meeting of the *European Society of Paediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition (ESPGHAN)* in the Czech capital Prague. More than 4,500 participants from 96 countries introduced new findings and exchanged views on several topics. We had the honour to represent EFCNI with an own booth. Lucie Zackova from the partnering parent organisation *Nedoklubko* followed the invitation and introduced the work of her organisation.

[View more \(ESPGHAN\)](#)

News from the EFCNI Donation Programme

On the occasion of the International Kangaroo Care Awareness Day on 15 May, we have started a donation campaign on *Betterplace.org* to raise funds for kangaroo chairs for a hospital in Greece. Your donation will help parents to cuddle with their preterm and ill born babies. Will you support us?

[View more \(Betterplace.org\)](#)

Kangaroo-Chairs for young mothers

0 Donors

[View & donate](#)[betterplace.org](#)

1st World Preeclampsia Day

22 May 2017 marked the first *World Preeclampsia Day*, initiated by the US based *Preeclampsia Foundation*. EFCNI participated in this worldwide movement to raise awareness for this dangerous pregnancy complication that is the leading cause for maternal (76,000) and infant (500,000) deaths worldwide.

[View more \(Ending Eclampsia project\)](#)



Meet EFCNI @ these congresses

We will participate in several symposia and congresses within the coming months and would be happy to see you there!

Meet the EFCNI team @

- [8th Europaediatrics Congress](#) from 7 to 10 June in Bucharest, Romania
- [43. Jahrestagung der Gesellschaft für Neonatologie und Pädiatrische Intensivmedizin \(GNPI\)](#) from 8 to 10 June 2017 in Dresden, Germany
- [16th World Congress in Fetal Medicine](#) from 25 to 29 June 2017 in Ljubljana, Slovenia
- [ISSHP European Congress](#) from 6 to 9 September 2017 in Berlin, Germany
- [3rd annual National Conference on clinical studies](#) from 7 to 8 September 2017 in Stockholm, Sweden



A healthy pregnancy – with BabyCare!

BabyCare is a preventive programme from Germany, which deals with all factors that influence the course of a pregnancy. The aim is to empower pregnant women and to reduce preterm birth rates through information and education. With success: Women who take part in the *BabyCare* programme have an up to 20 per cent lower risk of preterm delivery compared to non-participants! From now on, we are going to share with you some unique *BabyCare* pregnancy tips on our social media channels with courtesy of the *BabyCare* team.

[View more](#)



Kangaroo Care in Bulgaria - a big step forward

For the first time ever in Bulgaria, the International Kangaroo Care Awareness Day on 15 May 2017 was celebrated - in more than ten hospitals across the country. The doctors supported the idea and



for the first time, parents held their babies for more than an hour. We warmly congratulate the parent organisation "Our Premature Children" for achieving this milestone!

[View more](#) (Facebook)

International Kangaroo Care Awareness Day in Hungary

Promoting kangaroo mother care (KMC) is one of the major concerns of our Hungarian partner organisation *Melletted a helyem Egyesület*. Celebrating this year's International Kangaroo Care Awareness Day in May, they took the opportunity to hold a number of creative events to promote kangaroo mother care, like a flash-mob, a kangaroo care challenge and invited Professor Nils Bergman, one of the most famous researchers in KMC, to Budapest.

[View more](#)

From parents to parents

Our Ukrainian partner organisation *Early Birds* has realised a remarkable project to support parents of hospitalised preterm infants: In a lovely leaflet, affected parents tell their stories full of challenges, setbacks, milestones and moments of luck. Well done!!

[View more](#)

Therapy for body and soul – new projects in Romania

Recently, the Romanian *Association Unu si Unu* completed the setting up and endowment of the first neonatal post-therapy sensory room in Romania. In addition, they launched another project called *Therapy for body and soul*. In this unique project in Romania, babies in the NICU receive early neuro-motor stimulation to improve breathing, to prevent or adjust hypotonia or hypertonia.

[View more](#)



11 months - 11 topics: NICU design

How should the design of a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) – like the unit layout, acoustic environment, light - be to optimally support family-centred developmentally supportive care? In our hot topic in May, *NICU design*, we highlighted this issue from different angles.

- [Parent Statement](#) (Facebook)
- [Socks for Life campaign statement on NICU Design](#) (Facebook)
- [EFCNI project on web camera systems in the neonatal intensive care unit](#)



NICU design

Keeping families together in the neonatal intensive care unit

A shining best practice example: the newly renovated neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) at the *Charité University Medical Center* in Berlin, Germany, now offers rooming-in. As Professor Bühner and Professor Dame from the Charité Berlin nicely put it, “obstetricians and neonatologists share the duty of minimising the distance between mother and infant as much as possible. Skin-to-skin care and 24/7 rooming-in facilities are the answers to this demand.” An exemplary attitude!

[View more](#)



Good and bad sounds in the NICU

In a study, first published in *The Journal of Pediatrics*, Pineda et al. state that preterm infants treated in the NICU may be exposed to noise levels higher than those deemed safe by the *American Academy of Pediatrics*. Despite this result they also found that preterms may benefit from an exposure to stimulating sounds like natural language and music.

[View more](#)



How to: Kangaroo

The numerous positive effects of skin-to-skin contact on the physical and mental development of low-birth-weight and preterm born babies have been acknowledged among neonatal health experts long ago. In fact, it is being recommended to apply the so called *Kangaroo Mother Care Method (KMC)* in the care for all newborn infants. We would like to call your attention to the *World Health Organization (WHO)* guide to *Kangaroo Mother Care*. It is packed with helpful advice on how and when to integrate *KMC* into parent's daily routine.

[View more \(WHO\)](#)



EU commission with initiative for better work-life balance

A new proposal by the *European Commission* sets a number of new or higher minimum standards for parental, paternity and carer's leave. It includes the new right for fathers to take at least 10 working days off around the birth of a child or the right to request flexible working arrangements for both, like reduced or flexible working hours until the child's 13th birthday. With these proposals the commission aims at reducing the unequal treatment of women and men in the European Union.

[View more](#) (European Commission)



Speaking up about early symptoms of pre-eclampsia

A new study by Carter et al. in *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth* shows how important it is to raise awareness for the pregnancy-related disease pre-eclampsia. The researchers analysed available literature and examined factors that affect women to recognise symptoms of pre-eclampsia/ eclampsia and to 'speak up' to seek medical help, as well as responses of healthcare staff. The results showed that there was a lack of knowledge and understanding of signs and symptoms of the disease among women and their families and that further research is needed to explore clinical staff responses.

[View more](#)



World No Tobacco Day on 31 May

The theme for *World No Tobacco Day 2017* was "Tobacco – a threat to development" and that fits pretty well to the following study: According to Tong et al., even nondaily smoking in the last three months of a pregnancy is associated with an increased risk of delivering a small for gestational age (SGA) infant. In addition, daily smoking was associated with preterm delivery.

[View more](#)



EMA information guide on biosimilar medicines

The *European Medicines Agency (EMA)* and the *European Commission* have published an information guide for healthcare professionals on biosimilar medicines. The objective of the guide is to provide healthcare professionals with reference information on both the science and regulation underpinning the use of biosimilars. The guide was developed in collaboration with EU scientific experts, in response to requests from healthcare professionals.

[View more](#) (EMA website)



Mark your calendar

Receive an overview on [congresses and conferences in 2017](#) on maternal and newborn health.

[Awareness days 2017](#)



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