



# FEND – a brief history in time



## Dear FEND member,

December 1995 marked the establishment of FEND – in 2005 we celebrate our 10th anniversary. The founding members Deirdre Cregan (*Ireland*), Anne-Marie Felton (*UK*), Sue Hamilton (*UK*), Regina Wredling (*Sweden*) and Stina Wallenkrans (*Sweden*) launched FEND. Central to the planning for the arrival of this pan-European diabetes nursing organisation was the commitment of the founders to the mission and aims of FEND. FEND's mission is to promote the delivery of evidence-based care for people with diabetes throughout Europe. Our aims are to: develop and promote the professional role of the diabetes nurse in Europe; influence European health care policy relevant to diabetes care and research; promote acceptable standards and equity of care for people with diabetes throughout Europe; co-operate and collaborate with national and international health care organisations.

No organisation can function without members and a sound financial structure. During our preparatory phase we established that there was a need for a pan-European diabetes nursing organisation in Europe. In addition, some of these colleagues offered to form the first steering group: Doris Hemmann (*Germany*), Rukiye Pinar (*Turkey*), Hedi Schnee (*Switzerland*), Barbara Semlitsch (*Austria*), Barbel Somnavilla (*Austria*), Kerstin Sparre (*Sweden*), Anita Skafjeld (*Norway*), Esther Gil-Zorzo (*Spain*) and the late Lucia Zilli (*Italy*). This steering group formed the backbone and drive to establish the first and subsequent conferences up to 2000 when our first elections for an Executive Committee were held.

The financial support for FEND comes from the unwavering commitment of our sponsors: Bayer, Becton Dickinson, GlaxoSmithKline, LifeScan, Novo Nordisk and Sanofi-Aventis. The negotiation with potential sponsors was certainly a new experience for the founding members. There was real generosity of spirit from the sponsors who made a long-term commitment to FEND, and we felt that this was an essential component to ensure that we could plan at least over a four-year period. Because of this security we were able to establish relatively quickly the following key characteristics of FEND: our annual conference; the FEND ENDCUP training programme in partnership with three European Universities: Uppsala, Barcelona and Roehampton, London; the FEND Chair in Diabetes Nursing at Uppsala, Prof Karin Wikblad; our journal *European Diabetes Nursing*; and founding partner of EURADIA.

In pursuing its mission, FEND collaborates with

international and national diabetes organisations: EASD, IDF global, IDF Europe, DESG and PCDE. We are particularly appreciative of the early recognition by EASD of FEND. Our third conference was designated a symposium on the occasion of the annual meeting of EASD. This courtesy has continued, and we thank the past and present Presidents of EASD. In recent years the Chairman of FEND has been invited to the annual assembly of IDFE and to their world diabetes day meeting in the EU Parliament. Regular correspondence and occasional meetings take place between the Presidents and Chairmen of these organisations and FEND. This co-operation is important, reflecting what we in FEND believe is the key attribute of team work.

The challenge that the pandemic of diabetes presents in the 21st century requires a coherent and collaborative approach from the key stakeholders. This is exemplified by the recent invitation from the Austrian Government which will hold the EU rotational Presidency commencing in 2006. FEND is an official collaborating partner, along with IDFE, in co-ordinating an EU conference on diabetes for EU health ministers. The prevention and management of type 2 diabetes are the priority for the health agenda during the Austrian Government's tenure of the EU Presidency. This invitation has been received enthusiastically by the FEND Executive Committee, recognising the opportunity and responsibility that we have in shaping this significant agenda. In collaboration with IDFE we continue to lobby at national and EU level for EU Recommendation in diabetes.

This brief history of FEND thus far would be incomplete without acknowledging significant alliances: Prof Alberto de Leiva, Dr Colin McIntosh, Dr Chris Rodger and Marianne Angman, Prof Christian Berne, Prof Pierre Lefèbvre, Prof Aldo Maldonato (*President DESG*), Prof Jorn Nerup and Dr Michael Hall (*IDFE*).

The FEND Advisory Board members are Mary Banotti, John Bowis MEP, Dr Bibbi Smide, Prof Regina Wredling and Mr Nigel Sommerville legal advisor. These good friends of FEND have been constant in their support and we thank them. The FEND members themselves are at the core of the organisation. The Executive Committee over the years serves the membership with unstinting commitment, real leadership and a sense of vocation. We look forward to the next 10 years as the shape of the organisation continues to evolve. To quote Tennessee Williams: 'Make voyages! Attempt them... there's nothing else.'

**Anne-Marie Felton**, FEND Chairman