



## Monthly Newsletter From the International Clearinghouse

March 2014

Issue 2014 - 3

### What's going on regarding birth defects

#### Call for manuscripts

The National Birth Defects Prevention Network (NBDPN) will publish its **16th national report on birth defects surveillance and prevention** in the November 2014 issue of **Birth Defects Research, Part A (BDRA)**. It will also include articles on various issues in surveillance, epidemiology, and the application of surveillance data to birth defects prevention and public health programs. **Deadline** for submissions: **April 30, 2014**. Instructions: [http://www.nbdpn.org/call\\_for\\_manuscripts.php](http://www.nbdpn.org/call_for_manuscripts.php).

#### Genetic epidemiology and nonsyndromic structural birth defects: From candidate genes to epigenetics

An article by Charlotte Hobbs et al, published in *JAMA Pediatrics* (doi:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2013), includes an interesting review on current state of genetic epidemiology of birth defects and the complexity of exploring the interaction of genetics and environment, future challenges and opportunities, new and promising next-generation sequencing technologies and how the study of epigenetic mechanisms could become the key on this issue.

#### News from members

The **Canadian Perinatal Surveillance System (CPSS)** of the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) would like to announce the release of the Perinatal Health Indicators for Canada 2013. In the note received at the ICBDSCR Centre, the CPSS says: *"This report presents surveillance information on key indicators of maternal, fetal and infant health in Canada (a total of 16 indicators) based on the most recent available data: vital statistics data up to 2009 and 2010, hospitalization data up to 2010/11, Canada Community Health Survey data up to 2010, and National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth data up to 2008. It includes the following main findings:*

- *the rate of maternal smoking during pregnancy has declined since 1993 (from 21.9% to 12.3%);*
- *the rate of breastfeeding remained stable at 88% between 2005 and 2010, but the rate of exclusive breastfeeding increased during the same period from 20.3% to 25.9%;*
- *the infant mortality rate remained stable and very low (five deaths per thousand live births) in the past decade.*

*As you may know, the Agency monitors and reports on key indicators of maternal, fetal and infant health including congenital anomalies in Canada through the CPSS. We appreciate the ongoing collaboration with international organizations such as the International Clearinghouse Centre for Birth Defects to further our surveillance work for improved maternal and infant health in Canada".* Copy available on request at [centre@icbdsr.org](mailto:centre@icbdsr.org)

#### News from the Headquarter and Executive Committee

- 2014 Edition of the **Training Program on Surveillance and Prevention of Birth Defects and Preterm Births** (Geneva, WHO Headquarters, 7-11 July 2014). Until now 25 trainees confirmed the participation. The Faculty is working on the online pre-training course that will start in the next weeks.
- **The ICBDSCR Executive Committee** met on March 6-7, 2014 at ICBDSCR Headquarter in Rome. Further details on discussed items will follow.

#### Upcoming deadlines

- **April 30, 2014:** application to the **Alessandra Lisi Award**. Details at <http://icbdsr.org/page.asp?p=21608>
- **April 30, 2014:** exemption request of 2014 dues payment.
- **May 20, 2014:** data for the **2nd quarter 2013**, to be published in the **Quarterly Report/Krystalos**.
- **May 31, 2014:** nominations to the Distinguished Service Award. Details at <http://www.icbdsr.org/page.asp?n=dsa>
- **June 1, 2014:** submission of abstracts for the 41<sup>th</sup> Annual ICBDSCR Meeting (more info shortly on the website).
- **July 31, 2014:** payment of 2014 annual dues.

**SAVE THE DATE: 13-16 September 2014, 41<sup>th</sup> Annual ICBDSCR Meeting in Helsinki, Finland**