

Panel Discussion: Networking

Trudy Lieberman (TL), Amelia Beltramini (AB) (Chair: John Lister (JL))

(Unattributed) Is it possible for a sort of exchange of Twitter names and contacts after this conference?

(JL) Several people have asked me to circulate delegates list for contacts, which I am happy to do but we need to get everybody's agreement. Anybody who doesn't want their names circulated needs to let us know because of data protection. We do need to do that, so I will have to circulate everybody that has attended and be signed up to the conference to make sure that they are happy to have their contacts circulated. Once I get agreement then we can press ahead and it will be done within a few days. It will be done. That will at least be the basis of some kind of network straight away of people who you have already met and had the chance to meet up with.

(Barry Tuner) What function will the network have?

(JL) As was said, the one that exists in the AHJ is a kind of resource for people wanting advice, or sharing ideas. It's a complete variety of different topics. Some of which might not be very interesting but some of them are gripping. I remember a really fantastic exchange during the Swine Flu epidemic, a whole series of things, and people flagging up all kinds of papers on the effectiveness of influenza drugs which was really very interesting. I don't think you want to be saving every entry but if we could get something like that going across Europe with more relevance to the European issues and the European political context I think it would be of help. It would help to encourage new people in to feel that they have the confidence to get some support on issues where they want more information.

(BT) One of the organisations I'm involved with is a European-Union funded project for expert witnesses which we're in the process of building up, a giant network of people. What we are looking at is harmonising expert evidence across the European Union. Which is a long process. We're advising the European Commission on this. One of the consequences of being a member of that is that I've got a vast network of experts in all kinds of medical, pharmaceutical, fields. You say it is sometimes quite difficult to get hold of material. I think I can get hold of just about all the material very quickly via these networks. Anybody who is finding it difficult to get hold of material, I've got years of experience of digging it out.

(JL) Would it be alright with you if you joined this network, and you as an early entry on the blog that we're going to be running through the European Health Journalism website flagged up the fact that this is an option and that might start traffic? That might be a really good way to do it.

(BT) Of course.

(JL) We're not limiting the discussion today but we are starting it. We're hoping that everybody has enjoyed the conference and got some value out of the conference and will want to look at ways in

which we can take it forward, not necessarily by taking 3 days at a time in Coventry to do it, but ways in which some of the resources we've talked about and can be shared we will. We will be sharing the slides and colleagues at the back have been making some interviews summing up some of the papers and points that have been made at the conference which will also be made available on the website. So ways in which we can draw people in, get people on to the subject matter we've been talking about and then hopefully get them signed up to join the network.

I will reiterate that the AHCIJ affiliation if you are outside the USA is only \$30. It is an incredible bargain. You get all that stuff thrown in, you get an idea of what can be done there and maybe if we do that we can start to get more of an idea of how we can develop what we do in Europe as well.