

COMMENTARY

The response rate to the survey of 47% is disappointing. However, it can reasonably be assumed that those who did respond were the more committed members and that their responses can therefore be used as a useful guide to future INEBRIA policy and activity. It is also possible that some members were put off responding by language difficulties; if the survey were to be repeated in future, translation into Spanish, Portuguese and possibly other languages should be considered.

The survey has given us clear picture of the INEBRIA membership (or, at least, of those who responded.) They are predominantly medical practitioners or psychologists/behavioural scientists whose main responsibilities are research or clinical practice. (An interesting question is whether attempts should be made to attract other kinds of professional into the group, particularly more social scientists, social workers, nurses, policy makers.) They represent a highly experienced group with respect to alcohol brief interventions, with 40% having been interested in the topic for more than 10 years. The most common area of work cited by respondents was 'alcohol and other substances'. This raises again a question that keeps cropping up – whether we should expand to include BI for other substance use disorders besides alcohol.

The general level of satisfaction with the group is high, with 62% 'mostly satisfied' with the network's activities so far. This is obviously encouraging but should not lead to complacency. While only two respondents said they were 'not at all satisfied', it would be useful to know more exactly why this dissatisfaction is felt.

The core part of the survey, and the main reason for conducting it, concerns the recommendations for future INEBRIA activities and what members are interested in contributing to the network. Assessed by modal rank and the percentage of responses in the 1st rank, the most popular future activity is to continue holding our annual conference in different parts of the world. This is reassuring but it is not clear whether this would preclude smaller, perhaps thematic meeting in addition to the annual conference. While there was very little enthusiasm for additional conferences, respondents may have been thinking of large, general meetings rather than smaller, more focussed events and the latter remains a possibility for the future. Apart from that, developing collaborative research projects with others with similar research interests was a popular option. This will become easier to occur when we are successful in increasing communication between group members by a Listserv or something similar. There was also good support for a range of activities centred around the need to increase the implementation and effective delivery of BI: developing implementation strategies, providing professional support and training and providing assistance to developing countries on implementation and delivery of BI.

It is encouraging that 43% of those who responded said that they would like to be more actively involved in INEBRIA activities, while only 11% said they would definitely not like to be more involved. The main activities in which members were willing to be involved included participating in a Listserv (adding to the enthusiasm for such a development), training and providing advice on request. Over half seemed ambivalent about contributing to the INEBRIA Bulletin but did not rule it out.

The Co-ordinating Committee will now carefully consider the results of the survey and how the main recommendations and preferences can be implemented. Of course, the commentary here is only one interpretation of the data generated by the survey; others are surely possible. The CC and I would very much welcome any other comments from members on the implications for the survey results for INEBRIA activity.

"Nick Heather"
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