

## 2021 Annual Report from Nordic Cognition Network in Relation to Deafblindness

Nordic Leadership Forum of Deafblindness, Spring 2021

### Membership:

**NO:** Kirsten H Costain, Joe Gibson, Torill Gullvik, Annika Maria Johannessen, Jude Nicholas, Lynn Skei, Elena Hauge, Anne Nafstad & Magnus Tollefsrud. (New Members – Camilla Lyngar, Eline F Melhuus).

**SE:** Vuokko Einarsson

**FI:** Emmi Toumi

**DK:** Ulrik Skov Hansen. (New Members – Lone Rømer, Tanja Christiansen).

**NL:** Saskia Damen

**GB:** Jacky Smith, Jonathan Reid & Paul Hart

**Members leaving the network:** Gro-Anita Tunes, Ida Jifält, Odd-Eric Madsen, Olai S Johnsgård, Tina Bendixen.

### Meetings and activities 2020/2021:

Cognition Network meetings held online on 9<sup>th</sup> June, 19<sup>th</sup> August, 18<sup>th</sup> September, 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2<sup>nd</sup> December

### Planned Meetings: 2021

June 14<sup>th</sup>, September 6<sup>th</sup>, November 30<sup>th</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup>.

### Activity

The Nordic Cognition Network in Relation to Deafblindness was established in 2008. The main aim of the network is to promote professional competency in understanding cognitive development and identifying cognitions and their relation to learning and everyday functioning of individuals with congenital deafblindness (CDB).

Some members of the network are affiliated to different universities, conducting research, and collaborating with other professionals in the field of CDB. The other members are clinicians and practitioners working in the field, consisting of psychologists, educational specialists and supervisors who are involved in conducting assessments and intervention planning in the different countries. Since congenital deafblindness comprises a diverse, small-scale and heterogeneous group it is important that the collaboration and knowledge sharing of Cognition in Relation to Congenital Deafblindness takes place in a Nordic and International manner. Besides, the knowledge developed from this network would be feasible to be applied to other related fields.

The network has enjoyed a productive and busy year launched through the publication of the book “Revealing Hidden Potentials – Assessing Cognition in Individuals with Congenital Deafblindness” through the Nordic Welfare Centre in August 2020. This marked the second publication from the network, and considers pathways towards competencies in terms of cognitive assessment within a congenital deafblind context. The publication was well received, with significant international interest.

In parallel with the publication of the book, the network has also developed a number of webinars which highlight the different approaches taken within the book. The network aims to unpack the knowledge amongst the widest range of professionals, educationalists, assessors and health and social care practitioners and to date three webinars have been held, with more planned in the coming months. Again, these webinars have been met with significant international interest, and this can potentially be seen as a ‘silver lining’ of the Covid-19 pandemic, with uptake across a range of countries and academic disciplines.

The network will look to continue with this crucial Nordic and international collaboration and cement the thinking of the network within the architecture of the deafblind field and beyond. In considering this, the group will look to continue to host webinars and are tentatively hoping to meet in person in November in Finland. Future work will also consider the development of relationships across other networks and groups in order to strengthen knowledge from complimentary areas of cognitive expertise, and also to cascade knowledge from our work on cognition and deafblindness to the widest audience.

On behalf of the network I would like to extend our gratitude and thanks to NVC and especially Maria Creutz, Christina Lindström and Nina Stens for all their support.

On behalf of members of the network,  
Glasgow, May 2021,  
Jonathan Reid,  
The Health and Social Care Alliance (Scotland).