



Isilco

## **Country report 2011.**

### **Isilco is the Icelandic ostomy association.**

#### **MEMBERS:**

Our members number about 300 people of all ages, shapes and sizes. Since there are so few of us we are not divided into groups according to what kind of ostomy we have. However there is one subgroup: The young (between 20-40) have an informal group of their own.

#### **DOMESTIC ACTIVITIES DURING THE YEAR:**

Our activities throughout the year were mostly on a regular basis. We held six open meetings in Reykjavik, including our Christmas meeting in the beginning of December, and one in Akureyri in the north of Iceland. There we have a group of ostomates that live in the towns nearby. In these meetings we usually try to have a lecturer with a topic relating to ostomates on a broad scale.

Other activities included taking part in meetings and small conferences held by both the Disabled Peoples Union and The Cancer Association of Iceland, but Isilco is a member of both those "umbrella" organizations. In one "micro" conference we were hosts along with the Bowel Cancer Organization of Iceland and the topic was "Bowel cancer, awareness, treatment and consequences, including ostomy after surgery.

Our main concern in our last annual report was the dwindling demand for the services of our visiting service. To fight that Isilco organized a meeting with people from the visiting service and nurses and social workers from Iceland's main hospital. Also invited was a psychologist who has worked closely with the visiting service of one of the cancer support groups that is also under the umbrella of the Icelandic Cancer Union. The outcome of the meeting was increased understanding on the hospital's side and a bit of reorganizing of our part. We will be working more closely with other visiting services and will have more support from health care specialists.

#### **FOREIGN COOPERATIONS**

Nordic chairpersons meeting was held in Oslo, Norway, in the middle of September. Our chairman and the leader of our youth group attended that along with ten others from our sister organizations in the other Nordic countries. The main issue of the meeting was the planning of the Nordic conference which is to be held in Trondheim, Norway, in August 2012.

The chairman of Isilco was elected into the board of EOA and took part in board meetings. He also initiated the making of a poster that shows European ostomates in all sorts of activities and can be seen as a continuation of Isilco's swim poster. A few of our youth members took part in Action camps in Norway after a short break from those. That cooperation is much welcomed.

#### **PUBLICATIONS:**

Our small newsletter was published five times during the year.

#### **APPLIANCES:**

Ostomy appliances are practically free in Iceland and everybody gets the appliances that he or she needs. Two major suppliers are active on the market.

After our banking crises in 2008 it was feared that ostomates would be forced to pay for appliances but nothing of that sort has been. If the health authorities try to enforce such payments we will fight those decisions any which way we can.

Respectfully,

Jon Thorkelsson,  
Chairman of Isilco.

**Stómasamtök Íslands.**

**Isilco**

Founded october 16th. 1980.

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## **World champion in weight-lifting - an Icelandic ostomist since 1977.**

The newsletter of Stómasamtökin in Iceland recently interviewed Örn Agnarsson, a former chairman of The Icelandic Ostomy Association for several years, who had just returned from the World Chamionships in Weight-lifting of Fire Brigades and Policemen held in New York from 26 August to 7 September 2011.

Örn, one of 50 Icelanders out of a total of 12-13.000 participants, competed for the Straumsvík aluminum Smelter (Rio Tinto Alcan) where he has worked for 40 years. He competed in the "Grandmaster C" age class of 60-65 years and began by winning a bronze price, but then two days later he won the gold. Thereby Örn had become a World Champion in his age class, not only in one type of weight-lifting, but in both standing and lying positions. Perhaps he is the first ostomist to win a world prize in international athletic games.

Asked about the training, Örn said that he practiced four to five times per week for a whole year. Amongst other sports are swimming, skiing and kayak-rowing. "I row with a group of friends to the Island of Viðey near Reykjavík on the 9th of October every year to celebrate the birthday of John Lennon when the "Imaging Peace" light is turned on."

In 2013 Örn is planning a trip to Belfast in Northern Ireland where these championships will be held and where he intends to defend his title in an athletic spirit.

Asked about problems due to the great bodily strain of lifting heavy loads, Örn said that the stoma plate under the bag tended to get loose, at least partly, causing leakage at times. This is most risky when bending the knees under great strain, but a belt gives much support. Preferably the plate should have stayed on for two days before the competition. Just before the bag is emptied, imodium tablets may be used to slow down the digestion and cumin seeds and green kale help to reduce possible smell due to leakage.

(Summary by Ólafur R. Dýrmundsson)