Letter to the Editor

REPLY TO LETTER BY SUBMITTED BY DUTCH NEUROPATHIC FOOT SOCIETY

Editor

With reference to the original article by Brandsma et al. (Lepr Rev, 2001; 72: 254–275), and the comments made by Dr Faber on behalf of the Dutch Neuropathic Foot Society, we agree with the comment that there is no consensus about nomenclature with respect to impairments to the foot, and commend the Dutch Neuropathic Foot Society for their efforts to also try to reach a common language.

However, there need not necessarily be hesitation in suggesting and accepting a different terminology, especially where there is no officially endorsed terminology as yet. Recently, the World Health Organization published the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (WHO, 2001). This Classification now replaces the International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps (1980). New terminology was introduced and commonly used terms were redefined. We suggested that the foot that only has nerve function impairment be referred to as the ‘neurologically impaired foot’; the foot with primary impairments only. We then suggested using the term ‘neuropathic foot’ for the foot that subsequently may have developed secondary impairments, of which neuropathic bone (joint) disorganization (NBD) is a special complication that merits its own management. NBD could then be further classified as the authors suggest, preferably avoiding the eponym Charcot for reasons we have given.

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