

BRANCH SPOTLIGHT

25th Anniversary of the Benelux Branch

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In 1991, the McKenzie Institute Benelux was founded. The Benelux Branch became a union between Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxemburg. To celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Branch, Benelux board members organized a symposium for all MDT Certified Clinicians and clinicians who were simply interested in Mechanical Diagnosis and Therapy.

On September 21st, everyone was invited to the High Tech Campus in Eindhoven, the Netherlands. The program started at 2:00 pm with a nice welcome by the President of the Benelux Branch, Hanneke Meihuizen. The first speaker, Adri Apeldoorn, followed, speaking about the influence of Centralization and Directional Preference on spinal control in patients with nonspecific low back pain. He also elucidated his recent research that was published in the Journal of Orthopaedic and Sports Physical Therapy (JOSPT).



The next speaker was Henk Tempelman, a Benelux Branch Faculty member. He discussed the disc model. After 35-years, perhaps this model needs a facelift? Based on literature, he suggested that the model be used only as a model and not as an absolute truth as often we cannot be sure which structure is responsible for the symptoms. Using the disc model, one could suggest that we are talking about an intervertebral disc. Additionally, research in symptomatic discs shows that we cannot predict the movement of disc material. The perfect example of this is a patient with a posterior derangement who responds with 'Better' on repeated flexion.



After a nice dinner and a little break, the program continued with presentations by Stijn Van Merendonk and Mike Stewart. Van Merendonk is an expert in motivational interviewing. He explained the power of motivation. To empower our patient in self-care is essential when we work with the MDT system. Mike Stewart then spoke about the hidden influence of metaphors in rehabilitation. He explained to the clinicians that, at times, words can be more powerful than the techniques used.

The main purpose of the evening's program was for the Benelux Board to show to MDT therapists the importance of Centralization and Directional Preference. Next to these typical MDT subjects, there was room for a critical point of view on the disc model. The Board also wanted to make clear that MDT isn't only about mechanics. Coaching and teaching our patients is a big part of what we do and in this communication is key!