



ehps report

10 years of Collaborative Research and Training in the EHPS (CREATE), 10 years of up-to-date education, networking and excellence**Benjamin Schüz*, on behalf of the CREATE team**

Apart from a quite historical location, the 1999 EHPS congress in Florence saw an innovation- the first CREATE workshop, which was facilitated by Marie Johnston and Charles Carver and organised by David Hevey, David French, Mike Echteld and Efi Panagopolou. CREATE had just recently been founded as a subdivision of the (also at that time quite young) EHPS and intended to be an opportunity for early career health psychologists to share experiences, provide mutual support in an international network and to provide up-to-date education in yearly workshops. These ambitious goals have been more than met and have developed into a success story. The recent and actual CREATE team and participants originate from all European and many overseas countries, and several contacts being started during CREATE have developed into international cooperation projects such as successful major EU grant proposals. The annual workshops were mostly overbooked, so that one of the major topics in the organisers' discussion was formulating fair acceptance criteria for the workshop applicants. In fact, many former CREATE participants considered the concentrated workshops before the annual EHPS conferences so productive that after their CREATE career they founded SYNERGY, which organises yearly workshops for more advanced scientists.

In this article, we want to give a short overview of the past 10 CREATE years, point out how CREATE workshops have reflected current debates in health psychology, and formulate some desiderata for the future. More information on CREATE, past and future workshops and the possibility for international networking can be found on the CREATE website www.ehps.net/create

Most CREATE workshops so far have been structured in two main parts: One part being an explicitly prepared programme delivered by the facilitators and a second part intended to respond to participants' issues such as writing articles, grant proposals or translating health psychology theory into practice.

But let's start with 1999 - The first workshop (facilitated by Marie Johnston and Charles Carver) had two main topics, "Solving general research problems" and "Writing and publishing scientific health psychology research articles". These topics can be considered prototypical for the CREATE workshop concept: Addressing issues relevant for early-career health psychologists while aiming at involving the most eminent protagonists of the discipline in training the next generation of researchers (Hevey, Di Blasi, Hall, & Absetz, 2000). The discussion of publication strategies is one of the most important topics throughout all CREATE workshops, therefore one aim of the organisers has been and still is to ask current or past editors of health psychology journals to facilitate the workshops.



CREATE Logo – 1999 to 2005

The 2000 CREATE workshop in Leiden, facilitated by Marie Johnston and John Weinman, focused on theory-based research in health psychology: "Nothing is more practical than a good theory: Exploring, testing and applying theories in health psychology". This workshop explicitly related to the theme of the 2000 EHPS conference, "Models of Health and Illness Behaviour" (Hevey, 2001). With the focus on theory-based research, this workshop also reflects the ongoing discussion on advancing and refining health behaviour theories. The task for testing, refining and again testing theories in order to improve them remains one of the core tasks for our discipline. ►

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CREATE 10 years (cont'd)

In 2001, the CREATE workshop “Health behaviour change: Intervention and Evaluation” was facilitated by Brian Oldenburg, Paul Kennedy and Paul Gardner. It focused on theories of individual and group/population behaviour change. Here again, a correspondence between the conference theme “Changing behaviour: Health and Healthcare” was maintained. This workshop also saw a special focus on statistical methods to analyse change data.

The 2002 workshop “Research methods in Health Psychology” was facilitated by John Weinman, Kavita Vedhara and Rona Moss-Morris. This workshop also reserved a slot for sharing work in progress with the rest of the participants. Although the workshop topic



CREATE Logo – 2005 to 2006

reflects a general resource for Health Psychology, the methodological focus was developed before the backdrop of illness perceptions, psychoneuroimmunology and interventions in chronic illnesses. The focus on illness perception also reflects one of the key publications in 2002, the Revised Illness Perceptions Questionnaire-Revised (IPQ-R; Moss-Morris et al., 2002).

In 2003, the workshop “Understanding qualitative research in Health Psychology”, facilitated by Kerry Chamberlain, took an explicit perspective on qualitative research in Health Psychology. Kerry Chamberlain’s main aim was to make participants bilingual in terms of being able to equally understand and interpret quantitative and qualitative research. This workshop tapped into a very important field of research, as qualitative methods in health psychological research are increasingly being used and published.

The 2004 workshop “Predicting and changing health behaviour: Conducting and publishing theory-based research” was facilitated by Paul Norman and Peter Harris. While the first part of the workshop took into account recent discussions on theory-based research and focused on a critical evaluation of the prevalent health behaviour theories, the second part of the workshop profited from both facilitators’ outstanding expertise in publishing and presenting research. Paul Norman presented criteria and guidelines for peer-reviewed publications, while Peter Harris explained and introduced tactics and strategies for disseminating and publishing research findings.

Susan Michie (at that time EHPS president), Charles Abraham and Susan Ayers facilitated the 2005 CREATE workshop “Designing and evaluating theory-based interventions”. This workshop took up the current discussion on theory- and evidence-based interventions in health psychology. Special emphasis was given to protocols for intervention development, such as the MRC framework for intervention development. Designing theory-based interventions is one of the core topics in health psychology, and the discussion around designing interventions in the workshop resulted in the development and publication of a checklist for theory-based interventions (Darker, 2006; Davies & Panzer, 2006).

The 2006 workshop of CREATE in Warsaw “Stress, coping and social support” was facilitated by Ralf Schwarzer and Krys Kaniasty. Within this workshop, new concepts of social support in support in coping with illnesses and coping with disasters were introduced, along with new developments in mediation and moderation analyses were introduced. Additionally, the facilitators as recent and current editors of *Anxiety, Stress and Coping* reviewed the peer-review process.

In 2007, the CREATE workshop was facilitated by Gerjo Kok, Herman Schaalma and Rob Ruiter. It focused entirely on Intervention Mapping, a framework for designing evidence- and theory-based interventions in health promotion. This workshop provided many answers for applied problems in health promotion, but additionally stimulated discussion on the role of health behaviour theory in theory-based research. ►



CREATE 10 years (cont'd)

The 2008 CREATE workshop on risk perceptions and risk communication will be facilitated by Britta Renner (current president of the EHPS) and Stephanie Kurzenhäuser.

This short review of the past CREATE workshops demonstrates that the application of theory, especially health behaviour theory in research and health promotion practice remains one of the core topics of interest. Although it may seem that workshops rotate around a limited set of repeating topics, the continuing discussion of theoretical innovations and their role in the applied research projects of early-career health psychologists (and advanced career health psychologists as well) promotes Health Psychology as a science. This is because continuing discussion of these topics leads to refined research questions and methodologies, which in turn allow for refining of theories.



CREATE Logo – current

In these terms, the CREATE workshops reflect current discussions of the Health Psychology community and provide an excellent and important means for early-career health psychologists to network and acquire a common knowledge and discussion basis.

Future CREATE workshops are planned around the core topic of designing and evaluating interventions in Health Psychology, but might take advanced research methodology into account as well.

We would like to pose a big “Thank you” to all previous organisers, to all participants and especially to all facilitators of the CREATE workshops who helped to make these ten years a great success.

As current organising team of CREATE, we are happy to announce that CREATE is alive and kicking, and we hope to see many happy returns of both the workshop and anniversary pieces in the European Health Psychologist! ■

The current CREATE organising team: Stephan Dombrowski, Nelli Hankonen, Natalie Mallach, Karen Morgan, Jana Richert, Benjamin Schütz, Amelie Wiedemann

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