



Synergy



plain what Synergy is and announce the upcoming Synergy workshop being run shortly before the EHPS conference this year in Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

What is Synergy?

Synergy is a subdivision of the EHPS with a core aim of stimulating networking and collaborative research within the society. Primarily this is done through an annual 2.5 day workshop which precedes the annual EHPS conference. These workshops are focused on particular areas within health psychology and are facilitated by highly experienced academics. They aim to advance the standard of work in the field by encouraging the pooling of expertise and the sharing of critical evaluations. Recent workshops include a focus on culture and illness representations (2007), internet-based interventions (2008) and the pragmatics of running clinical trials (2009).

A further aim of Synergy is to strengthen communication between Health Psychologists across Europe beyond the workshop. For example, we have set up a Synergy website where members can share work, research ideas and start discussion forums. We hope that this might help researchers find others who have similar research interests and potentially facilitate new collaborations.

The Synergy board

The way in which Synergy is organised has changed from recent years with the creation of a new Synergy board. The board is made up of a Convenor, Treasurer, Secretary, Webmaster, Applications Manager and two ordinary members.

We aim to have an annual general meeting during the EHPS conference, which is open to all society members. Board members and board roles are as follows:

Convenor: Karen Morgan – Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Dublin, Ireland.

Synergy role: Responsible for ensuring the board functions effectively and overseeing all Synergy activities.

Work profile: Karen is a lecturer in Psychology. She teaches undergraduate medical, physio-therapy and

pharmacy students and her research focuses on issues relating to population health and ageing.

Treasurer & EC Liaison: Benjamin Schüz – German Centre of Gerontology, Berlin, Germany

Synergy role: Responsible for all financial activities within Synergy and liaising with the EC over any Synergy related business.

Work profile: Benjamin is interested in the psychological processes underlying engaging in health-promoting behaviours, in particular in high-risk populations such as elderly individuals with multiple illnesses.

Secretary: Felix Naughton – University of Cambridge, UK

Synergy role: Responsible for supporting the convenor, ensuring all Synergy related activities are completed on time and maintaining Synergy documentation.

Work profile: Felix has just completed his PhD which has been focused on developing and evaluating a tailored smoking cessation intervention for pregnant smokers using written and text-message self-help support. He is particularly interested in the use of new technologies to promote health.

Webmaster: Gjalte-Jorn Peters – Maastricht University, Netherlands

Synergy role: Responsible for web-based Synergy activities including developing and maintaining the Synergy Website.

Work profile: Gjalte-Jorn's research interests mainly concern cognitive determinants of re-creational drug use, online research and intervention development, systematic intervention development, and choices during the intervention development process that are inconsistent with theory/evidence.

Applications Manager: Maria Karekla – University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

Synergy role: Responsible for managing applications for the Synergy workshop.

Work profile: Maria is a lecturer in Psychology. Her research interests are in the areas of individual differ-



Synergy

synergy

ence factors and how these relate to the development and treatment of health related problems (e.g. the role of emotional avoidance in smoking initiation).

Ordinary member: Panayiota Andreou – University of Southampton, UK

Synergy role: Supporting the convenor in any relevant Synergy activities and representing Synergy on the EHPS grants committee.

Work profile: Panayiota is towards the end of her PhD which focuses on developing a web-based intervention for acute respiratory tract infections.

Ordinary member: Anne Marie Plass – VU University Medical Center, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Synergy role: Supporting the convenor in any relevant Synergy activities.

Work profile: Anne Marie is a social psychologist and senior lecturer. She teaches on courses like public health and genetics; community genetics, prevention and research methods. She is involved in research activities in the field of community genetics and in behaviour and behaviour change.

2010 Workshop

The Synergy board are very pleased to announce the 2010 Synergy workshop entitled “Beyond talk and text: Stretching and Enriching Qualitative Research Practice”. The workshop will be facilitated by Professor Kerry Chamberlain who is based at the School of Psychology, Massey University, New Zealand. Kerry has extensive experience in qualitative research. He has published a range of peer-reviewed papers and book chapters on qualitative health research and has experience at including innovative and multiple methods in his own research practice.

The aim of this workshop is to promote the use of inventive and imaginative forms of qualitative research practice. The focus will be on innovative methods for the design, data collection, analysis and reporting of qualitative research. Methods to be considered include recent developments in the field such as the involvement of space, time and materiality, the use of photo-voice and photo-elicitation techniques, mobile research such as go-along interviews, multiple interviews, observational methods, and drama and arts-based

research practices, as well as multiple methodologies. The workshop is suitable for researchers with experience in qualitative health research seeking to stretch and extend their knowledge in innovative directions. It will provide an opportunity for researchers to discuss and work on research ideas and present their own work in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

The workshop will be held on 29th – 31st August at the Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, and will run for 2.5 days. **The deadline for applications has been extended to July 1st 2010.** All those accepted onto the workshop will need to become members of the EHPS if they are not already a member. To apply and for further information please visit the Synergy website at <http://ehps.net/synergy>.

Closing comments

Membership of Synergy is free and open to anybody who is interested in health psychology research. We would like to invite researchers interested in sharing ideas and networking to visit the Synergy website to start and get involved in forum discussions. The Synergy board are delighted to have been appointed by the EC and committed to helping to strengthen the identity of Synergy and to further its work within the EHPS. We invite submission of comments or ideas for how Synergy can focus its activities from all EHPS members.

Thanks

The Synergy board is advised by an additional 5 colleagues with extensive expertise, who together form the advisory committee: Marek Celinski (Workplace Safety & Insurance, Canada), Geir Arild Espnes (Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway), Richard Cooke (Aston University, UK), Jana Richert (Freie Universität Berlin, Germany) & Eva Kalay (Babes-Bolyai University Cluj, Romania). Eva, as the local liaison for Cluj, Romania 2010, has been invaluable in the organisation of the Synergy workshop 2010 so far. The board would also like to take this opportunity to say a big thanks to Jana and the other members of the CREATE team for their invaluable support in helping us set the Synergy board up. ■

Felix Naughton and Gjalt-Jorn Peters
On behalf of the Synergy board
<http://ehps.net/synergy>