

EHPS president's message

Dear colleagues,

It is a great pleasure to write my first President's message for the European Health Psychologist. I am deeply honoured to take on the position of President of the EHPS for the next two years. I have a long association with the society, through regular attendance at the annual conference, as Secretary (1996-2000) and as Editor of *Psychology & Health* (2001-2006). Over this time the society has grown considerably, not only in terms of its membership but also in the range of activities it now supports. During my time as President I hope to build on the success of the society and introduce a number of initiatives which will hopefully further improve the functioning and scope of the society.

Over the next two years I will be supported by a new Executive Committee (EC) that was elected at the Cluj conference in September. The new EC has both continuity and new members. Irina Todorova remains on the EC as Past-President. I am very fortunate to be able to draw upon her expertise and knowledge. During her time as President she introduced a number of important initiatives, including the Networking Grant for EHPS members, which I hope to consolidate. Manja Vollman steps down as Treasurer/Membership Secretary, but remains on the EC as an Ordinary Member. Manja oversaw a marked increase in the membership of EHPS during her tenure which, in no small part, was due to her excellent work developing procedures for facilitating membership recruitment and retention. Given her expertise, she will take on special responsibility for overseeing the website and electronic communications as well as providing support to the incoming Treasurer/Membership Secretary. Holger Schmid remains on the EC with special responsibility for Education and Training. Holger has been instrumental in overseeing the development of our portfolio of conference/workshop grants, the CREATE tandem and visiting scholar grants as well as the EHPS Networking Grant that we introduced this year. I also welcome new members to the EC. Amelie Wiedemann is the Treasurer/Membership Secretary. She has served successful terms as Treasurer of both CREATE and Synergy as well as Chair of CREATE. Likewise, the new Secretary, Karen Morgan, has served as Chair of CREATE and was instrumental in convening the new Synergy board. Gerry Molloy joins the EC and will have special responsibility for communications and publications. He has relevant experience from his successful spell as Co-Editor of the *European Health Psychologist* (EHP) which he will bring to this position. Finally, I welcome Falko Sniehotta as President-Elect. Falko has been heavily involved in many EHPS activities over the past 10



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years, for example as a member of both the CREATE and Synergy boards, as an Associate Editor of *Health Psychology Review*, and as a Co-Editor of EHP. Falko brings with him a wealth of experience as well as many new ideas for the development of EHPS. Since the Cluj conference, the new EC has also asked Efrat Neter to act as National Delegate Convenor. Efrat has a particular interest in developing the National Delegates section of the society in order to encourage membership, support networking activities (e.g., joint applications for research funding), and develop the range of the society's training activities. I am looking forward to working with such a strong and enthusiastic group of colleagues and, in particular, welcoming them to Sheffield for our winter EC strategy meeting in February.

I would like to take this opportunity to also acknowledge the work of members of the outgoing EC who stepped down at the last election. Britta Renner, who was Past-President, has had a major influence on the development of the society both as President and in her previous roles on the EC. Her input and support will be missed. Yael Benyamini served two terms as Secretary. It is difficult to describe how important she has been in ensuring the smooth workings of the society over the past four years. I am pleased that she will continue to be in close contact with the EC as liaison officer for the Crete conference. Vera Araujo-Soares served as the Communications Officer and brought a range of new ideas for the development of this post. Finally, Elvira Cicognani was the National Delegates Officer in the last EC and, in addition to encouraging closer links between National Delegates, was instrumental in developing and administering the EHPS Networking Grant.

The end of the year marks the end of Rona Moss-Morris and Lucy Yardley's tenure as Editors-in-Chief of *Psychology & Health*. On behalf of the EC, I would like to thank them, and their editorial team, for

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all their excellent work on the journal over the past four years. In particular, I would like to highlight four major achievements. First, they oversaw the introduction of the web-based submissions procedure which has helped to reduce the time for decisions to be made on submissions. Second, the number of submissions has grown year on year, and the journal has increased in size to accommodate this increased interest in the journal. Third, Rona and Lucy successfully applied for Psychology & Health to be indexed in Medline. This should serve to increase the visibility of the journal. Fourth, the journal's impact factor reached 2.00 for the first time during their time as Editors-in-Chief. We are fortunate to have appointed Mark Conner and Daryl O'Connor from the University of Leeds (UK) who will be the new Editors-in-Chief of the journal from 2011. They bring with them considerable editorial experience and expertise in a wide range of topics in health psychology. Over the past month I have met with the new Editors-in-Chief along with Martin Hagger (Editor of Health Psychology Review) to discuss ways in which both journals can grow and support each other.

The new EC will be meeting in Sheffield early in the New Year for its winter strategy meeting. This will allow us an opportunity to consider the recent achievements of the society and to develop our aims for the next two years. We will be discussing a wide range of issues, but I would like to highlight two initiatives that we plan to prioritise. First, with the development of digital technologies over the past two decades, the voting procedures for EC elections have become somewhat antiquated. With the support of the Cluj Members Meeting, the new EC will revise the articles/bylaws of the society so that members are able to vote electronically. This will not only streamline the administration of EC elections but will also hopefully encourage more members to vote in EC elections. Second, health psychology in Europe has grown considerably as an academic discipline over the past two decades. There are now a plethora of Masters levels courses in health psychology available across Europe, some of which are detailed in the National Delegates' pages on our website. In addition, many of our colleagues are seeking to develop new courses. A recurrent theme in the National Delegates Meetings at recent conferences has been the wish for EHPS to develop a 'core minimum curriculum' that we would expect Masters levels courses in health psychology to cover. This would need to be flexible enough to encapsulate current practice across Europe, but detailed enough to provide a framework for the development of new courses. To this end, we propose to bring together experts from different countries to work on a proposal that can then be sent to EHPS members to comment on

and the National Delegates Meeting to discuss. This endeavour will hopefully aid harmonisation across Europe and may ultimately feed into a specialized a EuroPsy qualification to enable health psychologists to practice in different countries.

The society's annual conference continues to be a "flagship event" that highlights some of the very best research in European health psychology. We were fortunate to hold our 2010 conference in the Romanian city of Cluj-Napoca. The conference was very popular, attracting over 1000 abstracts, and was expertly organized. The success of the conference was due to work of a large number of people including the Organising Committee, the Scientific Committee, the Track Chairs, the keynotes, the workshop organisers and facilitators, the student helpers, as well as all of the delegates who attended and presented their work in symposia, oral sessions, poster sessions, roundtables and workshops. Special thanks are owed to the Chair of the Organising Committee, Adriana Baban, who did a phenomenal amount of work both in planning the conference and dealing with the myriad of problems that can occur during the conference itself. Without her dedication, calmness and organisational expertise the conference wouldn't have been so successful and enjoyable. Our next conference that takes place in Crete (20-24 September, 2011) will be the 25th Conference of the EHPS. This marks a special point in the development of the society and I know that the Conference President, Evangelos Karademas, and the Chair of the Scientific Committee, Efharis Panagopoulou, have a number of activities planned to celebrate this important event. We look forward to working them over the next few months and visiting Crete in September.

As we approach the 25th conference of the EHPS in Crete next year, the society is in a strong position. With over 500 members and a vibrant annual conference, the society is well placed to fulfil its aims "to promote empirical and theoretical research in and applications of health psychology within Europe". Given the maturity of health psychology as an academic discipline, coupled with the recent development of the professional status health psychology, it is perhaps appropriate that the theme of next year's conference focuses on "Engaging with other health professions: Challenges and perspectives".

Season's greetings to everyone from a very snowy Sheffield! I wish you every success and good health in 2011.

Paul Norman, EHPS President