



President's message

President's Message



Susan Michie
President, EHPS

Dear EHPS Members,

In Warsaw, I end my term as President; for the next two years I will serve as Past President. When I became President, the Society had been put onto a firm financial and procedural basis. As President, I set myself the goal of increasing membership and member involvement. This is necessary, in order to increase the activities and effectiveness of the Society, both in terms of providing services for members but also in terms of having an impact on the wider scientific and social community.

During the last two years, we have developed a recruitment strategy and developed four sub-committees of the EC, involving many new members in important developmental work. These are Education and Training, Publications, Research collaboration and the *European Health Psychologist* collective. As a result, the Society has become much more active, as illustrated by an increased membership of 27% in 2005, the launch of *Health Psychology Review* and the *European Health Psychologist*, new Special Interest Groups (e.g. Occupational Health Psychology, Qualitative Methods) and the initiation of satellite Conference workshops. We have increased our presence at other international conferences and strengthened our interdisciplinary links e.g. with the International Society of Behavioral Medicine with which we have had joint symposia at each other's conferences for the last three years.

As ever, there is much more to do. My view is that the next phase should include a "looking outwards" to disseminate the evidence we build and use our expertise to influence a wide variety of health and social policy. In the UK, the Department of Health pays the Division of Health Psychology for one day a week of Health Psychology time. As a result, we have a direct input into strategies such as the current anti-obesity strategy, and public health policies e.g. the development of a new type of health service worker, trained in behaviour change techniques. It would be wonderful if we could become similarly involved at a European, and a global level.

Five years ago, 189 member states of the United Nations agreed eight goals for the New Millennium. All are related to behaviour, and most are related to health behaviour. To mention just four of them:

- Combat AIDS/HIV, malaria and other diseases
- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Improve maternal health
- Reduce by 2/3 child mortality.

The International Association of Applied Psychology has achieved, within four years, non-governmental organisation status at the United Nations, and has begun to contribute to the work of the UN. They have accreditation on two UN committees, the Department of Public Information and the Economic and Social Council and four representatives in New York, Geneva and Vienna. The American Psychological Association also has representation. They are part of a newly formed Coordinating Council of 35 psychology representatives to strengthen the voice of psychology within the UN. It would be a great step forward for the EHPS to be part of that voice.

I have enjoyed these two years as President of EHPS immensely, and would encourage others to become involved in the Society. EHPS is your organisation, and it is vital for its success that members are involved in all the important decisions and activities of the Society. Your participation increases the quality of decisions and the quantity of activities. I extend warm thanks to my fellow EC members, past Presidents and countless others for wonderful support in the many and varied tasks of President,

Susan Michie, President, EHPS