

EUROPEAN HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY SOCIETY

EMAIL NEWSLETTER – APRIL 2000

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear EHPS Colleagues,

Preparations are well underway for our 14th annual conference in Leiden, The Netherlands (16-19th August 2000). We have received over 400 abstracts for the conference and these have now been arranged into over 200 oral presentations and 200 poster presentations. The conference promises to a great success and I encourage you to take advantage of the early registration fee (deadline: 14 May, 2000). Further details on the conference can be found on our website (<http://www.ehps.net>).

The term of the current Executive Committee expires at the Leiden conference. Nomination forms have recently been sent to EHPS members. I encourage you to nominate members who you would like to see on the Executive Committee and to send the forms to the Secretary by 31 May 2000. A copy of the form is included in this newsletter. The term of the National Delegates will also expire at the Leiden conference and a call for nominations is also included in this newsletter.

This newsletter also contains an article on Health Psychology in Portugal by Teresa McIntyre. As you will know Portugal will be hosting our conference in 2002, so the article gives us all an opportunity to learn more about Health Psychology in Portugal.

Best wishes,

Professor Hannah McGee
President, EHPS

14TH EHPS CONFERENCE

Leiden, The Netherlands, 16 – 19 August 2000

Models of Health and Illness Behaviours

Over 400 abstracts received. The Scientific Committee met in Leiden at the end of March to review the abstracts and to arrange the composition of the conference programme. There will be about 200 paper presentations (including symposia) and over 200 poster presentations. All interested participants have now been written to with details of the type, day and time of their presentation.

Early registration deadline: 14 May 2000. Reduced registration fees are available until 14 May 2000. All potential participants who sent in abstracts will receive a registration form along with their letter of acceptance. Further registration forms can be obtained via our website (<http://www.ehps.net>).

Invited Keynote Speakers. The theme of the conference is “Models of Health and Illness Behaviours” and a number of key researchers in the area have been invited to give keynote lectures. These are:

Albert Bandura (U.S.A.)
Charles Carver (U.S.A.)
Howard Leventhal (U.S.A.)
Kathy Parkes (U.K.)
Steve Sutton (U.K.)
Willem Albert Wagenaar (The Netherlands)

Further information about the conference, including registration details, can be obtained via the EHPS website (<http://www.ehps.net>).

HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY IN PORTUGAL

Teresa Mendonça McIntyre, Univ. Minho, Portugal

HISTORY

The informal beginnings of Health Psychology in Portugal can be placed about 15 years ago. These were marked by an increasing interest on the part of a few academics for the investigation of psychosocial processes related to the aetiology and maintenance of illness, and by the work of some clinical psychologists with medical patients in hospitals and health centres, especially in the areas of infant and maternal health (McIntyre, 1994).

These developments gave rise to the organisation of the 1st National Congress of Health Psychology in Lisbon in 1994. In 1995 the *Sociedade Portuguesa de Psicologia da Saúde* (Portuguese Society of Health Psychology) and the Division of Health Psychology of APPORT (Portuguese Association of Psychologists) were created, the latter focusing more on professional concerns. The Society organised the 2nd National Congress of Health Psychology at the University of Minho in 1997, which had 500 participants and witnessed a great expansion of scientific and professional interest in this area. The 3rd National Congress took place in Lisbon in February 2000 and focused on the contributions of Health Psychology to chronic disease. The Portuguese Society currently has about 220 members.

Between the first and second congresses there were a number of important publications in Health Psychology in Portugal: two textbooks and a half dozen journal issues. The primary emphasis of research and publications has been on disease and rehabilitation.

TRAINING

Training in Health Psychology in Portugal first started at the undergraduate level around 1991. The basic training in Psychology in Portugal is a 5-year degree entitled Licentiate, which gives access to a work permit given by the Union that allows for unsupervised practice in any speciality area. Typically, this training includes 3 years of coursework in a core psychology curriculum and 2 years of a pre-speciality curriculum, including a 5th year internship in the pre-speciality area. Although there is wide variation among undergraduate programs and curricula at this level, training in Health Psychology may include a one-year or semester course, usually in the fourth or fifth year which is optional, and the choice of a health setting for part of or the full 5th year supervised internship, if the pre-speciality is in Clinical or Clinical and Health Psychology.

At the graduate level there are five Master's programs in the country, two in Health Psychology and three hybrid programs with some components in Health Psychology:

- Master's program in Health Psychology, Univ. Minho, Braga: 1st Edition 1996/1998.
- Master's Program in Health Psychology, Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada (ISPA), Lisbon:
1st Edition 1997/1999.

- Master's program in Psychotherapy and Health Psychology, Univ. Lisbon: 1st Edition 1995/1997.
- Master's program in Developmental Psychology: Health Contexts, Univ. of Porto: 1st Edition 1996/1998.
- Master's program in Health Psychology and Community Intervention, Univ. Fernando Pessoa, Porto: 1st Edition 1999/2001.

There are no formal doctoral programs in Health Psychology in Portugal, as with other speciality areas in psychology. However, there are a number of people who have recently completed or are currently conducting their doctoral thesis in this area.

REGULATION OF THE PROFESSION

There is no regulating body for psychologists in Portugal that determines licensing and registration procedures. A proposal has been presented to the Ministry of Health for the last 10 years, which has not been approved due to powerful lobbying from other health professions and the lack of cohesiveness of the different associations of psychology in Portugal.

From 1994 to 1997, the APPORT, SPPS and five universities played an important role in passing a law that regulates the career of clinical psychologists in public medical settings (hospitals and health centres). This career includes a 3-year internship with accompanying coursework, with some Health Psychology content but mostly focused on psychopathology. However, most of the positions opened so far have been in hospitals and psychiatry departments, rather than in the primary care sector. There has also been a centralisation of these positions in the large cities (Lisbon, Coimbra and Porto) with virtually no positions opening regionally. As a result, relatively few health psychologists are given the opportunity to work in their field of expertise.

CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

The main problems for health psychology in Portugal are as follows:

1. It is in its infancy in terms of being recognised as a speciality domain within psychology.
2. Lacks a regulating body for education and practice.
3. Lacks a legislated career in health psychology in health institutions.
4. Lacks a research and practice focus on prevention and health promotion.
5. Is centralised in terms of the educational and professional expansion of the field.
6. Lacks internationalisation in terms of presenting and publishing Portuguese research abroad, and in terms of the exchange of students, researchers and faculty members.

The problems that are faced by a relatively unregulated expansion of Health Psychology in Portugal may be common to other countries where Health Psychology is also in its infancy. The contact with European organisations, such as EHPS, is very important in guiding our efforts to face these challenges more successfully so that the future for Health Psychology in

Portugal is truly a promising one. The organisation of the EHPS conference in Lisbon in 2002 will be an important opportunity for internationalisation and an impetus for the development of Health Psychology in Portugal.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- Teixeira, J. (1993). *Psicologia da Saúde e SIDA (Health Psychology and AIDS)*. Lisbon: ISPA.
- McIntyre, T. (1994). *Psicologia da Saúde: Áreas de intervenção e perspectivas futuras (Health Psychology: Areas of intervention and future perspectives)*. Braga: APPORT.
- McIntyre, T., & Vila-Chã, C. (1995). *O sofrimento do doente: Leituras multidisciplinares (Patient suffering: Multidisciplinary approaches)*. Braga: APPORT.
- Dias, R. (1997). *A esmeralda perdida: A informação ao doente com cancro da mama (The lost emerald: Informing breast cancer patients)*. Lisbon: ISPA.
- Ribeiro, J. (1998). *Psicologia e Saúde (Psychology and Health)*. Lisbon: ISPA.
- Ribeiro, J. (1999). *Metodologia da investigação em saúde (Research methodology in Health)*. Lisbon: CLIMEPSI.
- Barros, L. (1999). *Psicologia Pediátrica (Pediatric psychology)*. Lisbon: CLIMEPSI.
- McIntyre, T. , & Silva, N. (1999). *A satisfação do utente na Região Norte (Patient satisfaction in the northern region)*. Porto: Regional Health Administration – ARS-Norte.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE EHPS (2000-2002)

The term of the current Executive Committee will expire at the time of the Members' Meeting to be held during the next EHPS conference in Leiden, The Netherlands; 16 - 19 August, 2000. Nominations for election to positions on the Executive Committee are invited at this time.

In accordance with the Articles and Standing Orders of the Society, any member of the Society who has been a member for 3 years by this time is eligible for election unless he/she is already time-expired as a member of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee consists of eight members: President, Past-President, President-Elect, and 5 members-at-large who fulfil specific functions such as Secretary, Treasurer and Membership Officer.

Nominations are invited for the following positions: President-Elect and 5 Ordinary Members. Nominations (see form below) must be signed by the nominee him/herself and must be nominated and seconded by EHPS members. Nominations must be sent to the secretary to arrive not later than 31 May 2000. Members will receive a ballot form by mail, not later than one month before the Members' Meeting.

The following members of the current Executive Committee are eligible to be nominated for election: Therese van Elderen, Maria Kopp, Teresa McIntyre and Paul Norman. The following members will be retiring from the Executive Committee and, as time-expired members, are not eligible to be nominated for election: Ralf Schwarzer and Ladislav Valach. Ad Kaptein remains on the Executive Committee as incoming president and Hannah McGee as past-president.

INFORMATION REGARDING NOMINATIONS FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Approaches to the election of candidates to official roles in various aspects of life including professional societies differ considerably in the various regions of Europe. In some countries, it is understood that all members of an association are equally entitled to, and encouraged to, put themselves forward for election (by asking others to nominate them) or to identify and approach other members whom they would like to see represent the association and encourage them to go forward. In this system, the advantages of "new blood" and initiative in seeking to engage in the overall activity of managing the association are seen as an asset to the overall association. The holding of elections for a number of places is seen as evidence of active members who are keen to represent their perspectives in taking the association and its aims forward. In other countries, it is typically understood that positions for election will be filled by informal contact processes, often by senior members of the existing organisation. Here the advantages are seen to be those of identifying those individuals who have already shown some commitment to the goals and activities of the association and those who have an interest in the broad concerns of the association rather than a single issue. Elections may not always be necessary if only one individual is identified for each vacant position.

As a European association, the European Health Psychology Society is conscious of these different approaches and wishes to promote the widest feeling of access to the Society and its structure among members. It welcomes, as a democratic organisation, the declaration of intention to stand for election of any of its members. According to its Standing Orders the Executive Committee will ensure that candidates are able to fill the positions for election in the absence of sufficient nominations to ensure continuity of the work of the Society. Adequate representation of the various regions of Europe will also be ensured by agreement of results of the election by the members attending the Members' Meeting, as stipulated in the Standing Orders.

NOMINATION FOR ELECTION TO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE EUROPEAN HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY SOCIETY (2000-2002)

Name of candidate:

European Country:

I agree to have my name go forward for election

Signature of candidate:

POSITION NOMINATED FOR (please circle one): president-elect / ordinary member

PROPOSED BY: Name:

Signature:

SECONDED BY: Name:

Signature:

Completed form to be forwarded to the secretary,

Dr Paul Norman
Department of Psychology
University of Sheffield
Sheffield
S10 2TP
UK

to arrive no later than Wednesday 31 May 2000. Nominations (and acceptance of nomination) will also be accepted by email – to be sent to the secretary by 31 May 2000 (p.norman@sheffield.ac.uk).

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR NATIONAL DELEGATES
OF THE EHPS (2000-2002)

The term of the current National Delegates of the EHPS will expire at the next EHPS Conference in Leiden, The Netherlands; 16 - 19 August, 2000. Nominations are therefore invited for National Delegates for the period 2000-2002.

Nominations should be forwarded to the Teresa McIntyre to arrive no later than 31st July, 2000. The Executive Committee of the EHPS will appoint the National Delegates at the Leiden Conference. Letters of nomination should include brief c.v. details about the nominee and, where possible, a letter of endorsement from the nominee's national society.

The National Delegate is the main contact point for EHPS members in their country and they are expected to disseminate information about EHPS and to encourage membership. In addition, National Delegates are expected to attend a National Delegates meeting at the annual EHPS conference and to produce an annual report outlining activities in their country.

Letters of nomination should be forwarded to

Dr Teresa McIntyre
Departamento de Psicologia
Universidade do Minho
Campus de Gualtar
4710 Braga
PORTUGAL

to arrive no later than Monday, 31st July, 2000.