

president's message

Dear colleagues,

I am very happy to be writing my first President's message for the European Health Psychologist. I greatly appreciate that you have entrusted me with the position of President of the EHPS, a position which I now assume for the next two years. The EHPS is the first professional society that I joined after receiving my degrees, and it has been a warm and welcoming home to me throughout the years.

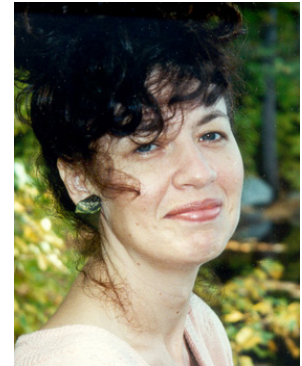
The number of countries represented in the EHPS and the number of members has been growing steadily. The EHPS currently has members from 40 countries! It has actively fostered collaborations with colleagues and societies throughout Europe and beyond, through joint conferences, symposia, workshops and other programs - and we look forward to continuing this tradition which will strengthen our scholarship. In the next months we will work to further solidify the voice of EHPS expertise at the international level by affiliating the EHPS with the United Nations community of psychological organizations. As such, EHPS representatives and members can contribute their scientific and practical knowledge to improving health, reducing health disparities and affecting policy on a global level, through their presence and input in Vienna, Geneva and New York. Susan Michie initiated this application during her term in the EC, and I now ask you to join us in bringing it to completion - by sending me information about your current and past projects and collaborations with UN organisations.

The involvement of EHPS members from Central and Eastern Europe has also grown during these years, and I am very happy that we recently had a very successful conference in Warsaw, Poland, and now new proposals from other CEE countries are coming in (from Romania and the Czech Republic, as well as an inquiry by Hungary). Hosting a conference can provide an enormous impetus to further stimulating health psychology activities in a country, and I certainly look forward to supporting these and other endeavours in Eastern and Central Europe. The rapid political and economic changes in some of the countries of the region have brought into perspective the impact that social change and social inequalities have on health, morbidity and mortality and the important role which health psychology can play.

Through its forums, publications and its education and training events the Society can also ensure a high level of expertise in a diversity of methods of analysis, including broadening the scope and impact of qualitative inquiry.

The new EHPS Executive Committee has both continuity and new members. Britta Renner will

continue her invaluable contribution to the society as Past-president. I feel very well supported by her expertise and commitment to the goals of EHPS. It has been stimulating to work with her both in her role as President and previous roles in the EC, with



creativity and dedication to principles. Yael Benyamini continues her second term as Secretary, and it is impossible to describe the importance of her role in assuring the smooth workings of the Society, as well as her contribution to the synergistic functioning of our committee. Vera Araújo-Soares contributed immensely to making the Bath Conference possible, as liaison with the Bath team, and also continues her active role in the EC as liaison with the European Health Psychologist. I would like to thank the outgoing EC members, Susan Michie, Christel Salewski, David Hevey and Winnie Gebhardt for their creativity, commitment and perseverance. I welcome the new members Paul Norman, Manja Vollmann, Elvira Cicognani, and Holger Schmid - you bring immense experience and ingenuity and I look forward to working with you. The first three months of our term have been quite turbulent and the opportunity to work with such a dedicated team has been very rewarding.

The European Health Psychologist is dear to my heart, as I enjoyed being its Editor for over four years. For two of those years I was joined by Falko Sniehotta & Vera Araújo-Soares as co-editors, who then took on the role of Editors. They have creatively transformed the EHP, and now it is time for them to move to other projects and to hand over the editorial position to a new team. We welcome Gerard Molloy from University College London and Emely de Vet from Universiteit Amsterdam in their new role as EHP Editors, and the editorial team of Nihal Mohamed, Elke van Hoof, Richard De Visser, Lukasz Kaczmarek, Adam Mickiewicz, Jenny Fidler, Rik Crutzen, and Justin Presseau. Our other publications, the journals *Psychology & Health* and *Health Psychology Review* are also doing very well; we are in the process of renewing the contract for *Psychology & Health* with Taylor & Francis and ► will have more information in the next issue. Rona Moss-Morris and Lucy Yardley have sent us the great



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news that the application to have Psychology & Health indexed on Medline has been approved and we can now expect even greater visibility of our journal.

The Fellowship Committee chaired by John Weinman has developed and finalized the procedures for nominating EHPS Fellows. They are posted on the EHPS website, along with explanations of the criteria and the needed nomination forms. As the deadline for nominations is fast approaching - December 20th - I urge all members to visit the website.

The conference in the beautiful city of Bath in September 2008, under the theme of Behavior, Health and Healthcare: From Physiology to Policy, was a wonderfully organized joint EHPS and British Psychological Society (BPS) Division of Health Psychology (DHP) conference. I would like to underscore the success of the conference, with its 713 delegates and the fruitful outcomes of this collaboration between our two organizations, which we can now consider a tradition! On behalf of the EHPS, I would like to thank the members of the Bath Organizing committee and the Scientific committee, and Jo Hart, Karen Rodham and David French. Coordination of the procedures, rituals and programs of the two organizations must have been a taxing juggling act, however, it was handled brilliantly and the results were rewarding for all of us who had the good fortune to be able to attend. The feedback from the evaluation forms testifies to that.

And now, we are excited to look forward to the next major event for the EHPS, the annual conference to be held in the picturesque and historic city of Pisa, Italy. The theme of the conference, Health Psychology: From Knowledge to Interventions, reflects cutting edge areas of inquiry which are central to the scientific endeavours of many of our members and throughout the scholarly health psychology community. It is with great pleasure and anticipation for our meeting in Pisa that I would like to introduce the organisers for the next conference: the President is Mario Guazzelli, Professor of Clinical Psychology, School of Medicine, University of Pisa, Italy; Chair and Co-Chair of the Scientific Committee are Stan Maes (Leiden, Netherlands) and Franco Bonaguidi (Pisa, Italy). The keynote speakers have now been confirmed: Gian Vittorio Caprara (Italy), Linda Cameron (New Zealand), Jim Coyne (USA/NL), and Jane Wardle (UK).

The pre-conference Workshops at Pisa will be: Evaluation Research in Health Psychology – What the little prince can see with Werner W. Wittmann, Narrative Analysis in Health Psychology, with Adriana Baban, and Introduction to the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological

Development (2007-2013) with Alessia Franchini. CREATE is preparing their three-day program on the topic of Advancing the science of behaviour change: methods and theories with Susan Michie, Falko Sniehotta and David French as facilitators. Synergy's program is on the topic of: Pragmatics of running clinical trials: Issues of design, management and the processes of change with Rona Moss-Morris, Trudie Chalder, Alison Wearden and Gijs Bleijenberg.

As this issue of the European Health Psychologist is going to print, the virtual members' meeting we called regarding the decision about the 2010 conference venue is still on-going. Thank you, Rebecca Jacoby and Adriana Baban, for being so gracious to invite the members of the EHPS to visit your countries and to get to know the accomplishments of the field in each of your Universities. I know that the Society can further catalyze health psychology activities in both Israel and Romania, through the collegial exchange of information and contacts offered by our conferences and other forums, and that that the Society will benefit immensely from your participation.

As I write this, I do not know the outcome of the vote for the 2010 venue, which is not relevant to my message. What I do know is the extent of commitment of time, concern and effort from all members of the Executive Committee needed to prepare and conduct the meeting, and I express my sincere appreciation for their dedication. Manja Vollman's unique expertise in web construction and her endurance, through many revisions of the webpages, have made the virtual implementation of this meeting possible. I know that the motivations driving the Executive Committee have been those of democracy and fairness. I know that both proposers would be very happy to host us in their professional homes, and would organize excellent conferences. And I also know that the emotions surrounding this issue are testimony to the importance of the Society in the lives, the professional identity and networks of its members.

Thus, let's remember the spirit that motivates hosts to invite us to their countries in the first place, and from there we can go forward with the next steps in developing the mission, collaborations and scientific goals of the Society.

Best wishes to everyone for the upcoming holidays and have a wonderfully creative and healthy New Year! Please contact me with comments and ideas! ■

Irina Todorova, EHPS President