

President's message



Paul Norman

EHPS president

Dear Colleagues,

It was a great pleasure to see so many of you at our recent conference in Crete. The conference was our largest conference to date and

was a fitting celebration of 25 years of Health Psychology in Europe. We are indebted to the enthusiasm, commitment and hard work of the many people who ensured that the conference was such a great success. In particular, special thanks are due to Evangelos Karademas, who was Conference President and Chair of the Local Organising Committee, and to Efharis Panagopoulou, who was Chair of the Scientific Committee.

Our Conference Officer and Past-President, Irina Todorova, has produced a glowing report on the Crete conference that appears in this issue of EHP. I would like to thank Natalie Schüz and Manja Vollmann for organising the technical aspects of the online survey and Irina Todorova for summarising the feedback provided by delegates. Delegates' ratings, as well as their written comments, were very positive for nearly every aspect of the conference. However, delegates highlighted two recurring issues that we will seek to address for future conferences. First, over recent years we have moved to only having an online version of the abstracts book. Delegates commented that they would like to receive the link to the abstract book earlier and to be able to download a single pdf file of the full abstract book. We will work with Taylor & Francis to ensure that both these comments are

addressed for future conferences. Second, delegates made a range of comments on the poster sessions. In particular, delegates commented that there were many no-shows (presenters and chairs) and that it was difficult to hear the presentations. Other delegates commented that the presentations made it difficult to move around the poster hall and look at all of the posters. In Cluj we dropped the poster presentation format, although in the online feedback most delegates indicated that they would prefer to have poster sessions with presentations, as they also did this year. The EC will look at ways to enhance the poster sessions at future conferences taking into consideration delegate feedback as well as local circumstances.

The society aims to "promote empirical and theoretical research in and applications of health psychology" which is ably supported by our annual conference, publications and grants. In recent years the society has sought to have a stronger influence on health policy through two main developments. First, EHPS is now associated with the Division of Public Information/NGO Section of the United Nations. Our Past-President, Irina Todorova, is currently working on the formation of an UN sub-committee to develop ways in which we can strengthen our association. EHPS members have already attended briefing events at the UN and the 64th Annual UN/NGO Conference in Bonn on "Sustainable Societies, Responsive Citizens". Reports on these activities are now detailed in the new UN section of the EHPS website. Second, over the past two years we have strengthened our links with EFPA (European Federation of

Psychologists' Associations). For example, I have attended meetings with other European psychology societies to discuss common issues of interest. In early November, EFPA organised a conference at the European Parliament on "Psychology for Europe". The conference sought to highlight the importance of psychology to EU policy-making in various areas including education, work, community, transport and health. The conference was attended by 120 delegates from 28 countries, including over 20 EU policy makers. European health psychology had a strong presence at the meeting with one of our Past-Presidents, Susan Michie, presenting on the psychological principles of behaviour change and implications for policy. EFPA are planning a follow-up conference specifically on "Psychology for Health" in autumn 2012, in which health psychology will represent a core focus. Our Founding President, Stan Maes, is the Chair of the Scientific Committee for this conference.

Having celebrated 25 years of Health Psychology in Europe in Crete earlier this year, we are already looking forward to our next conference in Prague, 21-25 August 2012, which is being ably organized by Vladimir Kebza (Conference President) and Aleksandra Luszczynska (Chair of the Scientific Committee) with the support of our Liaison Officer, Ralf Schwarzer. Abstract submissions open in early January and close on 14 February. I encourage all members to submit their work and ensure the continued success of our conference!

I would like to wish all members a very merry Christmas/festive season and I look forward to seeing you in Prague in 2012. ■

Paul Norman

EHPS President