



### Letter from the President

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Dear Colleagues,

By the time you will be reading this Letter, we'll be very close to the EAHIL 2018 Conference in Cardiff, and I hope to see as many of you as possible there. The Local Organizing Committee in Cardiff is doing an excellent work, and I am sure that the Conference will see a large participation of colleagues. A very interesting scientific programme is available on the website, and the Continuing Education Courses offered are appropriate and varied, including, among others, topics such as Research Metrics, Health Technology Assessment, Systematic Reviews and Distance Learning. Please note that CEC 3 "Synchronous Online Teaching – Keeping virtual classroom students engaged", is offered free of charge to all EAHIL members. Furthermore, the social programme features visits to libraries and to other cultural points of interest in the city. Last, but not least, the social programme includes a Welcome Reception in Cardiff National Museum and a Gala Dinner in the City Hall. For the lucky members of EAHIL who will be able to attend the Conference, it will be a priceless opportunity to meet old friends again, as well as to make new ones, thus creating new professional and personal relationships.

This issue of *JEAHIL* is dedicated to Clinical Librarianship, which is why I want to introduce in this letter the issue of health literacy that is undoubtedly relevant for health information specialists, who work closely with the public. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) definition, Health Literacy includes "the cognitive and social skills which determine the motivation and ability of individuals to gain access to understand and use information in ways which promote and maintain good health. Health Literacy means more than being able to read pamphlets and successfully make appointments. By improving people's access to health information and their capacity to use it effectively, health literacy is critical to empowerment". The WHO has recently launched a new action network, in the context of the European Health Information Initiative (EHII)<sup>1</sup>. This Initiative aims at improving the health of the people of the European Region by increasing the information on which policy is based. EHII aims at integrating and harmonising the health information systems in Europe, providing policy-makers with evidence. This can be achieved by fostering international cooperation in order to exchange expertise, build capacity and harmonize data collection. The new Action Network<sup>2</sup>, born under the umbrella of EHII, deals with Measuring Population and Organisational Health Literacy (M-POHL Network). M-POHL is willing to emphasize the importance and value of enhancing health literacy in Europe. The first meeting of the network was in Vienna, Austria, on 22 and 23 February 2018. Participants from 19 Member States of the WHO European Region and representatives of international organizations and networks discussed and reached an agreement on the goals of the newly founded network and started the preparation for the next comparative international health literacy study scheduled for 2019. During the Vienna meeting, the delegates produced a Statement on the Measurement of Health Literacy in Europe. This statement reaffirms the M-POHL Network's commitment towards the provision of continuous support for the European Health Information Initiative as a fundamental basis for strengthening evidence, information and research in the WHO European Region, as well as the establishment of an international research consortium to support regular cross-national European health literacy surveys. The next meeting of the M-POHL Network will take

place on 27-28 August 2018 in Bern, Switzerland. My Institute is representing Italy in M-POHL, and I am personally involved, as an information specialist, in the group of the appointed experts.

Finally, as all of you are certainly aware (if only because of the many mails that filled your mailbox) on 25 May 2018 the new European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)<sup>3</sup> entered into force. The GDPR has many implications for our profession, since everyone may have to deal with data, and in particular with personal data, and might be requested to act as supervisor of personal data processing and protection. This is even more true for Clinical Librarians, who are likely to be involved in research projects where sensitive health data of patients and citizens are stored and processed. EAHIL as an organisation deals with personal data of its members. This is why a privacy statement has been published on EAHIL website <http://eahil.eu/privacy-statement/>, where you can find all information regarding the protection of your personal data.

I am looking forward to hearing from your comments on this and other topics. In the meantime, I wish you a fruitful conference and for those of you who are unable to attend, a wonderful summer.

Maurella

The screenshot shows the WHO website interface. At the top left is the WHO logo and 'World Health Organization REGIONAL OFFICE FOR Europe'. On the right, there are language options: English, Français, Deutsch, Русский. Below this is a search bar. A navigation menu includes Home, Health topics, Countries, Publications, Data and evidence (selected), Media centre, and About us. The breadcrumb trail reads 'Data and evidence > New Action Network strengthens health literacy measurement in Europe'. The article title is 'New Action Network strengthens health literacy measurement in Europe' with a date of 30-04-2018. The article text describes the M-POHL Network's mission and WHO's definition of health literacy. A group photo of network members is shown on the right, credited to MOH Austria.

Fig. 1. WHO News: New Action Network strengthens health literacy measurement in Europe.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.euro.who.int/en/data-and-evidence/european-health-information-initiative-ehii/european-health-information-initiative>  
<sup>2</sup> At this URL you can find all contacts and information on how to join M-POLH: <http://www.euro.who.int/en/data-and-evidence/news/news/2018/4/new-action-network-strengthens-health-literacy-measurement-in-europe> The link to the Vienna agreement full-text is also available in the above mentioned Web page.  
<sup>3</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/reform/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/reform/index_en.htm)