
Letter from the President



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Dear EAHIL Colleagues,

This year it is 35 years since the Association was officially constituted, in Brighton, the UK, in 1987. The aim of the Association was – and still is – cooperation by health information professionals across Europe. Many things have changed in 35 years; more recently, the possibilities for networking and meeting digitally have transformed how we work. When this letter is published in the June issue of JEAHIL, some of us will have met in Rotterdam for the first time since 2019, a longed-for event. EAHIL has a long and impressive history of successful conferences and workshops. Still, lately, I've had reasons to reflect on the relevancy of EAHIL to health information professionals of the 21st century.

The background for this is a decrease in member activity in several areas; in the number of submitted abstracts for events as well as in participation, also manifesting itself in the low interest in being nominated for the Board, offering to arrange a future event or being active in (not just a member of) a Special Interest Group (SIG). Most noteworthy is the considerable decline in our membership after the update to the membership database in late 2021.

EAHIL was created at a time before quick ways of networking on the internet, and social media platforms were available. Perhaps there is less need to meet colleagues face to face to network or update your professional knowledge. Maybe this also reflects the interest in belonging to a professional association? There is also the fact that being a member gives the individual no specific advantages, except being added to a general e-mail discussion list or joining a SIG, unless you want to run for Council or Board. It is hard to discern what's behind this perceived decline in interest. Is it a sign that the relevance of EAHIL is changing, or is it an effect of the pandemic?

EAHIL is a professional association run by dedicated volunteers. Without members willing to support the association by working on the Board or Council or arranging events, there will be no EAHIL. Currently, the most pressing issue is planning future conferences and workshops. Next year we will meet in Trondheim, Norway, but for 2024 and onwards, we are looking for locations. Since the planning timeline for an event is approximately two years, we need to secure future event locations. I invite you to send expressions of interest or proposals to EAHIL-SECR@LIST.ECOMPASS.NL. Please refer to <http://eahil.eu/events/arrange-conference/> for event guidelines, and feel free to contact me or other Board members for discussion and support.

I am looking forward to hearing from you with proposals and suggestions!

Lotta