
Letter from the President



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Dear EAHIL Colleagues,

In my two previous Letters, I have expressed my thoughts on the relevance of EAHIL today and in the future, on the background that the number of EAHIL members is in decline and varying and low member activity. Against this background, a workshop was held at the Council meeting in Rotterdam to learn more about the reason for becoming and staying a member of EAHIL. We also wanted to find good examples of how Council members could work in their countries to advocate the association among health librarians.

As was expected, there were many reasons for becoming and staying a member of EAHIL. The most common ones were learning new things and to network with colleagues. Some quotes:

- “EAHIL is the perfect place to discover new tools and new ways of working. It gives another perspective and possible solutions in case of difficulties”;
- “To connect with people in the same profession, to exchange knowledge with peers who may be facing similar challenges in other countries”;
- “To feel a sense of belonging particularly important for solo librarians”.

Council members listed several ways they had or could spread information about EAHIL in their countries, including encouraging new colleagues in the field to join EAHIL, giving short reports about EAHIL at national meetings for health librarians or writing short pieces for national library journals. They stressed that strong local or national networks were important and suggested contacting universities' local/national library programmes to encourage students to become members. Working nationally could also be a way to overcome the language barrier for those not so fluent in English.

In June, a workshop on a similar theme was held in Stockholm at the national conference for health librarians, discussing the future of networking with an emphasis on formal or informal networks and the commitment needed to keep a network or association going. The participants agreed that we will still want and need to network in the future, but considering the fact that “someone” will need to invest their time – personal or professional – to keep the network/association going, be it a formal association with elections or a more information network with a steering group.

A conclusion could be that even though it might seem easier to get information or network today, we still very much need and want to network and learn from each other. It suggests that there is a future for EAHIL and EAHIL events. We need to work a little harder to involve our colleagues who are not yet members or not very active. Together we can do it!

NEWS FROM EAHIL

The above brings me to remind you that we need to secure locations for the EAHIL events from 2024 onwards. Since our yearly events are the main activities of our Association, and the planning timeline for an event is approximately two years, time is running short. 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 other Board members or me for discussion and support.

Looking forward to hearing from you with proposals and suggestions.