



NEWSLETTER

International Federation of Environmental Health

July 2013 Edition

Welcome to the July edition of the IFEH Newsletter

IFEH Council meeting and AGM

The 2013 Council and Annual General Meetings of the IFEH were held in the Glynhill Hotel, Renfrew, Scotland on Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 May. The meetings were well attended with representatives from Australia, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, England, Ireland, Malaysia, Malawi, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Portugal, Scotland, South Africa and USA. The meetings were hosted by the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland. The minutes from both meetings are now on the website for members to access. The next Council meeting and AGM will be held during the Thirteenth World Congress which will be held in Las Vegas, USA at the beginning of July 2014. More details will appear in future Newsletters and on the website.

Fourteenth IFEH World Congress

During the Council meeting mentioned earlier two presentations were made for the right to host the Fourteenth World Congress in 2016. Presentations were made by Young Samanyka, on behalf of the Malawi Environmental Health Association and Susanna Paixao, on behalf of ESTeSC, Portugal on their respective bids to host the World Congress in 2016. Following a ballot of members it was agreed the Fourteenth World Congress on Environmental Health will be held in Malawi in 2016.

Hedgerow Bursary — Background

At the 2012 World Congress in Lithuania the Federation Council agreed to examine options for supporting Members from developing Countries to attend our Annual Council Meeting and AGM.

During the Congress the Federation President, Robert Bradbury, started to engage Hedgerow Software Ltd in discussion on possible financial support to deliver this objective. Hedgerow were an exhibitor at the Congress and are a Software Company who provide software packages for the environmental health & health sectors in Canada and the USA.

In the following months and after several discussions, Hedgerow offered to provide the Federation with an annual Bursary Fund of 10,000\$ Canadian. The 2013 Council Meeting in Renfrew approved the Bursary proposals and Hedgerow presented the Federation with the first year's funds.

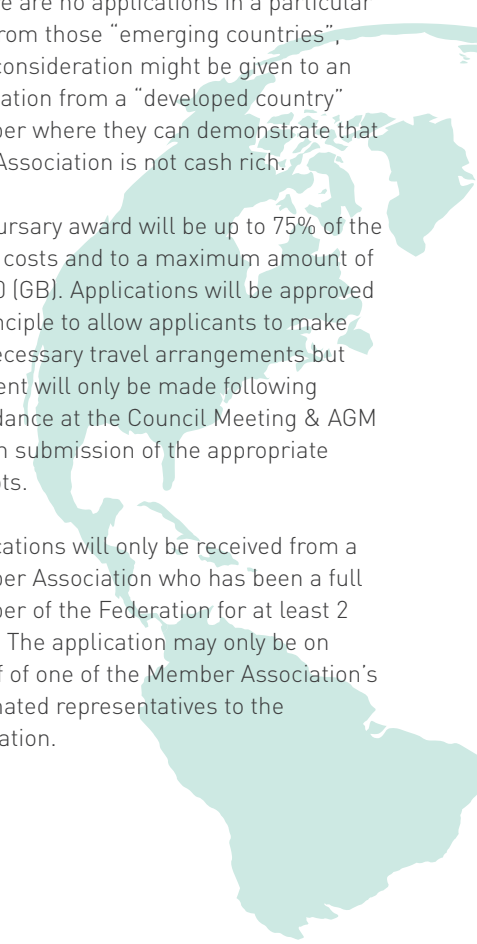
The purpose of the Bursary is to assist Member Association delegates to attend Council Meetings & AGMs but cannot be used for travel to or from Regional Meetings.

Each year priority will be given to assisting those countries who fall into the category where IFEH subscription band, limits their payment to £50 because of their GDP. Consideration may also be given to countries where the member country is not classified as 'emerging' as their national economies are vibrant, however the Member Association is not cash rich and cannot afford expensive travel costs.

If there are no applications in a particular year from those "emerging countries", then consideration might be given to an application from a "developed country" Member where they can demonstrate that their Association is not cash rich.

Any bursary award will be up to 75% of the travel costs and to a maximum amount of £1,400 (GB). Applications will be approved in principle to allow applicants to make the necessary travel arrangements but payment will only be made following attendance at the Council Meeting & AGM and on submission of the appropriate receipts.

Applications will only be received from a Member Association who has been a full Member of the Federation for at least 2 years. The application may only be on behalf of one of the Member Association's nominated representatives to the Federation.





Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly closes with concern over new global health threat

The World Health Assembly is held annually in Geneva, Switzerland and is the decision-making body of the WHO. It is attended by delegations from WHO Member States and focuses on a specific health agenda prepared by the Executive Board. Held from 20 to 27 May 2013, the 66th World Health Assembly concluded with agreement on a range of new public health measures and recommendations aimed at securing greater health benefits for all people, everywhere. At the closing ceremony Dr Margaret Chan, WHO Director-General sounded an alarm concerning a new threat to Public Health, she said 'Looking at the overall global situation, my greatest concern right now is the novel coronavirus. We understand too little about this virus when viewed against the magnitude of its potential threat. Any new disease that is emerging faster than our understanding is never under control,' Dr Chan said.

"These are alarm bells and we must respond. The novel coronavirus is not a problem that any single affected country can keep to itself or manage all by itself. The novel coronavirus is a threat to the entire world."

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that includes viruses that may cause a range of illnesses in humans, from the common cold to SARS. Viruses of this family also cause a number of animal diseases. Since April 2012, there have been 50 laboratory-confirmed cases of human infection with Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV). Thirty of these cases have died.

Delegates noted the report on progress in implementation of the resolution on global efforts to prevent, control and eliminate malaria. Mortality rates decreased by more than 25% worldwide between 2000 and 2010, but a global funding shortfall threatens to jeopardize further progress. The report highlights surveillance challenges in many endemic countries and notes new WHO-led initiatives to address emerging drug and insecticide resistance. It also underlines that further progress can only be made if malaria interventions are substantially expanded in the 17 most affected countries, which account for an estimated 80% of malaria cases.

All Island Conference

The annual All Island Conference which is attended by members from both EHOA and CIEH NI Region will be held in the Crown Plaza Hotel, Dundalk, Co Louth on Thursday 4 and Friday 5 July. The conference programme will be looking at a range of issues including Food Fraud, Housing, Pest Control, Public Health Policy, Biomonitoring and Tobacco Control. Some members will also be presenting a number of case studies and reports on interesting or unusual issues or projects they have been involved with during the last year.

Also presenting will be Shauna Lagan, winner of the 2012 NI Region Michael Cole Award with her project "Mum's Health Matters" which has been adopted and taken forward by one of our Health Boards

This event is, of course also open to IFEH colleagues from other member organisations. If you are interested in attending contact Deirdre Fitzsimons on Deirdre@ehoa.ie or Steve Cooper on s.cooper@cieh.org for further details.

News from Northern Ireland

On the 8th of March the annual technical update meeting for members was held in the Hilton Hotel, Belfast. The feedback after the meeting was all extremely positive and colleagues were most appreciative of the opportunity to hear first-hand what is happening across the field of environmental health in Northern Ireland.

Some of our retired members sat in on the meeting and at their lunch afterwards they took the time to mention how much they enjoyed the morning session. In particular, they found it amazing to look at the depth and breadth of our work today but were also delighted that the public health work — housing & pests — remained a core responsibility. This was the first lunch your Treasurer attended as a bona fide retired member!

We also installed our new regional President, Sam Knox CFCIEH whose first responsibility was to present the David Montgomery Award with which we acknowledge the top graduate from the Environmental Health course at the University of Ulster each year. This year we had two winners with equal marks — Stephanie King and Hannah Chapman. They are pictured below with Sam.





Coimbra Health School students visit Bruel and Kjaer

Kidnapped!!

Two EHOs were recently detained against their will by an obstructive shop keeper in County Armagh, Northern Ireland. The two officers were undertaking a routine inspection when the shopkeeper locked the doors of the premises and refused to let them leave. The officers eventually escaped and the matter is now being dealt with by the Police Service with the full support of the Officer's employing authority.

University Exchanges

Two of our Associate Academic Members – the University of Ulster and the College of Health Technology, Coimbra, Portugal are engaged in environmental health staff and student exchanges under the Erasmus programme. The College of Health Sciences hosted the 1st Annual meeting of the Coimbra Health School on 13th April and two speakers from Northern Ireland participated – Ursula Walsh, Senior Lecturer, University of Ulster and Steve Cooper, CIEH NI Region.

On the 23rd of April the NI Region will host an afternoon meeting for members and we have invited a visiting lecturer from the College of Health Technology, João Almeida to speak at the meeting.

Environmental Health students from Coimbra visited Copenhagen to see examples of environmental Sustainability

by Nelson Leite e Sá

Coimbra Health School (ESTeSC) is one of the three pioneer schools in the teaching of health applied sciences, having been founded in 1980. Today it has about 1200 students in undergraduate courses (with a duration of 4 academic years) distributed by the degrees of: Audiology, Cardiopneumology, Biomedical Sciences, Environmental Health, Nutrition and Dietetics, Pharmacy, Physiotherapy and Radiology.



Acknowledging the spirit of ancient Portuguese Navigators, once again, an international study visit was undertaken by the school. Similar to last year where we went to the center of European decision making, Parliament and the European Commission, in Brussels (Belgium). This year we choose a green capital, Copenhagen, with a very valuable academic, technical and social program which added tremendous value to students and professors.

The study visit to Copenhagen was organized in cooperation with Henning Hansen, President Elect of the International Federation of Environmental Health. He made arrangements for a group of 35 people, including 8 professors from the course at Coimbra. Also in the party were two students from Slovenia, who were in ERASMUS mobility, and 2 students from Brazil.

From 29 January to 2 February we participated in technical visits and lectures on several topics related to Environmental Health, including the European Environment Agency (EEA), the Municipality of Copenhagen, Bruel & Kjaer — specialist company in noise and vibration, Foundation for Environmental Health (FEE) and a waste incinerator in Copenhagen, "Amagerforbrænding."

The European Environment Agency has, in our opinion, contributed more to the creation/modification of policies contained themes explored by us while current and potential agents of change in the near future. The city of Copenhagen, that is considered the greenest Capital of European Union and received this epithet with the Green Capital Award 2014.

We also had the opportunity to visit Bruel & Kjaer, which has served the industry reference in the field of Noise and Vibration and which has cooperated with the Environmental Health of Coimbra for many years. Coimbra Health School is the first higher institution in the world being awarded by Eco-Schools and visited the FEE with the Green Flag.

This visit resulted in a new set of contacts and experiences that may be useful in the future, both for students and for professors, and Coimbra Health School stated as a center of excellence and innovation in teaching Environmental Health.

Currently we are planning the study visit for next year that will involve students as co-organizers, giving them responsibility for their future and future development.

Practitioner exchanges and Twinning

Practitioner exchanges are an excellent way for professionals to gain experience in a different working environment and to exchange ideas with fellow professionals. Over the years many officers from Member Organisations have benefitted from visiting other countries and, therefore, experiencing the delivery of environmental health services in a different setting. At the Council meeting held in Vilnius last year it was agreed that all Member Organisations should be asked to encourage practitioner exchanges. Equally, the Federation would encourage Member Organisations to become involved in formal Twinning arrangements. A number already exist and these can be found on the IFEH website. If you are interested in working in another country where the IFEH has a member organisation please get in touch with our IFEH twinning coordinators: Jan Homma, email: jan.homma@upcmail.nl and Jesper Christensen email: jecr@frederikshavn.dk. You should be aware that the requirements for working in another country might differ from those in your home country.

Keeping up to date

Frequently in these Newsletters I make a plea, particularly on behalf of the Honorary Secretary and the Honorary Treasurer, for members to keep us up to date with changes happening within their own organisations. It is important, especially for the Annual General Meeting, that we have an accurate contact list for those eligible to attend meetings. So may I take this opportunity to ask all Member Organisations, Associate Member Organisations and Academic Associate Members to review their entries on the web pages and update them, if necessary, as a matter of urgency? Please send these changes to Rod House, Honorary Secretary. It would be also helpful if you would copy your response to Steve Cooper, Honorary Treasurer, and Henning Hansen, Honorary Webmaster.

Finally this is the last Newsletter produced and edited by me. My thanks to all who have assisted me over the last five years, and twenty one editions. My thanks go to Rod House, Steve Cooper, Nelson Leite e Sá, WHO media centre, Andrew Forteath and Henning Hansen who have assisted in the production of this issue.