

# ISPS

## Report of ISPS's chair of the executive committee For the membership and for the 2011 Formal General Meeting

### Dear ISPS Colleagues

It is my pleasure on behalf of the ISPS Executive to be delivering this report which is both a formal obligation as part of our General Meeting in Dubrovnik in June, but also will serve as a source of information to all our members throughout the world who cannot attend the meeting.

The new Executive has been meeting regularly since June 2009 after the elections in Copenhagen and has made a number of important steps rebuilding foundations from which we hope the organisation can take further developmental initiatives.

The ISPS has changed in nature in the last 15 years. It was an organisation that only held international conferences every three years, conferences with an excellent reputation. Since 1997 it has had a constitution and one of the key aims was for ISPS to do much more in between conferences to support those interested in the psychological approaches to the psychoses.

This has been happening in a number of ways especially by the increasing development of local ISPS networks of professionals, in some cases also involving family members and users by experience. Local networks have been organising their own discussion meetings and conferences, developing their own newsletters and some have been very active in influencing national guidelines for the treatments of 'schizophrenia' and psychoses as well as a host of other activities. The International ISPS has a website, a book series and in the last three years an increasingly influential journal *Psychosis* and an international email discussion group and intends to re-launch a newsletter.

I mention all these things here in my introductory remarks to emphasise both our increasing success and impact as an organisation but also to stress that this requires an infra-structure and framework that needs to grow if it is to support such developments and enable good communications and the active involvement of our growing membership.

To this end the committee has been working particularly on

- Constitution
- Mass mailing
- Executive communications
- Web site
- Conferences
- Network development
- Ensuring viability of journal and book series
- Other means of promoting psychological therapies and skills relevant to psychoses
- Financial management

### **Constitution Changes**

We will be voting in Dubrovnik on proposals the EC believes will improve our constitution. In particular it will allow us to involve all of you in major decision making and in elections through electronic voting. At present these decisions are only made by members attending our international meeting, a very small percentage of the membership.

### **Mass mailing facilities**

We have been researching cost effective ways of reaching you all electronically from time to time. We have selected 'Constant Contact' and you will all have already started to receive communications in the weeks leading up to the Dubrovnik meeting. I think you will agree that this is a most welcome development.

### **Executive communications**

For the last year, the ISPS executive has succeeded in meeting every few weeks through SKYPE telephone calls which are free. This is a most important development and has allowed us to start to be far more effective as a team.

### **Web site**

We recognise there are considerable limitation to our web site and web site capacities. However there are quite a number of pages we can easily update ourselves and local networks are able to have their own information pages without requiring great technical skills. In this age we recognise the great potential of a website as an effective means of fulfilling our constitutional objectives of increasing knowledge of psychological therapies in both fellow professionals and the general public. We also sense that it may have a use in promoting learning skills. However, releasing the full potential of a website will have to await financial resources.

### **Newsletter**

Some of you have been enquiring about our Newsletter. This stopped in 2009 as we could no longer afford it. Our current plan is to use the website as much as possible for news and articles of interest and we rely on you all to send in items but to also re-launch the newsletter as soon as possible.

### **Conferences**

The executive has decided to move from international conferences every three years to every two years. The attendance in Dubrovnik will be considerably lower than usual and it is too early to be sure whether this is only a result of the global economic crisis. The next conference after Dubrovnik will be in Warsaw in Poland and a date should be announced in the coming weeks. The executive are more than welcoming of expressions of interest in hosting our international conferences. As already stated a number of ISPS networks organise their own conferences at both national level and regional levels.

### **Network development**

I am very pleased that our networks continue to develop and their activities are increasingly reported on our web pages. A number have their own email and other communication networks and organise meetings and conferences. We have about 1,300 members now in 17 networks around the globe and 6 more are in the

'contemplative' stage. Our hope is that an increasing number of countries will realise the benefit and potential of members linking together locally. Please note that local groups may have their own webpage within the ISPS parent site (without cost) and it does not require particular expertise to enter your own notices and other material.

### **Journal and Book Series**

When we met last in Copenhagen, our international journal PSYCHOSIS was very new. It now feels a very solid part of ISPS and a quality product of which we can be truly proud.

Congratulations are due to John Read, the Psychosis Editor with appreciation of all the work he and his associate editors Associate Editors, Jukka Aaltonen, Richard Bentall, Jan Olav Johannessen and Brian Koehler put into Psychosis. It is being increasingly indexed and cited as a result of the wide range of important areas it covers. It is paid for by all ISPS members' fees including £10.50 for a year's subscription of three editions and makes an important contribution to ISPS' limited funds.

Our book series now has 11 published books and two more will appear later in 2011. The series covers a wide range of topics relevant to ISPS.

Both books and journal are published by Routledge and we appreciate the many 'Routledge people' who have contributed to these important products.

### **Finances**

As is our tradition, there is a financial report separate from the chair's report.

#### **Longer term financial goals**

As will be seen from the financial report, the organisation has only enough income to cover little more than basic administration costs. We do not feel we can raise the membership fees without losing members and it is essential for the viability of the journal that our members' fee includes subscription to the journal.

In order to finance some basic projects such as being able to do more with our website, we have to seek alternative sources of income. We intend always to generate some income from our conference, we intend to increase our membership, generate more income from books and journal by marketing them more widely and we have not ruled out the possibility of fund raising.

#### **Practice and Training Developments**

The ISPS is now a substantive organisation and much is happening in our local networks. In the next phase of our development, we would like to see an emphasis on using the talents of our members even better than we do in promoting skills and knowledge of the psychological therapies. It is important that we promote these, not only amongst ourselves but amongst the large number of mental health professionals who are often thirsty for help and understanding of psychosis. We welcome members coming forward with ideas about this. It would be good to have more ISPS presentations within other organisations' conferences. We have a delicate balance of promoting psychological therapies and engaging other colleagues whilst standing up

and finding creative ways of challenging the often too dominant biological approach to psychosis.

### **The Executive Committee**

This is composed of people!! Of course all the above has been accomplished by a great deal of human endeavour and I want to end by giving credit to the members of the elected executive committee for all their work on behalf of the organisation. I want to thank John Read and his co-editors for all the very hard work that has gone into making the journal a sound success. I want to thank Michael Robbins for his prompting that has led to a number of the developments reported above, such as his work with others on revising the constitution, the Skype communications and the mass mailing. I want to thank Margreet de Pater for pursuing a number of these initiatives, Bent Rosenbaum for the important work of chairing the network sub-committee, Marty Cosgro for all his work looking after our finances - far from an easy task to keep track of everything. Marty was co-opted to the committee as Treasurer and is handing this over from the time of Dubrovnik on to Klaus Lehtinen. I want to thank Klaus for hosting our EC Skype conferencing, for taking over as Treasurer and Brian Koehler for his work as Secretary. The EC wishes to thank Chris Burford for stepping into the empty chair between June 2009 and June 2010 and for his energetic devotion to ISPS-INT over many years. The EC regrets recent developments that have led to the EC recommending a new email list which we hope will continue to be an important place for the open expression of ideas and information in our field.

I also want to pay tribute to Ivan Urlic and his colleagues in Croatia for all their work in difficult global circumstances in organising our 2011 conference at relatively short notice. I am sure it will be a professional success even if numbers prove to be lower than usual.

Last and most important of all, on behalf of the committee and all of you, I want to say a very big thank you to **Antonia Svensson** who, as our long standing administrator, takes care so efficiently and with such calmness and grace of all the things we fail to do!

**Brian Martindale**

**Chair ISPS**

12th May 2011