

Letter from the President



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Dear Colleagues,

This is my first letter as newly elected President of EAHIL, and, as you all can imagine, I am very honored and excited in taking up this role. EAHIL has driven me throughout all my professional and personal life. When many years ago, in 1985, I started my career as a young medical librarian, I immediately heard about the proposal to create an association of European medical librarians. Soon, I started to collaborate with Gabriella Poppi of the Library of my Institute, and future EAHIL Board member, in the organization of a conference to be held in Brussels in 1986: the correspondence among the organizers of the conference took place through an e-mail prototype, which, in those days, compared to the fax machine and postal system, seemed a highly advanced innovation, and indeed it was. Communicating almost in real time with colleagues in other countries was a kind of miracle. The following year - 1987 - EAHIL was born (this year is EAHIL 30th birthday!), together with my first daughter. In 1988 I collaborated in the organization of the Bologna EAHIL Conference, although I did not take part in it in person, since I was on maternity leave. Since then, EAHIL has always been a part of my life, and by participating in almost all events I was able to meet many colleagues from all over Europe and to learn so much from their experience. Now is time for me to serve – to the best of my abilities and in the wake of my predecessors – as President for this association, which was always crucial for my professional growth. Many years have passed since then, many things have changed in our profession, which is now transformed in many aspects, but one thing has always remained the same: the enthusiasm and the joy of working together with the awareness of the usefulness and the importance of our work.

At the time of writing this letter we just had our February Board meeting in Amsterdam (*Figure 1*). This was the right opportunity to welcome our new Board members for the 2017-2020 term, Witold Kozakiewicz (Poland) and Eirik Reiherth (Norway). And of course to thank Peter Morgan (UK) and Anna Kagedal (Sweden), who both left the Board in 2017. Peter, as Past President, made an excellent work in organizing our procedures, establishing connections with similar organizations and setting up rules and procedures for scholarships. Anna has ensured that the new modern site of the association saw the light, and we all appreciate her efforts every time we access the website. So, we all thank both of them for their great work and hope to have the opportunity of still working together in the near future. A very special thanks to Marshall Dozier, who has now the role of Past President. She has been a wonderful EAHIL President for 4 years, and is now helping me a lot in the transition period, by her invaluable assistance in all matters: she will always be, I hope, my reference point, and I am looking forward to collaborating with her and all the other colleagues of the Board, who confirmed their roles or took up new ones. Namely, Lotta Haglund



Fig. 3. EAHIL Executive Board members.

From right to left, seated: Karen Buset, Maurella Della Seta, Marshall Dozier, Lotta Haglund; standing: Witold Kozakiewicz, Eirik Reiervh, Francesca Gualtieri, Ghislaine Declève, Suzanne Bakker, Federica Napolitani, Tuulevi Ovaska.

(Sweden) is our vice President, she will liaise with sister organizations, and chair EAHIL Council. Karen Buset (Norway) and Ghislaine Declève (Belgium) will continue with their essential roles of Honorary Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, while Suzanne Bakker (Netherlands) is still our Supervisor, and Federica Napolitani the editor-in-chief of the JEAHIL, leading and ensuring communications with the Journal's editorial team. Tuulevi Ovaska (Finland) will be our Communications leader; Eirik Reiervh (Norway) will take care of the Professional Development area; Witold Kozakiewicz (Poland) is taking up the role of Deputy Treasurer, while

Francesca Gualtieri (Italy) will be our very committed Systems leader, managing EAHIL operational systems such as web server, mail and so on. During the Board meeting we had the possibility of testing new ways of developing our discussion. Thanks to Anna and Lotta efforts, we brainstormed about the topic "New strategies for EAHIL"; many stimulating ideas came out from all members. Among the many "wow ideas" generated during our session I particularly appreciated "Compass speed dating – speed dating between east and west and north and south at and between conferences! Could be organized online and in annual meetings" and we will let you know further developments about this and other issues, that will be also discussed at the Council meeting in Dublin.

My warmest welcome to new and re-elected Councilors for the 2017-2020 term: Luc Hourlay and Sandrine Vanderput (both from Belgium), Stefi Dodig (Bosnia-Herzegovina), Helena Bouzkova (Czech Republic), Brigitte Holm Petersen (Denmark), Pille Naggel (Estonia), Gyöngyi Karácsony (Hungary), Louise Farragher and Aoife Lawton (Ireland), Cristina Mancini and Mauro Mazzocut (Italy), Ilona Kauce (Latvia), Eugenie Delvaux and Hans Ket (Netherlands), Ewa Dobrogowska-Schlebusch (Poland), Maria Da Luz Antunes and Paula Seguro De Carvalho (Portugal), Mar González-Cantalejo (Spain), Isabelle de Kaenel and Désirée Stalder (Switzerland), Madeleine Still (UK), and to all the other Council members. I hope to be able to meet as many of you as possible personally at the next Dublin EAHIL Workshop. I wish you a fruitful work and hope to receive many proposals and suggestions for the future of our association.

Looking at the outcome of the Council elections, I noticed that some countries, although having vacancies, did not elect any representative: I really hope that colleagues from Austria, Croatia, Greece, Iceland and Moldova can find members considering to become a Councilor in the upcoming elections.

As you know from previous President letters, EAHIL is doing a lot of work trying to establish strong liaisons with similar organizations operating all over the world. I am glad to inform you that EAHIL President was invited by Taiwan Medical Library Association to give a speech at its International Conference, in Taipei at

the end of March 2017. The theme of the Conference is inspiring: “Beyond”, and the organizers are particularly interested in new roles and challenges for medical librarians, a research topic which is also lively debated in Europe and in EAHIL events and in the Journal. It will be certainly a good opportunity to learn more about trends and “hot topics” in medical librarianship from our eastern colleagues. A representative of Taiwan Medical Library Association, along with other sister organizations from other countries, was invited to take part in the Dublin EAHIL Workshop next June.

Moreover, following the proposal made by the promoters Alicia Gomez (Spain) and Valeria Scotti (Italy), a new EAHIL subgroup has been created, and approved by the Board. It will be about Evaluation and Metrics, with the main aim of connecting all those members interested in different types of metrics (bibliometrics, altmetrics, informatics). Besides being a framework to share and discuss information and experiences, the new subgroup aims at providing continuing professional development on these topics. Therefore, I warmly invite those of you involved or interested in assessment of organizational impact, in bibliometrics and altmetrics to join this newly established group and to actively collaborate in its activities. I am sure it will be a rewarding experience.

In January, Sapienza University of Rome invited Valeria Scotti and I, on behalf of EAHIL, to give a speech and to chair a session on “The Role of Librarians in the Evaluation of Research Output of University Units”, at the International workshop on Medical Libraries as high quality learning centres. All details, abstracts and some slides can be found at this link <<https://web.uniroma1.it/sbs/programma-convegno-medical-libraries>>.

As far as it concerns future EAHIL events, by the time you will read this letter, registration will be open for the Dublin Workshop, which will be held together with the 12th International Congress of Medical Librarianship (ICML). The draft program looks very promising and our Irish and IPC colleagues worked hard to ensure an extremely inspiring and innovative event, as announced by its theme, Diversity in practice: Integrating, Inspiring & Innovative. I am glad to remind you that we have two very good proposals for EAHIL events in 2018 and in 2019, which will take place respectively in Cardiff (Wales) and Bern (Switzerland). Events from 2020 onward are still to be set, although we had very interesting proposals. Therefore, I invite you once more to send expressions of interest or proposals to the secretariat email address (EAHIL-SECR@LIST.ECOMPASS.NL). Please feel free to contact me or other Board members for discussion and support.

Looking forward to hearing from you with proposals or suggestions, I wish you a wonderful 2017 full of professional success.

Maurella