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Health Equity Notes

A newsletter for ISEqH members

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 President (2004-2006)

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 Executive Secretary

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 Communications Co-ordinator

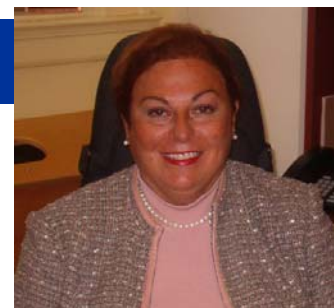
A Message from the Executive Secretary

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the new format of our newsletter for the ISEqH membership. This newsletter will be used as a venue to keep the membership informed of what is happening in the society and with its members. Members will have an opportunity to contribute topics and news to be included in the newsletter and inform members of the work that the society's members are doing throughout the world.

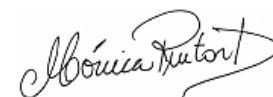
In the past six months, we have built resources and momentum to mobilize our office as we organize the 4th biennial conference in Adelaide, Australia. We have hired two new individuals to support our work here at the International Secretariat. Nelson Cabral has joined us as the ISEqH Communication

Co-ordinator. He has been working in our office since September 2005. He has a Masters in Education (Toronto), and a Bachelor of Business Administration (Laurier). He brings experience in oral and written communications from both the private and public sectors. He also is fluent in both Portuguese and Spanish and is highly proficient in French. He will be the primary contact for communications between the International Secretariat and the membership and external stakeholders.

Susan McCrae Vander Voet has joined us again to help organize and secure funding for our conference in Australia later this year. Susan previously worked with the Society to organize, fundraise and edit the Book of Abstracts for the Durban



Conference in 2004. In addition to an extensive background in not-for-profit management, organizational development and fundraising, she brings considerable experience in international development and program evaluation in Latin America, focusing on the health, education and well-being of children and women and the engagement of communities in development. Please join me in welcoming them to our team.



Special points of interest:

- New support staff at the International Secretariat of ISEqH
- Dr. Shane Houston selected as Keynote Speaker for conference
- Equity work in Bolivia
- New Master's program in Europe on Health and Welfare
- Richard Wilkinson's new book

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4th Biennial International Conference - Adelaide, Australia

Creating Healthy Societies through Inclusion and Equity
September 11 - 13, 2006

A conference organizing committee has been established with the participation of Fran Baum and Angela Lawless from Flinders University and Barbara Starfield and Monica Riutort from ISEqH. Together with the support of

Susan McCrae Vander Voet, the organizing committee has submitted proposal to funding organizations/agencies to help in building travel subsidies for selected presenters from low-to-middle income countries. Barbara Starfield leads the Scientific Committee who will review the abstracts submitted based on a set of criteria and notify selected presenters by mid-April. **The deadline for abstracts is March 1, 2006.**



For more information on the conference and to download the abstract submission form, please visit our website at www.iseqh.org.



**YEDITEPE University
Istanbul, Turkey**



Dr. Shane Houston

People's Health Assembly (PHA2) - Cuenca, Ecuador

Reports indicate that over 1500 people attended from 80 countries. Most participants were from Latin American countries. PHA2 was a continuation of the work started in Dhaka, Bangladesh to revitalize "Health for All".

Traditional healing practices was focal in the opening and closing events as well as in daily cultural events. Indigenous leaders from Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico and South Asia provided a healing space during the entire assembly. Monica

Riutort participated in a workshop organized by GEGA (Global Equity Gauge Alliance) Chilean Chapter for equity researchers from Latin America. The objectives for ISEqH in this Assembly was to network and promote ISEqH and our conference and to meet the Australian Planning Committee which were clearly met. Monica, with the support of Fran Baum and Gavin Mooney, distributed over 700 conference brochures. And she had the opportunity to meet with Walter Flores,

Martin Valdivia, and Lilian Jadue who are active members of both GEGA and ISEqH. Through our president, Armando de Negri, ISEqH has been present at the People's Health Assembly.

For more information regarding PHA2, please visit <http://phmovement.org/pha2/>.

IFSSH World Congress - *Health Challenges of the Third Millennium*— August 21 - 26, 2005 - Istanbul

Monica had the opportunity to travel to Istanbul this past August to attend the International Forum for Social Sciences and Health's World Congress on August 21- 26, 2005 that took place in Istanbul, Turkey. She presented a paper called "Decentralization and Equity in Health in Latin America" in addition to taking the opportunity to broaden ISEqH links in Europe and Asia.

The congress was organized in such a manner that parallel sessions were run for four

days with the same participants. Each participant was expected to join one session (workshop) and stay with that group during the course of the congress. Under the guidance of the session organizer, participants had the opportunity to meet each other, discuss their research, present their findings and work towards a congress declaration.

Monica also met in Istanbul, Dr. Sanda Cali and Dr. Sibel Kalaca from the Department of Public Health of Marmara University who invited

ISEqH to organize a meeting in Turkey by the last week of May 2006. Our hope is to establish a Balkan chapter of ISEqH during this meeting. The organizing process will start in the next couple of weeks with the assistance of Ruki Konjai, Lecturer at the University in Albania and a former Secretary of Health of Albania.

Dr. Shane Houston selected as KEYNOTE Speaker

Dr. Shane Houston, a Gungulu man from Central Queensland will be the Keynote Speaker at the ISEqH 4th Biennial Conference in September. He has urged the Australian and other governments to radically rethink Aboriginal

health policy. He proposes that public policy must take into account that "Aboriginal health issues are, at least in part, due to Aboriginal people being unable to live the life they value." And policymakers need to trust that Aboriginals know what is

best for them. Dr. Shane Houston currently works for the Office of Aboriginal Health in the Department of Health and Community Services in Casuarina, Australia.

Erasmus Mundus Master : Phoenix EM, DYNAMICS OF HEALTH AND WELFARE

The Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB), following the E.U. guidelines on higher education, presented a Master entitled *Phoenix EM Dynamics of Health and Welfare* to the European Commission in Brussels last May which was accepted this September. This Master, coordinated by École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris, France in which the Universities of Linköping, Évora, EHESS and UAB participated, has as its objective the provision of

knowledge and expertise for the future management of health and welfare in Europe and elsewhere.

By integrating a broad range of disciplines (political science, public health, history, sociology/anthropology, philosophy, demography, epidemiology, economics, education, public administration, law), the Master modules provide the keys to understanding health, welfare, and institutions. The goal is to empower individuals, organizations as

well as official bodies with new tools for analysing the interaction between health and social policy.

The program co-ordinators are interested in student and teacher exchanges. For more information, please contact Josefina Caminal at the UAB at: josefina.caminal@uab.es



Bolivia - Working towards reducing inequities

Under the auspices of the Bolivian Ministry of Health, ISEqH and the local PAHO office in Bolivia called a meeting to establish a working group to develop a strategy to reduce inequities in Bolivia. The meeting in La Paz involved more than 20

individuals representing policymakers, researchers, advocates, funders, and members of the recently-formed ISEqH chapter of the Americas. The International Secretariat developed a proposal to work with Bolivia and presented it to the

Canadian Institute for Health Research (CIHR) in November 2004. CIHR approved a grant of \$25,000 CAD to continue the work of PAHO and ISEqH in the country.



Map courtesy of The Lonely Planet Online - www.lonelyplanet.com

Writings Related to Equity

The literature on equity in health is burgeoning. Authors are invited to submit short descriptions of publications which they believe to be noteworthy. We introduce this feature in this first edition of the *Health Equity Notes* with a contribution from Richard Wilkinson.

Richard Wilkinson's 4th book, *The Impact of Inequality*, explains why low social status - being devalued and looked down on - is so stressful and can have devastating effects on people's lives and communities. The book presents a radical theory of the psychosocial impact of class stratification, with particular emphasis on health

and the quality of societal relations. It addresses people's experience of class and inequality and the pervasive sense that modern societies, despite material success, are social failures. At the same time, it shows that even small reductions in inequality matter, compelling us to pursue greater social and political equality to improve life for everyone.

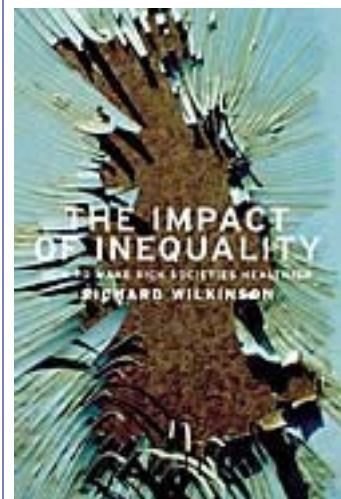
Format: Hardcover

304 pages

ISBN: 1565849256

Published: February, 2005

New Press





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The purpose for which ISEqH is formed is to promote equity in health and health services internationally through education, research, publication, communication and charitable support:

- to promote equity and expose inequity in health and in health care services internationally;
- to facilitate scientific interchange of, and disseminate conceptual and methodological knowledge on issues related to equity in health and health care services;
- to advance research related to equity in health; and
- to maintain corresponding relationships with other relevant international and regional organizations.



We are seeking NEW Members

If you know of anyone who is interested in becoming a member of the International Society for Equity in Health, please encourage them to register with the Society. The registration is available to download at our website at www.iseqh.org. We have also sent a copy of the registration form with this newsletter that you can feel free to distribute to interested individuals. We have a sliding scale membership fee structure determined by country. A

complete list is available on the website. Provisional membership has been established for individuals whose personal and institutional resources are insufficient to pay the membership fees. The provisional membership enables individuals to be on our mailing list and receive notices from ISEqH but without the privilege of voting. If you any inquiries, please contact Nelson at iseqh.info@utoronto.ca.

More Highlights and Events

Evaluation of Primary Health Care Initiatives in Bogotá, Colombia

The Faculty of Health Policy Management and Evaluation and the Department of Family and Community Medicine at the University of Toronto, partnered with faculty from the National University and Javeriana University in Bogotá and the Secretariats of Health and Finance of the Federal District, have applied to the Canadian Institute for Health Research to undertake and evaluation of the *Salud a Su Hogar (Health to Your Home)* primary health care initiatives in Bogotá. Researchers in Colombia are part of the Americas Chapter of ISEqH. They expect a decision in February.

Four-Country Partnership

Four teams in the Americas (from Canada, Brazil, Chile, and Colombia) have submitted a Letter of Intent to the International Development Research Centre (IRDC) to conduct research and build research capacity in Primary Health Care Evaluation in their respective countries.

Future Chapters of ISEqH in the Balkans and Asia



We hope to organize a meeting in May 2006 to a chapter of the Balkans. We currently have Ruki Konjai, a lecturer from the University of Albania and a former Secretary of Health from Albania, assisting us in contacting and organizing the group to lead the chapter in the

Balkans. Also Sibel Kalaca and Sanda Cali from Marmara University have been extremely helpful in making the chapter of the Balkans a closer reality.

Members have expressed an interest in establishing a chapter in Asia. It has proven to be a challenge in developing the contacts in Asia to form this chapter. Please let us know of any opportunities where we can reach an audience of equity health researchers in Asia and drum up support to proceed with the formation of this chapter.

We are accepting nominations for the ISEqH Executive Board, please visit our website at www.iseqh.org for more information on the nomination process. Please send us your nominations to iseqh.exec@utoronto.ca.

Do you have any notes to share with the membership?

If you have any news, information, or research highlights that you would like to share with the ISEqH membership, we invite you to submit an article to include in our newsletter.

Please note that *Health Equity Notes* is a newsletter and NOT a journal. Therefore, please keep your article as brief as possible. The newsletter will be sent out on a quarterly basis if not more frequently depending on the volume of articles, information, and news to share.

We want to make this a means to communicate your ideas and events and to share your successes. If you have information and/or article that you would like to submit to be published in the newsletter, please send it via email to iseqh.info@utoronto.ca or by fax at +1 (416) 946-3147.

Please send any comments, suggestions, or inquiries to iseqh.info@utoronto.ca