



Newsletter March 2003

Dear ISEqH members:

I am pleased to bring you the first newsletter of 2003 to keep you informed about the activities and development of the International Society for Equity in Health. As a young Society we encourage and count on your responses and active involvement.

Membership

First of all, I would like to thank those who already renewed their membership; and I would also like to especially acknowledge those members who made a contribution to subsidize the membership of colleagues from poorer countries.

However, we still have a large number of members who have not yet renewed their memberships for 2003. I encourage them to visit our website www.iseqh.org to complete and send us the Payment Form via e-mail or fax as soon as possible.

Please note that we have lowered our membership fees for most countries.

ISEqH activities and discussions

At the end of 2002 ISEqH Executive Board established its priorities through a series of electronic discussions. The first priority is to plan the 3rd International Conference and a second priority is to stimulate the formation of regional groups or chapter and activities or events. The Executive Board would like to develop ways to support activities and exchange among members between conferences.

Another key discussion of your Board was the need to develop a fundraising strategy for our next conference and the support of the Society in general. The International Secretariat, following the Executive Board discussions, prepared a generic funding proposal that was circulated to the Executive Board at the beginning of 2003. This proposal is now being used to solicit funds for regional activities and events, to support the International Secretariat and to request subsidies for the 3rd International Conference. Funds to support the work of the Secretariat have been requested from the Pan American Health Organization.

Organizing the conference will need many hours of volunteer work from members of the Executive Board. Some areas already identified include fundraising and running special sessions during the meeting.

Another e-mail conference exchange will take place in the first semester of 2003 where the structure and options for the 3rd International Conference will be discussed. During this exchange, themes for the 2004 conference will be proposed. All members should feel free to suggest themes for workshops and discussions that would meet their needs.

Recently, we have designated a new Scientific Advisory Committee for the period 2002-2004. The list of members can be found on the ISEqH website. The main purpose of this committee is to advise the Society and its elected officers and the Executive Board on matters related to all aspects of research relevant to equity in health.

ISEqH Website

Making essential changes to our website is our main priority for the first trimester of this year and our objective is to increase benefits for our members. We will add a *Member's Corner* to our page where you will find special information on equity, contacts, bibliography, on line communication with other colleagues and other information resources that will be particularly useful for your work. The *Member's Corner* will be accessible only to members by special log-on, and they will be able to peruse a list of members, including details of members' research interests and projects, which will be posted by members themselves. We hope that this may facilitate collaboration amongst researchers.

You may have suggestions to improve the ISEqH website, and we would be grateful if you would send us your ideas. The person in charge of this mission is our communications coordinator Leslie Nunez, and you can contact her via e-mail at leslie.nunez@utoronto.ca.

Toronto Declaration

As you may know, the Toronto Declaration is a significant document issued at the Second International Conference of ISEqH, in June 2002. You can find it on our website (www.iseqh.org) and it is available in English, French and Spanish.

We want to acknowledge Jim Hyde, Ronald Labonte, Afsana Wahab, Thumida Maistry, Alex Scott-Samuel, Marion Danis, Debora Tajer, David Sanders and Amoy Yuk Mui Ong for drafting the Declaration. We also received many comments from our members about this document. Thank you very much to those who sent us their comments, ideas and opinions.

Third International Conference

Durban, the largest and busiest port city of Africa, a major gateway to the continent, and a melting-pot South African city of cultural diversity in which African, Asian and European influences create a fascinating cosmopolitan society, will host our Third International Conference between June 10-12, 2004.

For our Durban meeting, the ISEqH is immensely pleased to be working in partnership with the Health Systems Trust (HST), a South African-based NGO built partnership with the Southern African Regional Network on Equity in Health (Equinet) and the Global Equity Gauge Alliance (GEGA), an international consortium of health equity initiatives.

The *Call for Abstracts* for our 2004 Conference will be posted on the website by the end of March 2003. You can help us with the quality and diversity of the presented papers by letting your co-workers and colleagues know about our event and of course, by presenting a paper yourself. With your help, I am confident that we will have a successful 3rd International Meeting.

News from the members

We want to create a space in our Newsletter for members to circulate their news about research activities, meetings, new articles on equity, grant and research opportunities, policies that have impacted equity, and any other news you might consider interesting for the rest of our membership. I encourage those who would like to collaborate with the society in this matter to do so by contacting the communications coordinator, Leslie Nunez (leslie.nunez@utoronto.ca).

You will be hearing from us again in June 2003 - in the meantime, please keep in touch through our Secretariat: it will be a pleasure to hear from you.

Kind regards to all,



Yves Talbot
President

The newsletter is being sent to all original members of ISEqH as well as new members. To receive future newsletters, all original members who have not yet renewed their membership, must renew membership. Please check the website (www.iseqh.org) on how to do this. Remember that the amount of membership dues is set according to the wealth of your country, in order to be as equitable as possible.