

News and notes

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Table 1. Officers of the College's International Divisions, 2005

International Division	Chair	Secretary	Financial Officer
African	Professor Tuviah Zabow (South Africa) zabowt@curie.uct.ac.za		
European	Professor George Christodoulou (Greece) psych@psych.gr ; gnchrist@compulink.gr		
Middle Eastern	Dr Nasser Loza (Egypt) nloza@behman.com ; nloza@hotmail.com	Dr Faud Antun (Lebanon) antun@cyberia.net.lb	Dr Walid Sarhan (Jordan) sarhan@nets.com.jo
Pan-American	Dr Nigel Bark (USA) nbark1@pol.net		
South Asian	Professor S Haroon Ahmed (Pakistan) nharoon@super.net.pk	Dr Nalaka Mendis (Sri Lanka) nalaka@sri.lanka.net	
Western Pacific	Professor Scott Henderson (Australia) ashenderson@netspace.net.au	Professor M. Parameshvara Deva (Malaysia) devaparameshvara@yahoo.com	

Election results for the College's International Divisions

The results of the first elections to the International Divisions are shown in Table 1.

Board of International Affairs at conference of the World Psychiatric Association

The Board of International Affairs of the Royal College of Psychiatrists organised its first 'roadshow' session of its international divisions during the World Psychiatric Association's international conference in Athens, March 2005. Professor Christodoulou, chairman of the WPA meeting, welcomed the participants and Professor Ghodse in his introductory address briefed the participants about the aims of the College's international divisions. Dr Javed outlined how these divisions would be organised and function, and gave a detailed account of their future role in College activities.

The other speakers included Professor Christodoulou and Dr Douzenis (European Division), Dr Nasser Loza (Middle Eastern Division), Professor Parameshvara Deva (Western Pacific Division) and Professor Haroon Chaudhry (South Asian Division), who presented reports from their respective divisions and their plans for future activities. The presentations generated lively discussions and a number of ideas emerged about establishing future links among the overseas members of the College.

Dr Mike Shooter, President of the College, in his concluding remarks expressed positive and optimistic thoughts about the College's new roles through the creation of the international divisions.

Besides the division meetings and presentations at the College's annual meeting in Edinburgh, there will be division meetings in Cairo in September 2005.

Western Pacific International Division

The officers of the Western Pacific International Division of the College (Chair, Scott Henderson, Australia; Secretary, Parameshvara Deva, Malaysia; Finance Officer, Helen Chiu, Hong Kong) are examining possible contributions that could be made in particularly needful areas, geographically and professionally. It is hoped that collaboration with major organisations in the region will give greater efficiency and better outcomes. A balance is needed between service delivery, professional training and scientific opportunities. It will be important to avoid duplicating what other organisations have already been doing and it may be that the College has as much to benefit as to give in its future activities in the Western Pacific region.

Mental health for Europe

Ministers of Health of the 52 member states of the World Health Organization's European Region endorsed a declaration for Europe and an action plan for the next decade at a historic meeting in Helsinki in January 2005, organised by the World Health Organization. A major focus of the action plan is social inclusion, to mitigate practices that lead to marginalisation, abuse and economic and other forms of discrimination. It is anticipated that consumers will have increasing prominence, aided by legislation about rights for people with a mental disability. Changes are unlikely to happen until governments fund mental health services in proportion to the economic burden they represent. The Helsinki conference

established the principle of parity. The Helsinki declaration and action plan can be found at <http://www.euro.who.int/mentalhealth2005>.

Cairo, September 2005

The XIII World Congress of Psychiatry (WCP) organised by the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) will be held on 10–15 September 2005 in Cairo, Egypt. The congress will offer psychiatrists and other mental health professionals the opportunity to learn more of the science and art of psychiatry from experts in the field, to share knowledge with colleagues from all over the world and to socialise with friends. Delegates are offered a series of tours to see Egypt's cultural jewels, including an evening dinner and show cruise on the Nile, as well as visits to: the Egyptian Museum; the Coptic Museum (old Cairo); the Museum of Islamic Art; the Military Museum (the Citadel); the 14th-century Khalili Bazaar and Sagh; the Giza and Saqqara pyramids; the Valleys of the Kings and the Queens; the Temple of Luxor and Karnak; the Temple of Abu Simbel and the Aswan High Dam; the St Catherine Monastery; and the Red Sea.

For further information about this congress and Egypt, visit the website http://www.wpa-cairo2005.com/xiii_pres.html.

South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) Psychiatry Federation

The psychiatric societies of India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives have formed a federation. The dream of coordination was first mooted in 1978, because these countries have so much in common culturally, politically, economically and in the mental health field. The federation at last came into being as a result of a meeting in Lahore in September 2004 during the WPA Regional and Inter-zonal Meeting.

Among its first officers are:

- President – Professor Achakzai of Quetta, Pakistan
- Vice-Presidents – Dr Mendis of Colombo and Professor Sobhan of Dhaka
- Secretary-General – Professor Kallivayalil of India.

The executive committee includes the presidents and secretaries of the member countries' psychiatric societies.

There will be a SAARC Psychiatric Federation annual conference at Agra, India, in November 2005. Further details are available from Professor Kallivayalil, Secretary-General, email ktm_roykalli@sancharnet.in.