WEPHREN Newsletter

Mar 2017, Issue 1

*Welcome note from Emma/Eamonn*

Welcome to the first of many WEPHREN Newsletters. This comes at an exciting time – on the eve of the launch of the WEPHREN website, [www.wephren.org](http://www.wephren.org). It is clear that a vibrant network of those passionate about the health of people in prison is no longer just an aspiration but a reality – a reality that we hope will contribute to the improving the health of the millions of individuals in prisons worldwide. We are pleased you are already part of this network – please do spread the word!

- Dr Emma Plugge and Dr Éamonn O’Moore

# WEPHREN’s baby shower at WHO/PHE Conference in UN City!

In November at the WHO/PHE Health in Prisons Conference, Dr Emma Plugge from the University of Oxford and Dr Éamonn O’Moore, National Lead for Health & Justice, Public Health England & Director of the UK Collaborating Centre for WHO Health in Prisons (European Region), formally launched WEPHREN and asked international delegates to complete a survey on their top research priorities for this agenda, as well as their priorities for professional development in the field. At the conference, Dr Plugge described how WEPHREN was fundamentally about improving the health of those in prison and the quality of the healthcare they receive. She emphasised that WEPHREN is not just for researchers but for everyone with a stake in the health of prisoners – policy makers, prison services, international organisations, public health organisations, healthcare staff and, of course, the people in prison themselves. Thanks to funding from PHE, WEPHREN had become a reality and work was underway on the 10 agreed priorities for Year One. Some of the key areas the WEPHREN team will be working on in the coming months are the development of the website, further analysis of the research publications & priorities, and the development of specific international projects. Dr Plugge emphasised that it was now important for everyone to consider joining WEPHREN and to put forward their research and professional development priorities. She urged all those present to spread the word and to inform all those in their own networks about WEPHREN – all those with a stake in the health of prisoners are welcome to join and shape the development of this exciting new initiative.

# WEPHREN Survey

As part of the engagement work with stakeholders, about 400 emails have been sent to individual stakeholders inviting them to join WEPHREN. Preliminary mapping of health research activity across the European Region showed that most output since 2000 came from the UK. There had been no research published from several countries.

Initial responses to this survey from researchers across the WHO European region suggest that ageing, infectious diseases, health promotion, mental health, quality of care/professional standards, substance use and the health of women are research priorities. Emerging professional development priorities include training in both quantitative and qualitative research methods, on securing research funding, involving users and most importantly, leadership and management skills. Further analysis will be conducted and shared in due course.

# WEPHREN Steering Group

In September 2016, the first international Steering Group Committee Meeting for WEPHREN was chaired by Dr Plugge to oversee the worldwide research network’s development. The group now consists of 14 members, representing professional groups, geographies and interest/expertise in research. The role of the steering committee is to advise the UK Collaborating Centre on matters relating to the organisation and development of WEPHREN, including the annual planning and progress monitoring of WEPHREN, addressing technical issues of importance to the programme, building and expanding partnerships and resource mobilisation and enhancing synergies between the involved members.

WEPHREN Steering Group Members

Dagmar Hedrich EMCDDA (current chair)

Linda Montanari EMCDDA

Carole Dromer International Committee for the Red Cross

Roberto Monarca Health without Barriers, Italy

Juma Khudonazarov Royal College of General Practitioners/Central Asian projects

Lara Tavoschi European Centre for Disease Control

Heino Stöver University of Frankfurt

José Manuel Arroyo Cobo Ministry of Justice, Spain

Antti-Jussi Ämmälä Ministry of Health, Finland

Lesley Graham Chair of UK and Ireland Research Group

Lars Møller WHO HIPP

Éamonn O’Moore WHO UK Collaborating Centre

Emma Plugge WHO UK Collaborating Centre/University of Oxford

Sunita Stürup-Toft WHO UK Collaborating Centre

The group is currently chaired by Dagmar Heidrich from the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction. The group has met twice in 2016 and plans another virtual meeting in the Spring of 2017. Meetings have reviewed WEPHREN activity for Quarter 1,2 and part of 3.

# www.WEPHREN.org

Work has begun in building a suitable web platform for WEPHREN which is capable of allowing the postings of new information and links but also a “community” function and chat room to enable interaction and collaboration between members. This is going to be very important for this ‘virtual’ network. We will be taking the opportunity to partner up with The Global Health Network ([www.tghn.org](http://www.tghn.org)) to develop this platform and the WEPHREN website will look similar to other “communities of practice” hosted on TGHN.

A notification will be sent to all registered members as soon as the website is up and running at [www.wephren.org](http://www.wephren.org)

We will be welcoming content and contributions from our members to help this worldwide network to be vibrant and valued. The website will be an opportunity to share any blogs or write articles specifically for WEPHREN – we would like to encourage this, as well as using other media such as podcasts, videos and recorded presentations. Please do contact us to get involved.

# Future developments for WEPHREN

The UKCC has an ambition to hold an international research meeting in the near future to support the development of WEPHREN and encourages those with a research interest to make contact with on the email address WEPHREN@phe.gov.uk. These events often work as part of a wider programme, so please contact us if you have any ideas as to how we might make our virtual network into a live one!

# Events

The International Corrections and Prisons Association are hosting 2 events of interest. We are keen to encourage health-related submissions.

* **The First International Correctional Research Symposium**

(Ghent, Belgium; 27-29 March 2017) <http://icpa.ca/crs2017/>

* **The International Corrections and Prisons Association AGM and Conference**

(London, England; 22-27 October 2017) <http://icpa.ca/london2017/>

To promote your event with us, please send in details to wephren@phe.org.uk

# And finally…

Please find the flyer for WEPHREN to share with colleagues . If you are on social media then feel free to tweet about the network using #wephren.

