

Welcome note from the new Editor-in-Chief

Thomas Kohlmann

Dear Readers and Authors of IJPH!

It was not really a difficult decision when I was asked by Thomas Abel and the Editorial Board of IJPH if I could try to fill the gap that was left by Alfredo Morabia when he resigned as Co-Editor in Chief. Alfredo has moved to new professional horizons in North America and, in addition, taken on the editorship of another journal. Assuming the helm from a very successful Co-Editor in Chief will certainly not be an easy job. However, the five years that I worked as an Associate Editor with my dedicated colleagues in the Editorial Board of SPM were so full of exciting experiences that in the end the decision was easily taken. Since the sharing of editorial responsibility among two Editors in Chief and the Associate Editors has worked extremely well in the past and will remain in effect, readers and authors of IJPH should experience the partial change in editorial responsibility as a smooth transition.

However, as with any change in leadership, readers may expect some changes in the journal. With sociology as my primary academic background, I will be glad to see even more papers on social and societal aspects of public health in our journal. At the Institute of Community Medicine in Greifswald, where I have been working since 2002, we pursue an approach that integrates genuine perspectives of public health with perspectives in epidemiologic and health services research. I am convinced that bringing together concepts and methodologies developed in different areas of research is one of the best tools for scientific progress. So I will be eager to encourage authors to submit manuscripts comprising multidisciplinary “crosswalks” that demonstrate how results from, say, health economics, management science or demographics can serve to increase our understanding of

the major problems we deal with in public health. I expect that strengthening multidisciplinary perspectives in our papers will sharpen IJPH’s profile with its strong focus on surveys, surveillance and health promotion.

For those wanting to brush up their geography: Greifswald is located in the far north-east of Germany, close to the Baltic Sea and Poland. This location virtually predestines Greifswald for serving as a link between Eastern and Western Europe. Together with my successor in the position of Associate Editor, Andrea Madarasova-Geckova from Slovakia, I would like to take on the role of a bridgehead to the many public health researchers in Eastern Europe. Readers are sincerely encouraged to critically review IJPH’s section on Eastern Europe to monitor the success of our efforts.

Having said this, it is important to note that some changes within IJPH are going on almost independently of the changes in the editorial staff. I am proud to announce that the journal will soon process manuscripts in electronic form using a sophisticated Editorial Management System. We expect this to speed up, enhance and simplify the peer-review process for authors, reviewers, and our Associate Editors. Secondly, a new series premieres in this issue of the journal. Speaker’s Corner is a place in IJPH where international experts are invited to present their ideas on specific topics in concise and thought-provoking contributions. Providing this space is an attempt to offer our authors and readership a lively sounding board for ideas and conjectures that would not usually fit into a regular paper or editorial comment. The first call for such contributions, which we launched in the context of the Swiss Public Health Conference 07, was very successful. Seven experts in the field of mental health in public health accepted our invitation and breathed life into the first Speaker’s Corner. Our readers are kindly invited

to listen to these speakers by reading their contributions included in this issue of IJPH.

As the new Co-Editor in Chief I am very much looking forward to serving the readership and authors of IJPH. With Thomas Abel, an experienced Editor in Chief, a highly esteemed public health expert and a good friend, this service promises to be an exciting endeavour. The invaluable support of our committed Associate Editors will help us to position IJPH to meet the old and new challenges in public health.

Thomas Kohlmann

Address for correspondence

Address for correspondence
Prof. Dr. phil. Thomas Kohlmann
Institute for Community Medicine
University of Greifswald
Walther-Rathenau-Str. 48
D-17487 Greifswald
e-mail: kohlmann@uni-greifswald.de

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