

Vienna 8th EPH Conference 2016: All for Health – Health for All

9-12 November 2016

Plenary:

ASPHER 50th Anniversary: Training in Science and the Contribution of Science to Planetary Health

Organizer:

ASPHER

Moderator:

Jacqueline Müller-Nordhorn, ASPHER

Speakers:

Prof. Kasia Czabanowska, Maastricht University

Prof. Matthew Fox, Boston University

Prof. Peter Gronewegen, NIVEL

Dr. Richard Horton, Lancet

Young professional & Student

Abstracts:

Planetary health decisions potentially affect all areas of living, ranging from nutrition, physical activity, smoking reduction to socio-economic conditions, environment, changing populations, living circumstances and many more. Science is needed at all stages: to gather reliable data, to develop and evaluate interventions on different levels (individual vs. population-based), to implement interventions on the larger scale, and to promote evidence-based health policy. Public health professionals need to be trained in diverse research skills, whether or not they become researchers themselves. Literacy is needed for different scientific approaches such as quantitative and qualitative methods, knowledge in health economics and health systems or on advocacy and leadership. Expertise may then focus on one area.

Many public health decisions lack the scientific evidence base. Often interventions have been developed and evaluated in specific settings and may not be transferable to other countries or cultures. When assessing public health interventions in systematic reviews, the conclusion is often that studies are too heterogeneous to be compared. Side effects of public health interventions are hardly assessed. Even if the evidence is there and clear, the translation into practice occurs often at chance. A systematic translation of evidence into practice is missing in many countries.

Schools of Public Health play a crucial role in training in research and scientific methods as well as in the implementation of research findings into real life public health.

The plenary will address these issues with speakers with various backgrounds and opinions on the role of scientists in global and public health decision making.

Key questions addressed will be:

- 1) What is the role of scientists in translating their evidence into practice?
- 2) How many scientific skills do public health practitioners need to be trained in and use in daily practice?
- 3) How can effective public health interventions will transferred to other cultural settings?
- 4) What competences are needed to translate the scientific evidence into practice and should they be part of the standard public health curriculum?
- 5) What is the role of Schools of Public Health in promoting the translation of public health evidence?

Each speaker is asked to provide a 5-10-minute reflection on his/her views on the questions asked above. The role of scientists in public health decision making will be discussed from different points of view.

At the end, each speaker is invited to make a suggestion on how best to improve the scientific content of public health interventions.
