



October, 2021

President's Report to the 2021 Annual General Meeting

I am pleased to present the 2021 President's Report for the Global Law Enforcement and Public Health Association Inc.

As the world continued to be impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, our association responded, shifted focus and adapted many aspects of the delivery of our programs. World events significantly shaped the major themes of the LEPH2021 conference, and they impacted the focus of our Special Interest Groups. The intersections of public health and law enforcement came into sharp focus with questions of biosecurity and pandemic responses as a result of the Covid-19 epidemic and the calls for reform of the police and the justice systems in response to racial and ethnic disparities. These became some of the major themes in the LEPH2021 conference. GLEPHA expanded its focus to include those topical and emerging issues in the scope of our research being well positioned to contribute to the research and understanding of these issues.

GLEPHA is continuing to look to establish affiliations with organisations from around the world while strengthening current relationships with affiliations such as the International Association of Prosecutors, the World Federation of Public Health Associations, the International Development Law Organization, and many national and regional bodies and networks. We are starting to see increased global interest in the intersection of policing and public health among some established organisations whose objectives and interests align with ours.

As reported last year, the Centre for Law Enforcement and Public Health (CLEPH) received a major grant from the Open Society Foundations. Together with GLEPHA the project was to identify, document, showcase and network innovative projects and programs addressing public health issues which have previously relied too heavily on punitive police responses. The grant was used to create the Envisaging the Future project which saw the appointing of regional chairs and holding regional webinars in Africa and Europe, Latin and North America, and, Eastern Europe and Asia Pacific. In the coming year we hope to present the findings and recommendations of these webinars in a number of forums and report in a special issue of the *Journal of Community Safety and Well Being*. More information can be found on our website.

We are beginning to make some headway in creating regional networks in Africa, Asia and most recently South America. Developing these networks is a priority for GLEPHA

as we would like to see more representation and involvement from low and middle-income countries.

The LEPH Conferences: 2021 saw the first virtual LEPH conference -LEPH2021- hosted by a consortium of five universities in the Philadelphia, USA area. The consortium, led by Temple University, included the University of Pennsylvania, Rutgers University – Camden, Thomas Jefferson University, and Drexel University. It was satisfying to see how successful a conference with such a consortium could be. Of necessity the conference was held virtually, which proved to be a very good success from a number of perspectives. A virtual conference enabled far more registrants reaching as much larger audience than the traditional physical conferences, and we attracted wider participation from around the globe. We recorded all the sessions of the conference and made them available to conference registrants, enabling participants to actually take in more sessions than they would have ordinarily. Many of our Special Interest Groups really stepped up hosting some exceptional pre-conference sessions. While we may have missed out on the benefits of a face-to-face conference, we realised other benefits, and perhaps more importantly were able to deliver the conference. The interest in the conference was so high that it was extended to five days, a full day and a half longer than the usual face-to-face conferences we've held in the past. There were some inevitable hiccoughs, though, generally these were minor in nature. Future LEPH conferences may well be hybrid with both a physical conference and a virtual component.

We are striving to move fully to holding annual conferences, though much work is left to be done to realise this goal. On top of our annual LEPH conferences, there is planning for regional conferences in Africa and Asia, and though the uncertainty of the pandemic has slowed those plans, they are very much a priority. Until such time as we can return to physical, face-to-face conferences we will explore options such as virtual conferences and organising regional webinars on topical issues. It is our hope that regional networks and conferences - focused on both regional and global issues and being accessible by a much greater number of people in the regions - will contribute to the global reach and impact of the LEPH movement.

Membership: Our membership base has been fairly stable over the past year and has not grown to the extent we had hoped. We believe this is partially due to not holding a physical conference this past year, and partially due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. Our Board has undertaken a membership drive to generate some interest in the association. A key priority remains, while growing the membership, to increase the diversity of our membership geographically and across broader law enforcement, public health and other related sectors. We are still striving to attract more interest from the public health sector.

There were some adjustments to our membership fee structure to allow more payment options for persons to join GLEPHA.

Our current membership stands at:

Individuals	122
Institutions	19
Total:	131

Special Interest Groups (SIGs): Our SIGs have shown some very promising growth in interest and activity during the past year. The SIGs are emerging as an excellent means of bringing highly qualified, very motivated and caring individuals, that have shown ingenuity and produced some excellent initiatives.

Two new SIGs have come on stream: the Violence Prevention SIG and the Neurodiversity SIG, both of which are attracting real interest and will bring in new dimensions in the functioning and role of the justice system. There are a few more SIGs in the works; Policing and Pandemics, and Law Enforcement and Road Trauma. The final piece of news with respect to the SIGs is the Gender SIG transitioned to become the Intersectionality SIG. As mentioned in the section about LEPH2021, we saw many of the SIGs stepping up and organising some very high-quality pre-conference sessions. The SIGs continue to demonstrate one of the real benefits of our association, that is bringing together individuals with a shared passion from around the planet to collaborate and inform on critical issues.

Our Education SIG has been particularly active. The Education SIG edited the first comprehensive collection of chapters on law enforcement and public health contributed by world leading authors. The book, “*Law Enforcement and Public Health, Partners in Community Safety and Wellbeing,*” will be available from Springer International Publishing in October or November of this year.

Leading up to LEPH 2021 Conference the Education SIG called on students for submission of articles on the broad category of law enforcement and public health. The reviewing committee selected Mario Morales, University of Arizona, as the recipient of the award. This was the first such award, and they plan to continue with student awards in future.

Finally, the Education SIG, in conjunction with a number of partner universities, is in the early stages of developing post-graduate courses on policing and public health. We feel this type of education is sorely needed in order to instill cross-sector collaborations as the way of the future.

More information about the SIGs is on the website and if you have any ideas or would like to join a SIG, please contact Nick Crofts at nick.crofts@unimelb.edu.au.

A Journal for LEPH: We are maintaining our alliance with the *Journal of Community Safety and Wellbeing*, a journal run by the Community Safety Knowledge Alliance, one of our major partners in LEPH2018. There have already been quite a number of articles published in the JCSWB by GLEPHA members and special issues from LEPH conferences, which will happen again with future conferences. We are especially grateful to be associated with the CSKA, and this is a partnership which will build on

our mutual objectives. As part of this partnership, Nick Crofts is a Section Editor with the JCSW.

I want to remind members that the GLEPHA and CLEPH websites are good repositories of resources in the LEPH field; I encourage everyone to submit any useful articles, reports, videos, blogs etc., for inclusion in the Resources section of the GLEPHA website.

We have laid a very good foundation for the functioning of the GLEPHA and while we continue make progress, we have much to do. The task for the Executive Director, working closely with the Board of Directors, will be to see our association evolve. Our key priorities remain unchanged for the next few years, being to:

1. Create Strategic and Business Plans for GLEPHA, including development of further strategic alliances and partnerships – in progress
2. Grow current and develop new Special Interest Groups as relevant, and link them to the Conference Program planning and standalone events;
3. Increase both organizational and individual membership;
4. Market the GLEPHA and the LEPH Conferences, and build GLEPHA capacity to organise the LEPH conferences;
5. Develop and implement a fund-raising strategy;
6. Further develop the GLEPHA Newsletter and build the alliance with the JCSWB; and
7. Establish developmental opportunities for Masters and PhD candidates and other LEPH educational and research strategies.

Finally, I wish to thank all the members of our Board of Directors and our Executive Director, Nick Crofts, for their dedication, contribution of their time, their insights and advice in getting GLEPHA to where we are at today. During the year Dr. Jennifer Wood left our Board. She was one of the founding members of our association and served on the Board since inception, and she showed real leadership in the planning, organising, and implementation of the LEPH2021 conference. She was quite rightfully recognised with an Honorary Lifetime Membership.

Though as an association we have made significant progress in a relatively short time period, we need to leverage that momentum and grow to making a real contribution to the still emerging field of law enforcement and public health. We continue to believe the way forward to better community health is collaboration between police and public health, with the support at the appropriate levels of government, and, that our association can influence movement in that direction. We see our members as champions of those changes.



Richard Bent
GLEPHA President