



28 October 2020

### **President's Report to the 2020 Annual General Meeting**

I am pleased to present the 2020 President's Report for the Global Law Enforcement and Public Health Association Inc.

There is no doubt that 2020 has been an extraordinary and a most challenging year for the entire world. World events have significantly shaped the major themes of the LEPH2021 conference, as they have impacted the focus of our Special Interest Groups. The intersections of public health and law enforcement have come 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 are therefore some of the major themes in the LEPH2021 conference. Our association has also felt the effects of the global pandemic, particularly our membership; whether they be in academia, government ministries, police or other law enforcement agencies or are our student members. Nevertheless, GLEPHA is centrally positioned to contribute to the research and understanding of these issues.

GLEPHA is growing our affiliations with organisations from around the world, with 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. With CLEPH, GLEPHA received a major grant from the Open Society Foundations, to identify, document, showcase and network innovative projects and programs addressing public health issues which have previously relied too heavily on punitive police responses. This project will be carried out in six regions of the world, and will contribute enormously to GLEPHA's membership and profile.

**Continued Development of the Organization of GLEPHA:** Our Board is quite excited about the recent creation of an Executive Director position as the next important step in the evolution of our association, the details of which were sent out to all our members on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. We are still a young organisation, so having an Executive Director, who in addition to being the public face of GLEPHA, will direct his energies to achieving the priorities set by the Board of Directors. I will expand on our priorities later in this report.

**The LEPH Conferences:** GLEPHA is a key partner and contributor in the planning and organisation of the Law Enforcement and Public Health conferences and our members are making a significant contribution to the LEPH2021 in Philadelphia, this coming year, especially through the work of the Special Interest Groups. As you all know, LEPH2021 is now going to be a virtual conference, which has meant

a steep learning curve for our planning team. While there have been some real challenges, the LEPH2021 organisers are now well on the way to delivering an excellent conference in March, 2021. The shift to a virtual conference has also presented opportunities for the program delivery for the conference, such as hosting pre-conference events by webinar or other virtual means, so that we are now leveraging this technology.

We are continuing with the transition of the planning and organising of the LEPH conferences to the GLEPHA from the Centre for Law Enforcement and Public Health (CLEPH). Following LEPH2021 the plans are still to move fully to annual conferences. In addition, 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 we can run face-to-face conferences there, GLEPHA has been organising regional webinars on topical issues. It is our hope that regional networks and regional conferences, focused on regional as well as global issues and 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, partially as we did not hold a conference this year, and possibly due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. In the past we have seen increased membership leading up to and following the LEPH conferences, and we hope to see the same trend as we approach LEPH2021 and future conferences. We are continuing to look to attract more diversity in our membership; as we become better known and our influence expands we will see more interest in GLEPHA and in the field of LEPH. A key priority continues to be increasing the diversity of our membership geographically and across broader law enforcement and public health sectors. We will also continue to strive to attract more interest and engagement from the public health sector.

We did create another category of membership in order to grandfather existing members of interest groups when an official Special Interest Group was created. It is anticipated that the honorary members will eventually transition to another category of membership in time.

Our current membership stands at:

Institutions and Organisations	22
Individuals	59
Student	12
Honorary	28
<b>Total:</b>	<b>121</b>

(Total as at October 2019- 91)

**Special Interest Groups (SIGs):** Our SIGs have shown some very promising growth in interest and activity during the past year. We have been established two new SIGs: the Deflection and Diversion SIG, and, the Prosecution and Elected Officials SIG. Both these two new SIGs bring in the new dimension of the functioning and role of the justice system. We also saw the Law Enforcement and HIV Network (LEAHN) become the Law Enforcement and Harm Reduction (LEAHR) SIG. All our



SIGs are planning sessions during LEPH2021 or are actively working on hosting pre-conference events. The SIGs continue to demonstrate one of the real benefits of our association, that is bringing together individuals from around the planet to share and collaborate in research and informing on critical issues with the goal of influencing public policy.

More information about these SIGs is on the website and if you have any ideas or would like to join a group please contact Nick Crofts at [nick.crofts@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:nick.crofts@unimelb.edu.au).

**A Journal for LEPH:** Last year I reported that we formed an informal 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. This relationship of proving mutually beneficial. There have already been quite a number of articles published in the JCSWB by GLEPHA members and special issue from LEPH conferences, which will happen again with LEPH2021. This is a partnership which will build in future; I have taken a role as Section Editor with the JCSWB and will work to strengthen our association.

The CLEPH and GLEPHA websites are good repositories of resources in the LEPH field; I encourage everyone to submit any useful articles, reports, videos, blogs et to CLEPH 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
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 for the contribution of their time, their insights and advice in getting GLEPHA to where we are at today. I could not have envisaged we could have come this far so quickly and that is in large part to the efforts of our board. We will have two of our board members leaving the board as their term comes to an end in November. Melissa Jardine, our Secretary from Australia, Inga Heyman from Scotland and Ian de Terte from New Zealand have both been stellar in their efforts to support the growth of GLEPHA and I particularly wish to thank them.

The more we look internationally at the issues other countries are dealing with, the more we see so many countries struggling to deal with those same issues. There is a lot more the same than there is different. We truly believe the better way forward is bringing together dedicated researchers, practitioners and legislators, and providing the evidence to make meaningful change.



**Nick Crofts**  
GLEPHA President (to October 2020)



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