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September 2021 ASPHER Newsletter



Image: Sphere within a Sphere (*Sfera con sfera*) by sculptor Arnaldo Pomodoro
at Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings colleagues, friends, partners,

Many European countries have [‘wasted the summer’](#), not heeding the [ASPHER call to plan](#) for the autumn ahead. The [challenges of third wave pandemic](#) will include different symptom presentations; more variable long Covid manifestations, and infections affecting more and younger people, [alongside RSV and flu](#). [School children are now the frontline](#) for the third wave of infection in European countries. There is little evidence of any protection [for children in England](#), or in the [UK generally](#) – [Scottish rates](#) soared when schools returned mid-August.

The screenshot shows a news article from The Academy of Medical Sciences. The main headline is "Italy's wasted summer" with a sub-headline: "Instead of addressing urgent shortfalls in its coronavirus response, Rome went on a spending spree." Below this is a photograph of Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte from behind, standing in front of the Italian and European Union flags. To the left, there is another article snippet titled "Winter viruses and COVID-19 could push NHS to breaking point, warns new report" dated Thursday 15th July 2021, with a small image of people in winter gear.

University populations are the most mobile group in our communities, able to turn small pockets of Coronavirus infection from their hometowns into raging outbreaks in their adopted residences. Vaccination rates are not as good as for older populations and students are (stereotypically perhaps?) described as having a mindset of invulnerability. Many governments are encouraging their higher education sectors to go back to in person teaching. The UK government has offered this [unmanageable, contradictory and careless advice](#), “There is no requirement for social distancing or other measures within in person teaching. Providers are therefore able to shape their courses without restrictions to face-to-face provision”, while also stating that universities “should continue to make efforts to reduce the risk of transmission where possible.” [The UK Independent SAGE believes universities](#) should still stick to teaching remotely. What is your school doing? And why? Let us know.

Three faces of COVID?

For a meeting of the [Alliance of International Science Organisations](#) this month, I have been reflecting on my [‘Three faces of COVID’ analysis](#) from the November ASPHER President’s blog. One ‘face’ was countries that did well from the first wave – implementing WHO public health measures from the start; one ‘face’ did poorly from the start – exhibiting

complacency and indecision, and implementing measures when it was too late. The middle ‘face’ got it right in the first wave but couldn’t sustain public health measures into the second wave. Looking at selected country examples from these three faces, it is encouraging to see that the cumulative deaths are levelling off in many countries (Figure 1). The other good news for those countries who did well in the first wave, is that they ‘bought time’ – they are not catching up with the levels of deaths seen in the poorly performing countries. They have protected their most vulnerable, given vaccination its best chance and treatment options to be improved.

Unfortunately the death rate is still going up in the [United States](#), UK and Serbia, and in many other parts of the world, especially in South America and Africa. Deaths are almost always now [associated with the unvaccinated state](#). New cases are going up strongly in Israel and the UK, two early front-runners in the vaccine stakes. (Figure 2).

Figure 1.

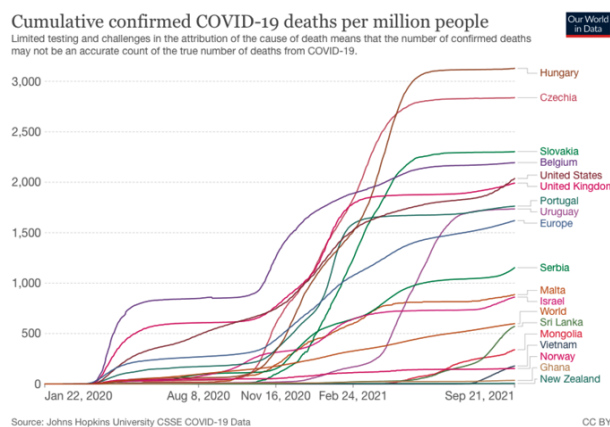
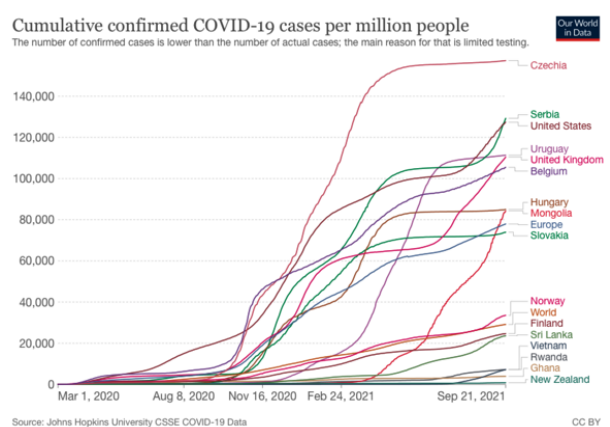


Figure 2.



Are the rates going up because of vaccine resistance from the Delta variant? Are they going up as vaccine efficacy wanes? And in both cases has [‘vaccine overconfidence’](#) meant these countries have thrown away social restrictions too soon? Countries like Portugal, Spain, Germany, France have retained masking and other social restrictions and case rates have not taken off again this summer. They have also now achieved high rates of vaccination, with two doses of mRNA vaccines, so may now be enjoying peak immunity. Croatia and Bulgaria are among those countries who keep a hold on mass gatherings. You can find details every week in [ASPHER situation reporting](#). None of our countries can be complacent, and none of us can declare an end to the pandemic until all the world is clear. The vital task of [enabling access to vaccines for the world](#) needs to be given urgent attention. We urgently need a [vaccine intellectual property rights waiver](#) and support for wider international production of vaccines. ASPHER is working on this as an urgent priority.

Monti Commission draws light from the pandemic

Still, many countries, many politicians and public health authorities look forward optimistically to a better time, a post-COVID world, and are anxious also to give us the

benefit of their wisdom about what has gone wrong and what lessons we should learn. The Monti report, [‘Drawing light from the pandemic’](#) was commissioned by WHO European Director General Hans Kluge. It gives us seven objectives towards a healthier and sustainable world: Operationalise the concept of One Health at all levels; take action at all levels of societies to heal the divisions exacerbated by the pandemic; support innovation for better One Health; Invest in strong, resilient and inclusive national health systems; create an enabling environment to promote investment in health; improve health governance at the global level; and improve health governance in the pan-European region. [The Scientific Evidence](#) supporting the Commission’s conclusions has been compiled by Editor-in-chief Martin McKee and published by the European Observatory. I strongly recommend it to you. It is an absolute tour-de-force and a major instant text book for public health – it should be required reading in all our schools of public health and for anyone at the start of their careers or a long way in theirs.

Johnson’s revamped cabinet cram into office - with no masks

Ministers assemble for ‘half-time pep talk’ in packed room, contradicting official advice

- [Coronavirus - latest updates](#)
- [See all our coronavirus coverage](#)



Martin has also drawn attention to the British government’s indifference to health, linking COVID and [other health policy failures](#). Prime-Minister Johnson’s [new Cabinet](#) showed their commitment to COVID safety recently. Will this be an image reflected on in the 2120 pandemic?

Brexit still to strike UK

As with UK *déjà vu* over Covid winter planning, so the ugly face of Brexit rears its head again. It is clear we in the UK, but also in the EU, have not yet experienced the true impacts of this self-destructive policy. In the UK we are beginning to see the shortages of goods in shops, [fast food stores](#), [empty shelves in supermarkets](#), [online purchases out of stock](#), a temporary NHS ban on [routine blood tests](#) in primary care. These are not the result of the UK-EU trade and cooperation deal – the British government has yet to implement its side of the deal on import controls. These are the result of the exodus of European Union drivers. The UK is set for another, more intense, winter of discontent.

Global air quality standards

Early in the pandemic people had a glimpse of what [healthier urban air](#) looked like. Sadly as the pandemic has moved on people have [retreated to personalised transport](#) where they can, for their own protection and home working is reducing. So we will still need

Lorry driver shortage poised to hit Christmas season: Shoppers face low stock and price rises

EXCLUSIVE

Shoppers face low stock, long delivery times and price rises as retailers across the country battle to secure drivers for the Christmas period



Industry figures, and some drivers, have been warning of a lorry driver shortage for years (Photo: Getty/Westend61)

[major action on air quality](#) at regional and local levels in a post pandemic world. Cue... WHO launched long-awaited [revised Air Quality Guidelines](#) on September 22nd. The guidelines update and toughen up standards for air quality for common air pollutants. More evidence has been gained over time on the deeply [destructive nature of air pollutants](#) in the 16 years since the last guidelines. ASPHER has been pleased to give its [support to the new guideline](#). There will be a long and difficult road ahead to get the standards implemented. The statement of support has also been published [here](#). We congratulate Nino Kuenzli and all our colleagues who were involved in the WHO report and in the professional society response.

As we go into the autumn we are about to hold our Deans' & Directors' Retreat. I look forward to meeting with you online to discuss the considerable body of work we are doing with members and partners. I look forward also to hearing from you about how ASPHER is meeting your needs and how we can continually improve our services to members and our advocacy for the public's health. As ever, I am grateful to my Secretariat colleagues, Robert Otok, Lore Leighton and Rana Orhan for the immense work they do on our behalf.

Yours in health,

John Middleton
President ASPHER

September 23rd 2021

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MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARIAT

Come one, come all! We are waiting with great anticipation to meet up with ASPHER Members next Monday and Tuesday (27 & 28 September) for the [2021 Virtual Deans' & Directors' Retreat!](#) The programme is quite rich and we are thrilled to have many high level speakers engaged from across Europe side by side with contributions by many of our Members. It is a testament to the impact being made by the Association and by our membership in difficult times.

A detailed outline of the [Retreat Programme](#) is available in this issue and we will be updating the [Retreat webpage](#) with descriptions detailing each session. If you haven't yet done so, [please register!](#) Meeting links for all sessions will be sent only to those who register – if you don't receive the links or have trouble with the registration page, please contact us at registration@aspher.org.

Another ASPHER tradition is the annual [Young Researchers' Forum](#). It will be held virtually this year on October 8th as part of the [30 Year Jubilee Conference of the Krakow SPH](#). Be sure to share the opportunity to [submit an abstract](#) with your students, post-docs recent alumni and junior faculty!

Please note that the [ASPHER Members Survey](#) remains open until the end of September. If you haven't yet done so, [please respond](#) and tell us more about your programme. We are

delighted to [announce](#) the two ASPHER participants selected from amongst survey respondents for the Global Network for Academic Public Health (GNAPH) leadership programme.

We are happy to inform you that ASPHER is continuing to grow – we have three new provisional members to welcome to the Association since June: Middlesex University, United Kingdom; Powiślański University, Poland; and Master Program of Public Health and Health Management, University of Valencia, Spain. You can look forward to hearing from them when they present their programmes at the 2022 General Assembly for full approval.

Make sure you don't miss out on new [ASPHER Covid-19 Task Force](#) items and other [Association News](#). As autumn agendas start to fill up, we also take note of several new reports and events – conferences, classes, and webinars – offered by [Members](#) and [Partners](#).

Finally, ASPHER Secretariat is always seeking to do more for our Membership and better respond to your needs. In order to do so, [we are seeking to hire additional help for our office](#). If you know of someone in Brussels who fits our needs, please have them send their CV and letter of motivation!

Best wishes,
Robert Otok and Lore Leighton

Please don't forget to share your news, publications, comments & suggestions with Lore at lore.leighton@aspher.org to be included in the next regular issue of the [newsletter](#) and on the ASPHER website [activity log](#).

ASPHER Deans' & Directors' Retreat

Virtual event: 27 - 28 September 2021

Due to COVID-19 conditions, we felt it best to organise a virtual event again this year, but we are thrilled to be able to offer an exciting programme to all members! Don't miss it!

The Retreat will feature four Plenary Sessions on the following themes:

- Plenary 1: Education & Health
- Plenary 2: Professionalisation
- Plenary 3: Global Governance
- Plenary 4: Planning for an Outbreak of Health

There will be four Parallel Session Tracks:

- PS-A: The Pandemic: Perspectives on Lessons Learned
- PS-B: ASPHER Business, Competencies & Core Curriculum

PS-C ASPHER Networking: Members, Accreditation & Careers
PS-D The Pandemic: Schools' Contribution & Roles

A special Public Health Gaming evening social is also planned.

The full Retreat schedule is here below and a pdf version can be [downloaded here](#). Be sure to check back to the [event page](#) for updates on sessions and technical details. We recommend that you upgrade to the most recent version of Zoom for the best Retreat experience!

There is still time to [Register](#)! The event is free, but registration is required.

Monday 27 September 12:00-19:30 CEST

12:00 - 12:20 WELCOME Session

John Middleton - President, ASPHER

12:20 - 13:00 PLENARY 1 EDUCATION & HEALTH

Moderation:

John Middleton - President, ASPHER

Ines Siepmann - Coordinator, ASPHER Young Professionals Programme

Keynote address:

Hans Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe

Keynote address:

David Atchoarena, Director UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning

ASPHER Deans' & Directors' Good Practice Award 2021 Ceremony

Presented by: Carlo Signorelli - President-Elect, ASPHER

Award Recipient: UK Faculty of Public Health (FPH) Public Health Speciality Training

Represented by: Maggie Rae - President, UKFPH & James Gore - CEO, UKFPH

13:30 - 14:45 PARALLEL SESSIONS 1

PS1-A: LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PANDEMIC: TRAINING ADAPTATIONS

ASPHER Undergraduate Training Working Group

PS1-B: FIELD EPIDEMIOLOGY

UCCAIDE Consortium

PS1-C: ASPHER MEMBERSHIP SURVEY 2021 & MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

ASPHER Secretariat & ASPHER Young Professionals Programme

PS1-D: INEQUALITIES & SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEES REVIEW

SPH Chester-UK & SPH Rennes-FR

15:00 – 16:15 PARALLEL SESSIONS 2

PS2-A: LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PANDEMIC: SCHOOLS REOPENING

ASPHER Young Professionals Programme

PS2-B: DIVERSITY & PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION

SPH Bielefeld-DE & SPH York-UK

PS2-C: ACCREDITATION IN PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION

ASPHER Accreditation Working Group & APHEA

PS2-D: CONTACT TRACING & TESTING

SPH Dublin-IE & SPH Porto-PT

16:30 – 17:30 PLENARY 2 PROFESSIONALISATION

Moderation:

Robert Otok - Director, ASPHER

Marie Guichardon - Policy Officer, European Public Health Association (EUPHA)

Introductory presentation:

Kasia Czabanowska - Immediate Past-President, ASPHER

Panel:

Natasha Azzopardi-Muscat - Director, Division of Country Health Policies & Systems, WHO Regional Office Europe

John Middleton - President, ASPHER

Trygve Ottersen - Chair, International Association of National Public Health Institutes (IANPHI) Europe Regional Network

18:00 – 19:30 Public Health Gaming (evening social)

Arnold Bosman - Transmissible; [PANDEMOS](#)

Tuesday 28 September 09:00-13:00 CEST

09:00 – 09:10 DAY 1 summary and DAY 2 programme outline

Carlo Signorelli - President-Elect, ASPHER

09:10 – 10:00 PLENARY 3 PLANNING FOR AN OUTBREAK OF HEALTH

Moderation:

John Middleton - President, ASPHER

Michele Calabro - Young Forum Gastein; Policy Advisor, European Patients' Forum (EPF)

Introductory presentation:

Dorli Kahr-Gottlieb - Secretary General, European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG)

Panel:

Caroline Costongs – Director, EuroHealthNet

Milka Sokolovic – Director General, European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)

Dineke Zeegers – Executive Director, European Public Health Association (EUPHA)

Reflections by Peter Piot – Special Advisor on COVID-19 to European Commission President

10:15 – 11:30 PARALLEL SESSIONS 3

PS3-A: LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PANDEMIC: FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA

SPH Edinburgh-UK & SPH Porto-PT

PS3-B: CLIMATE AND HEALTH ACTION via SCHOOLS OF PUBLIC HEALTH

ASPHER Fellowship

PS3-C: PUBLIC HEALTH CAREERS

ASPHER Young Professionals' Programme

PS3-D: VACCINATION

SPH MilanSR-IT & SPH BGU-IL

12:00 – 12:40 PLENARY 4 GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Moderation

John Middleton – President, ASPHER

Naomi Nathan – ASPHER Fellow 2019

Introductory presentation:

Laura Magaña – Global Network for Academic Public Health (GNAPH); President & CEO, Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH)

Panel:

Silvio Brusaferrero – President, Italian National Health Institute (Istituto Superiore di Sanità, ISS); G20 Health Working Group

Jim Campbell – Director, Health Workforce Department, WHO Headquarters

Walter Ricciardi – President, World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA)

12:40 – 13:00 CLOSING Session and Invitation to 2022 Deans' & Directors' Retreat

Karolina Lyubomirova – Chair, 2022 Deans' & Directors' Retreat, Sofia BG

John Middleton – President, ASPHER

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2021 ASPHER Young Researchers' Forum Call for Abstracts

8 October 12:45-16:10

The 2021 ASPHER Young Researchers' Forum (YRF) will take place online on Friday, October 8th, 12:45-16:10 as part of the 30th Anniversary of the Krakow School of Public Health – Jagiellonian University Medical College. It is the first edition of the YRF that will be entirely online and offered via an ASPHER member event.

Students, post docs, junior faculty and recent graduates from all ASPHER Member programmes are invited to submit an abstract which should be of performed original research ([follow the link for more information](#)). All authors selected to present at the Forum will be invited to join the virtual [Krakow SPH Jubilee conference](#), 7-8 October. An award, funded by ASPHER and Krakow SPH will be presented to the researcher judged to have made the best presentation.

The deadline for submission is Monday 27th September (midnight Brussels time). Please forward this message to your relevant contacts and share the opportunity with your students, alumni and junior faculty members. Abstracts of up to 350 words should be sent to: youngresearchersforum@aspher.org.

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ASPHER COVID-19 NEWS

ASPHER COVID-19 Task Force

The ASPHER COVID-19 Task Force and ASPHER Young Professionals have taken advantage of time off from the academic school year to produce a series of reports over the summer months. Below are short excerpts from the reports. All [ASPHER COVID-19 Task Force](#) materials are freely available at aspher.org. Please be sure to take advantage of their work in your schools and disseminate them widely.

The [ASPHER COVID-19 Task Force](#) is always open to new members and new ideas to help make a difference during the Pandemic. **If you or a colleague at your School is interested to join the Task Force please let Robert know at robert.otok@aspher.org.**

ASPHER Statement: Déjà vu? Planning for the Covid-19 Third Wave and Planning for the Winter 2021-22

A “third wave” of the pandemic has arrived in Europe. [The Delta variant of SARS-COV2, is now widespread](#). Relaxations in pandemic control measures have been accompanied by surges in cases. [Concerns we reported ahead of the second wave](#) are still relevant today, conveying a sense of déjà-vu on last year’s concerns and recommendations. Scientific knowledge is incomplete and we cannot yet appreciate the potential impact of SARS-COV2 on human and animal health, and on social and environmental conditions. [How countries](#)

[collectively respond will determine which road the pandemic takes](#), and how well we can control the pandemic in Europe and globally.

In short, ASPHER believes countries must:

1. Address the Uncontrolled Spread of Infections
2. Recognise the Increasing Range of Clinical Presentations
3. Recognise and Address the Widening Range of Syndromes and Clinical Consequences of “Long COVID”, “Persistent COVID” and COVID Related Medical Conditions
4. Rethink Inadequate Testing Tools and Strategies and Improve Public Understanding of the Limits of Tests
5. Continue to Implement Mass Vaccination and Consistent Equitable Coverage of Their Population
6. Address Unmet Health Care Needs
7. Plan for Winter
8. Appreciate Their Global Responsibility to all Other Nations of the World
9. Earn the Trust of Your People, Govern by Informed Consent and Support Communities and Individuals

Read the full statement:

Peixoto VR, Reid J, Lopes H, Prikazsky V, Siepmann I, Martin-Moreno JM, Middleton J. ASPHER Statement: Déjà vu? Planning for the Covid-19 Third Wave and Planning for the Winter 2021-22. *Int J Public Health*. 2021;66:71.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3389/ijph.2021.1604361>

Vaccinating Children and Young People: What are the issues?

In the past few months, the vaccination rollout in several European and non-European countries has expanded to include children and young people between 12 and 15 years of age. Ethical issues surrounding the vaccination of children and young people remain prominent. Careful consideration of the principles of vertical equity, distributional justice and proportionate universalism are required. For instance, is the strategy of vaccinating healthy children in high income countries more appropriate than prioritising high risk groups or unvaccinated adults worldwide? ASPHER, as Europe’s representative organisation for Schools of Public Health, is deeply concerned by the absence of a secured global supply of vaccines to address the immediate requirement for vaccination of health workers and vulnerable adults.

ASPHER calls for the rapid immunisation of vulnerable children and young people and children and young people who live with individuals with a weakened immune system and commends the efforts to identify and support young carers. ASPHER recognises the value of vaccinating children and young people in areas with higher rates of exposure and susceptibility to the consequences of COVID-19 that reflect the structural inequalities in otherwise wealthier countries. We also recognise that many communities facing a greater

rate of exposure to COVID-19 also have a higher proportion of people from younger age groups. Without vaccinating children and young people, these communities would be left with significant pockets of susceptible individuals.

Concurrently, ASPHER supports international calls for the mandatory supply of vaccines through the COVAX mechanism by immediate donation and distribution. ASPHER supports the vaccine waiver implementation, articulating proper agreements under international trade law (based on the Doha Agreement on HIV drugs 2000). ASPHER calls for an end to vaccine poverty through full implementation of the Missing Out on Vaccination (MOV) programme designed to address barriers to vaccine access at global and local level and the need for clear, consistent, and inclusive communication strategies to counteract disinformation, address concerns and minimise vaccine hesitancy.

[Read the full statement here.](#)

ASPHER COVID-19 Situation Reporting for Europe

ASPHER's produces a weekly surveillance report that we hope is complementary to other resources such as ECDC and Our World in Data, where the reader can go for more detailed information.

Europe is currently overwhelmed by Delta variant surges. A high level of protection against morbidity and mortality caused by COVID-19 and its variants can be attained on completing vaccination schedule as recommended ([link](#)). ECDC emphasizes that the vaccination program in the EU/EEA region should focus on ensuring that all eligible populations are vaccinated ([link](#)). In addition, genomic surveillance is emerging as a vital necessity to achieve containment of the virus in this pandemic. It would facilitate greater early anticipation as well as initiation of effective strategies to mitigate outbreaks of new variants of COVID-19 virus ([link](#)).

ASPHER is concerned that countries are adopting different policies on rolling out a third vaccine dose. ASPHER believes that greater international consensus and shared research is required to determine the efficacy of different types of vaccine over time. Countries should closely monitor new infection rates among both vaccinated and unvaccinated to understand the efficacy of the vaccine. The current situation demands international consensus on a long-term strategy to minimize the transmission of virus variants, not only by rapid vaccination but also by increasing vaccine confidence and improving accessibility to vaccines to prevent further waves. Despite vaccination status, non-pharmacological interventions which complement vaccination must be followed. ASPHER remains concerned that countries are unprepared and complacent about the responses that will be needed by health services and public health authorities this autumn. Read our statement [here](#).

Since January, the ASPHER COVID-19 Task Force and ASPHER Young Professionals with HAW Hamburg, Maastricht University and Karolinska Institute have been putting together

weekly COVID-19 situation reports for Europe. Find the reports updated every week at: <https://www.aspher.org/covid-19-situation-reporting.html>

Further COVID-19 Reading

Coccolini F, Cicuttin E, Cremonini C, et al. A pandemic recap: lessons we have learned. World J Emerg Surg. 2021;16:46. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13017-021-00393-w>

Jaffe E, Dopelt K, Davidovitch N, Bitan Y. Vaccination of the Elderly in Assisted Living by the Israeli Emergency Medical Services. Am J Public Health. 2021;111(7):1223-6. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2021.306318>

Middleton J. Is the NHS prepared for the coming winter? BMJ Opinion 9 September 2021. URL: <https://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2021/09/09/john-middleton-is-the-nhs-prepared-for-the-coming-winter/>

Qirjako G, Qosja A, Draçini X, Çomo N, Hyska J, Fico A, Bukli M, Burazeri G. Infection prevention and control in healthcare facilities in Albania. SEEJPH. 2021:17. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11576/seejph-4702>

ASPHER NEWS & EVENTS

ASPHER Members Survey

ASPHER is asking all our Members to fill out the [ASPHER Members Survey](#). This survey is a key consultation with members to help implement the ASPHER 2025 agenda and further improvements in the Association's membership policy including tailoring the benefits and services provided to serve members needs best.

This survey should ideally be answered by the head of the member institution. If not available, a delegated representative in a leadership position is also acceptable.

We hope that you take time to provide your honest and thoughtful feedback as we tried to put the survey together in a way to trigger engagement. Please tell us the story of your school or organisation!

The Survey will remain open until the end of September. ASPHER Secretariat will report to you on preliminary results during the Deans' & Directors Retreat.

GNAPH Leadership awards

ASPHER is pleased to announce the selection and congratulate Nina Adelberger from Berlin School of Public Health, Germany and Polychronis Kostoulas from Department of Public and One Health, University of Thessaly, Greece to participate in the Global Network for

Academic Public Health (GNAPH) Academic Public Health Leadership Institute (APHLI) executive programme.

We thank all Members who were incentivised by this offer to complete the ASPHER Members' Survey. The Association hopes to be able to continue to offer scholarships to APHLI in the coming years.

ASPHER Projects

UCCAIDE Survey

The ASPHER Consortium working on Updating Core Competencies in Applied Infectious Disease Epidemiology (UCCAIDE) for ECDC will soon be launching the final consultation of their Core Competencies list.

Many of our members responded at the time of the project bid indicating that you would be willing to act as experts to assist the project. We will be contacting you soon with the survey and ask that you please share with relevant colleagues.

VXTrain website

ASPHER's contract with ECDC to develop training courses aimed to strengthen the public health capacity in Europe to respond to the challenges encountered in the area of vaccine hesitancy and communication around vaccination is well underway. The scientific lead team from Italy has been busy over the summer with the preliminary work and the ASPHER consortium of partners have been meeting to organise the work to develop and deliver the curriculum.

[Learn more from the VXTrain project website.](#)

SEEEPHI at IAPHP Conference



25 October 2021 - Ashkelon, Israel

Sharing European Educational Experience in Public Health for Israel (SEEEPHI) will be taking part in sessions during the upcoming Israeli Association of Public Health Physicians (IAPHP) Conference on 25 October 2021. The conference will be held at consortium partner school, Ashkelon Academic College in Ashkelon, Israel. If you wish to have more

information please contact Lore at lore.leighton@aspher.org.

[Learn more about SEEEPHI from the project website.](#)

ASPHER Young Professionals at Youth SDG Summit



Three ASPHER YPs, Ines Siepmann, Brian Wong, and Robin van Kessel participated in a panel discussion on 22 September at the [Youth SDG Summit](#) to discuss youth engagement in digital health governance. Key takeaways from the session include the need to bridge the gap between academic and political youth opportunities, ensure equitable access to digital health, and be cognizant of the different needs of different regions - from the continent level

to the individual patient. It was emphasized that youth need to be involved in all steps of the digital health governance process, and that these models of engagement must be sustainable, not tokenistic.

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MEMBER NEWS & EVENTS

Webinar: Update on COVID-19 pandemic in the United Arab Emirates

28 September 13:00 UAE (11:00 AM CET)

United Arab Emirates University is continuing the Institute of Public Health webinars in collaboration with ASPHER.

The next webinar on "Update on COVID-19 pandemic in the UAE" by Dr. Farida Al Hosani (Chair of the Infectious Disease Control Department, Department of Health & Official Spokesperson of the Ministry of Health UAE) will be held on Tuesday, September 28 at 14:00 PM (UAE time), 12:00 PM CET.

All are welcome to join! [Download the event flyer here.](#)

[Direct webinar Zoom link here.](#)

Course: Contemporary Illness Narratives

Online starting 05 October 2021

The University of York is offering a non-accredited literature course taking a cross-genre approach, this course will introduce learners to the rich array of texts that address the ill body as a source of frustration, wonder, affect, loss and transformation. Reading poetry, memoirs, fiction and essays from 1960 up until the present day, the course will explore how writers communicate their illness experiences. This will be supplemented by reflective

writing so that learners will be equipped to respond to representations of illness from both critical and creative perspectives.

The course runs for eight weeks on Zoom starting: 05 October 2021, 19:00-21:00 UK time. Full fee: £76. [Find more information and booking here.](#)

Webinar: Public Health, Climate Change, and Strategic Litigation

07 October, 14:00-16:00 CET

The webinar is organised by the Global Health Law Groningen Research Centre, the UK Faculty of Public Health, the EUPHA Law and Public Health section and the Environment and Health section, in collaboration with a range of other partners. The session will explore the challenges and opportunities for advancing arguments in strategic litigation, in particular its health, environmental and human right dimensions. [Register here.](#)



Institute of Public Health, Jagiellonian University Medical College Jubilee Conference

07 - 08 October 2021

2021 marks the 30th anniversary of the establishment of the School of Public Health, which was a joint project of the Jagiellonian University and the Medical Academy in Krakow. To honor this event in a special way, the Institute of Public Health is organizing a two-day international scientific conference online on 7-8 October 2021, devoted to public health issues and the challenges related to the current global epidemiological situation. Participation in the conference is free of charge.

This celebrations in Krakow will also host the 2021 Virtual Young Researchers' Forum. [Read more about the YRF here.](#)

ASPHER congratulates the Krakow SPH on their 30th anniversary! [Find more information, the conference programme and registration here.](#)

Call for Abstracts: Public health – lighting the path for the next 10, 20, 50 years. Healthier lives and fairer futures through sustainable transformation, local and global action

12 - 13 May 2022, Aberdeen, Scotland



After the massively challenging impact of the COVID pandemic on public health and on our workforce, it is timely to now share our broader vision and bolder ambitions, embracing wide engagement of partners with a more determined focus than ever, so that we can achieve more than the most essential improvements required for the health of people in Scotland.

Our 2022 Conference offers the ideal opportunity for us to collaborate in determining the shared pathways to achieving our realistic aspiration of healthier lives and fairer futures for all. In 2022, we can look back with pride on the fifty years existence of the Faculty of Public Health and anticipate even greater achievements for the next 50 years.

Our national public health conference in 2022 will explore the bold and ambitious strides in public health that will lead to sustainable transformation of our country so that health is valued as a human right for all, and wellbeing is counted as one of our greatest assets.

Within and beyond the conference theme the organisers particularly welcome input from all specialists, practitioners, experts and researchers demonstrating effective public health around the themes shown below.

1. Climate Change, Health, Sustainability & Wellbeing Economy
2. Healthy Workforce / Staff Health and Wellbeing
3. Communicable Disease & Health Protection
4. Digital Health
5. Public Health System Structures in Scotland
6. Integrated Approaches – Health and the Environment

Submitted abstracts/proposals will be reviewed by the committee, and the successful ones will be included in the programme as Oral or Poster presentations. ASPHER Members and young researchers are encouraged to submit! **Abstract submission deadline Friday 29 October 2021**

[Find more on how to submit an abstract here.](#)

[Download the conference flyer here.](#)

Health Workforce Projects Cluster on EU Health Policy Platform

A webinar was held on the 20th of September to officially launch the new Health Workforce Projects Cluster on the EU Health Policy Platform.

The aim of this network is to provide supporting tools, practical guidelines and to improve sharing of best practices that can help Member States to design and implement their policies related to health workforce retention, task-shifting and tackling regional medical deserts. Contribution from key stakeholders to the policy dialogue is essential to advance on these challenging issues.

The Health Workforce Projects Cluster covers five EU co-funded projects under the umbrella of the 3rd Health Programme with several ASPHER Member Programmes involved. The projects focus on three key topics - medical deserts, task shifting, and retention policies - that will be investigated thoroughly in the coming years.

Projects of the Health Workforce Projects Cluster:

- [Action for Health and Equity - Addressing Medical Deserts: AHEAD](#)
- [MEnTal hEalth: fOCUS on Retention of healthcare workers: METEOR](#)
- [prOmoting evidence-bASed rEformS: OASES](#)
- [Empowering EU health policies on Task SHifting: TaSHI](#)
- [A Roadmap OUT of mEdical deserts into supportive Health WorkForce initiatives and policies: ROUTE-HWF](#)

ASPHER Calls for Public Health Reviews

We would like to inform you about a very beneficial editorial privilege that ASPHER has in the journal [Public Health Reviews](#) (PHR): We can autonomously run in the journal "ASPHER Calls for Papers" and publish them as "ASPHER Special Issues". This allows the ASPHER community to promote Public Health research topics that we consider particularly important, and gives ASPHER members the opportunity to distinguish themselves internationally as guest editors.

Each Call is run by 2-3 guest editors out of the ASPHER audience who propose a relevant topic and title for the Call, draft a description (about 250 max) and are ready to organize double blind peer reviews for the incoming submissions. The PHR Editorial Office (Dr. Anke Berger) will provide advice and assistance to set up the Call, distribute it widely and organize the peer reviews.

We are looking for topics and guest editors for ASPHER Calls!

Please let us know if you are interested in running an ASPHER Call by submitting a topic and proposals for guest editors to Karolina at carol_lub@abv.bg.

Karolina Lyubomirova, ASPHER delegate in the PHR Editorial Board.

Selected ASPHER Member Publications

Bjegovic-Mikanovic V, Wenzel H, De Leeuw E, Laaser U. Schools of Public Health in Europe: common mission—different progress. *J Public Health Emerg.* 2021;5:26. URL: <https://jphe.amegroups.com/article/view/7386/html>

Bjegovic-Mikanovic V, Matovic-Miljanovic S, Seitalieva C, Makarova T, Murzalieva G, Kozhokeev K. Assessment of the training needs and interests among directors of health care services in the Kyrgyz Republic, South Eastern European Journal of Public Health (SEEJPH). 2021:17. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11576/seejph-4728>

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PARTNER NEWS AND EVENTS

European Health Forum Gastein 2021

Virtual event, 27 September - 1 October 2021

The Annual European Health Forum Gastein Conference will be held online from 27 September to 1 October under the theme ‘Rise like a phoenix: Health at the heart of a resilient future for Europe’

EHFG 2021



The COVID-19 pandemic has upended lives and radically altered the political landscape. While we continue to fight fires and look towards an uncertain future, amidst the ashes of this unprecedented crisis there lies an opportunity for renewal and rebirth. Health is having a rare moment in the political spotlight: now is the time to fight for solidarity, equity and transformation in health, within Europe and on the global stage.

Join EHFG 2021 for a full week of digital sessions and networking, and help us conceptualise how we can rise from this crisis as more resilient, smarter, and more equitable societies. It's time to level up!

ASPHER is synergizing with EHFG on Plenary 3 of the [Deans' & Directors Retreat](#) to bring these two parallel events together. Don't miss out on EHFG's contribution to 'Planning for an Outbreak of Health' in Europe during Plenary 3!

[Learn more about the EHFG 2021 programme here.](#)

[Register for the conference here.](#)

CUGH's Virtual Summit: The Road to COP27: Climate and Health Through Three Lenses: Free and open to all

15 October 2021, 11:00-15:00 EST

Countless reports have warned us of the existential threat climate change poses to all of us. The latest August IPCC Report showed that the last time atmospheric CO2 levels were this high was millions of years ago. Worldwide we are seeing another year of lethal wildfires, water crises and extreme weather conditions.

The central challenge now is to mobilize political will across sectors and internationally to scale up known, effective solutions that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate against the effects of climate change. The Consortium of Universities for Global Health symposium, The Road to COP27: Climate Change and Health Through Three Lenses, will include presentations from experts from around the world who will share high impact solutions that will address climate change and improve health outcomes. Leaders from the African continent will share what should be in the COP27 meeting in Africa in 2022.

Attendees will be able to provide suggestions and ask questions. Solutions from this symposium will be shared publicly and with policymakers including at the COP26 meeting in Glasgow in an open access document.

[Find more information and register here.](#)

14th European Public Health Conference 2021

Virtual event, 10 – 12 November 2021



The theme of this year's annual EPH Conference is 'Public health futures in a changing world'. European public health has not had a good COVID. Across Europe the public health response to a pandemic has been largely unsuccessful. This is despite an enormous amount of very hard work in public health units all across the EU. This reflects a weakness within the profession, which has been manifested in the curious phenomenon of dual strands of public health advice, official and unofficial, in several EU countries. Politicians were placed in an impossible position by this. This needs to be openly and constructively faced. By and large, public health has had limited impact on the design and implementation of a core public health policy.

So. The world of public health changes, but many key pieces remain the same. A key part is to hold to that which we value, and to build on that, and extend out from that, to meet new and pressing needs. A focus on where we are, and where we want to go might be helpful for clarification. The relevant word is 'futures', and not 'future'. We expect an even more diverse

public health, with the public health workforce delivering in new and more traditional arenas. [Learn more here.](#)

[Register for the EPH Conference here.](#)

ESCAIDE: European Scientific Conference on Applied Infectious Disease Epidemiology

Online, 16 - 19 November 2021

Save the date for the ESCAIDE conference from 16-19 November. Registration coming soon! Find [more information here](#) and [download the provisional programme here](#).

Epidemic Intelligence e-learning course



A new e-learning course on Epidemic Intelligence (EI) is now open for enrolment. This is a self paced e-learning course to be taken by participants in an asynchronous fashion with the objective of transmitting basic knowledge about how ECDC conducts its EI activities. The total estimated duration is approximately between 2-4 hours of active learning.

After the completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Define Epidemic Intelligence (EI)
- Summarise the reasons for doing EI
- Apply the ECDC methodology and processes of EI
- Identify tools used in EI
- Contribute to strengthen EI capacities (Team/Institution)
- Participate in the development of a common approach among stakeholders on EI activities

[Find more information and enrol here.](#)

Drawing Light from the Pandemic: A New Strategy for Health and Sustainable Development

Pan-European Commission on Health and Sustainable Development Report

The Pan-European Commission on Health and Sustainable Development is an independent and interdisciplinary group of leaders convened by the WHO Regional Office for Europe to rethink policy priorities in the light of pandemics.

Comprising former heads of state and government, distinguished life scientists and economists, heads of health and social care institutions, and leaders of the business

community and financial institutions from across the European Region, the Commission brings together individuals with outstanding expertise and experience. The group of 19 Commissioners is chaired by Professor Mario Monti, President of Bocconi University and former Prime Minister of Italy and a former European Commissioner. Professor Elias Mossialos, Founder and Director of the London School of Economics Department of Health Policy, is the Commission's Scientific Coordinator, and its deliberations are supported by a Scientific Advisory Board chaired by Professor Martin McKee, Professor of European Public Health at the LSHTM and Director of the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies.



Over the past year, members of the Commission have reflected on what worked and, more often, what did not work in the COVID-19 response and in previous crises. In the Call to Action that they issued in March 2021 and in this final report, the Commission have made a series of recommendations with the aim of achieving seven key objectives to prevent a catastrophe on the same scale from happening again.

[Download the Pan-European Commission Report here.](#)

A review of the evidence has been published in conjunction with the main report of the Commission. The evidence on which they drew is set out in this review, led by Martin McKee (Co-Director of the European Observatory and a Commissioner and Chair of the Commission's Scientific Advisory Board) with contributions from leading academics.

This review can be divided into two broad sections, looking at: Problems to be solved; and Evidence that informed the Commission's proposals.

[Download the Review of Evidence here.](#)

Launch of the WHO Global Air Quality Guidelines



For the first time since 2005, WHO published an update of the [Air Quality Guidelines](#) (AQG). Taking into account the overwhelming amount of new evidence on the health effects of air pollution at levels below the 2005 AQG values, the proposed values have been lowered to protect public health. To reduce the global burden of 7 Million premature deaths attributable to air pollution every year, nations need to adopt the science-based WHO AQG values in their national clean air policies. As proven by many countries over the past 30 years, it is possible to drastically improve air quality. Related costs are much lower than those of the adverse effects of air pollution. However, many governments still ignore the needs for clean air regulations and the most polluted regions in Asia, Africa and

South America see further deteriorations rather than improvements of air quality, thus widening the inequity gap. This gap is amplified by wealthy countries exporting outdated technology and dirty fuels to countries with poor environmental regulations. **More than 110 societies – including ASPHER – signed a [statement](#), published in the [IJPH of SSPH+](#), to endorse the global adoption of clean air policies.**

On Wednesday 22 September, WHO launched the new Global Air Quality Guidelines. The new guidelines provide clear evidence of the damage air pollution inflicts on human health and recommend new air quality levels to protect the health of populations, by reducing levels of key air pollutants, some of which also contribute to climate change.

The updated WHO Global Air Quality Guidelines (AQGs) provide recommendations on air quality guideline levels as well as interim targets for six key air pollutants. They also offer qualitative statements on good practices for the management of certain types of particulate matter (PM), for example, black carbon/elemental carbon, ultrafine particles, and particles originating from sand and dust storms, for which there is insufficient quantitative evidence to derive AQG levels.

Based on the extensive scientific evidence currently available, the guidelines identify the levels of air quality necessary to protect public health worldwide. The AQGs also serve as a reference for assessing if, and by how much, the exposure of a population exceeds levels at which it might cause health concerns.

Guideline levels for specified pollutants can be used as an evidence-informed reference to help decision-makers in setting legally binding standards and goals for air quality management at international, national and local levels. They are also a practical instrument with which to design effective measures to achieve pollutant emission and concentration reductions, and therefore, to protect human health.

[Download the WHO Global Air Quality Guidelines here.](#)

Hoffmann B, Boogaard H, de Nazelle A, et al. WHO Air Quality Guidelines 2021–Aiming for Healthier Air for all: A Joint Statement by Medical, Public Health, Scientific Societies and Patient Representative Organisations. *Int J Public Health*. 2021;66:88.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3389/ijph.2021.1604465>

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OPPORTUNITIES

ASPHER is hiring!

ASPHER is looking for a part-time ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT to be responsible for handling clerical tasks in our Brussels office.

We are looking for someone with a high level of adaptability who is able to work within a team to ensure efficient operation of the office, and maintain friendly interactions with ASPHER's diverse membership.

Duties and responsibilities will include providing administrative support to other office employees through a variety of tasks related to organisation and communication, some of which may be confidential and time sensitive. Specific duties will include:

- handling and directing incoming communications, managing files, updating paperwork and other documents;
- organising appointments, meetings, travel and events (booking conference calls, hotels, taxis, etc);
- written English for correspondence, minutes, assisting preparation of reports/newsletter;
- creating, maintaining, and entering information into databases (incl. ASPHER website, online directory, contact lists);
- prepare and monitor invoices;
- maintaining contact with regular subcontracted services (e.g. book keeping, finance and tax advisor and legal services);
- performing other general office clerk duties (e.g. organising office common areas, resolving administrative problems).

The ideal candidate will have experience as an office assistant or related function requiring strong organisation and planning skills, excellent time management and ability to multi-task and prioritize work with attention to detail and problem solving. You must have excellent written and verbal communication skills with the ability to communicate clearly in English, with French or Dutch familiarity required for navigating administration of activities in the Brussels environment.

One year part-time contract with possibility to extend and incentives to be tailored to candidate profile.

Please send your CV and letter of motivation to recruitment@aspher.org.

Share the ASPHER newsletter!



[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)

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