

## 1) Health Psychology in the country

Although there has not been established a title or special identity of Health psychology (HP) yet and the boundaries defining HP are merging, a great number of psychologists work with various ideas of HP in theory and practice. HP has been taught as part of the curriculum at many Universities, not only for psychologists but also for doctors, teachers and other professions. The undergraduate program in psychology consists of three-year + two-year degrees that finish with the titles bachelor and master, respectively. During the course of university study, undergraduates are to become acquainted with many types of psychological practice, alongside with theory. There, in psychological departments at universities, HP is “hidden” under an umbrella of clinical, social, pedagogical or general psychology. After graduation, new psychologists are presumed to continue in additional specializations e.g. in school, occupational, counselling psychology setting etc., or continue in research institutions or stay further at universities.

Although there are not any special requirements to be trained in HP, it occurs implicitly in a great variety of institutions, from all types of schools and various workplaces to hospitals, university hospitals, outpatients clinics, specialized wards (e.g. ICU, intensive care units) clinical rooms etc., spread via its providers. The most frequent way to work as Health Psychologists (and put HP into practice) is to get a licence in clinical psychology, which is the only field of psychology where the special training programme is obliged under serious scrutiny and supervision.

## II. Education, training & professionalization

### 1. PROMOTION OF HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY

Information on working opportunities abroad, lists for applicants, offerings of pregradual and/or post gradual programmes, conferences, courses and other educational opportunities are available to all applied ČMPS members in the Journal of CMPS, printed quarterly and via the ČMPS online sources which can be downloaded here: <https://cmps.ecn.cz/?page=ps-zdravi>

Besides continuous teaching, educational, research and publishing activities of many members of HP, the popularizing blog “Practical Health Psychology” (PHP) aimed at a broader auditorium of providers in health services and co-edited by members of the Committee, may be downloaded in Czech version via EHPS websites.

## 2. EDUCATION AND TRAINING INITIATIVES/PROGRAMS

As of many years ago, HP is still a part of the bachelor's and master's curricula for psychologists in the Faculty of Arts at Charles University, Prague, at Masaryk University, Brno and at Palackého University, Olomouc. On average, there are one or two-term courses in HP for psychologists. In Prague, the Faculty of Social Sciences also provides courses in Health Psychology for students of humanities within the common basics. Moreover, the two-term course of Positive Psychology is taught at Masaryk University in Brno. Since the 1970, a long time before establishing HP in CZ, the field of psychohygiene has been traditionally a part of the curriculum at this MU in Brno.

There has yet to be established a PhD programme in HP at universities. A PhD degree in HP can still be only achieved within clinical, general or social departments of psychology but maybe the preparation for PhD study in HP within the social department of psychology at Charles University will come off in the next few years.

The majority of Bohemian and Moravian Faculties of Pedagogy (in Prague, Ostrava, Brno, Olomouc, Ústí nad Labem, České Budějovice and Plzeň) offer a course called "Education for Health" aiming to educate future teachers how to teach this topic in schools. The courses aim also at strengthening their general teaching skills and improving their psychosocial health too.

Hence HP is implicitly interwoven in clinical settings and psychotherapeutic training, it is mainly applied by licensed clinical psychologists. Before a career in clinical psychology and psychotherapy may start, the graduates are obliged to enter the postgraduate course "Psychologists in the Health care system". The course has been accredited by the Czech Ministry of Health and is offered in some universities in Prague, Olomouc and Brno, and is taught by psychologists approved and identified with HP in some abovementioned way. For future clinical psychologists who enter the way of such a special training, the length of receiving a licence in clinical psychology is equal to five years of full-time work (or any longer times accounted by adjusting for part-time work). The process of education and training is finished by multiple examinations and only since then the new provider-specialist can get a licence allowing him/her to work in clinical settings on his own (either in hospitals, clinics etc. or in own clinical rooms). After a special training programme, clinicians may also get a broadening specialization in psychotherapy for clinical settings. Formal registration is also required in a national registration authority under the Czech Ministry of Health. Working as a clinical psychologist is connected to another ongoing long-lasting education.

### III Activities

#### 1. CONFERENCES & MEETINGS

Traditionally in May every year, the Czech Health Psychology Section holds the Annual National Section Conference in Vernířovice. The Conference is a unique opportunity to socialize and personally share new ideas, directions and challenges in this field. More than 40 Czech members and supporters of HP from the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Poland have taken part this year. The programme consisted of regular lectures, evening round table discussions, plenary sessions and workshops, implemented in a week-end period (Friday evening – Sunday afternoon). A lot of the Conference's visitors work as university teachers, tutors, and counsellors in clinical, educational and occupational settings and through those members, HP is spreading into the country. The 90th anniversary of the Czech-Moravian Psychological Society which is the biggest professional organization in the country, was celebrated in autumn 2017. The Health Psychology section was introduced to other delegates in this assembly as a progressive and quickly developing area.

#### 2. PUBLICATIONS/grants

B. Hátlová with colleagues from Jan E. Purkyně University successfully finished the international Czech-Norwegian Research Programme named PsychPat in the period 2014 – 2017. The research was aimed at the investigation of psychomotor activity in psychiatric patients in relation to their personal experiences and positive and negative feedback of social relations. In 2017 there was published about 6 scientific papers and at least two monographies about the topic.

The annual international conference linking the role of movement (psychomotor therapy) was held at University JEP in Ust nad Labem in April 2017.

At least 6 peer-reviewed articles of implemented research concerning epilepsy in children and founded by national grants were published last year by authors Brabcová, Kohout from Western-Bohemia University. M. Svoboda from the same university has conducted two projects founded from municipal resources: the former was linked to maladaptive eating behaviour, the latter investigated the effect of various psychosocial interactional trainings in children.

The number of peer-reviewed articles, books or popularizing articles and dissertations written and published in 2017 is near to 15 (based on references from the Book of collection, edited by prof. Mareš)

#### 3. WORKING GROUPS

Members of the Committee narrowly cooperate with the sections within Czech Moravian Psychological Society (ČMPS) and other professional associations in the country, e.g. Psychological Association of Clinical Psychology (AKP) or Union of Psychological Sciences (UPA). Beside the Health Psychology Section there are not any other professional groups relating to HP in the country. Unfortunately, on June 27<sup>th</sup> 2017 Czech Psychology was suddenly stricken by the death of Professor Vladimír Kebza – who was the long lasting leader of the Health Psychology Section and an outstanding Czech psychologist with international experiences and reputation.

Even if the state of HP in the country seems to be the same as in recent years and works approximately within a similar scope, it is apparent that HP is entering a transitional period due to new challenges in the field.

The Committee consists of these members:

- Professor Jiří Mareš – the chief of HP Department,
- associate professor Bohumil Koukola – vice chief,
- Dr. Renata Hacklová – secretary,
- Dr. Radim Badošek – member,
- Dr. Tereza Kimplová – member.

To complete the number of the Committee members to seven, the Committee has decided to call for an early election that should be finished by the end of this year.

Some additional activities are now under way and will peak during the next HP Conference. We realize that the future of the HP section depends on sharing and mixing the “old” experiences with the new and enriching ones. Hence, various round table discussions to stimulate cooperation between the relative professions and overlapping areas are prepared to be launched. The site of the Conference will be situated near the small town Rokytnice in the Krkonoše Mountains.

#### 4. PLANNED/FUTURE ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES

Members of the HP Committee in cooperation with the local and international professional associations (CMPS, UPA) & (EHPS, EFPA etc.) are preparing for the 32th International Conference of Psychology, Prague 2020. The Health Psychology department will be among the 42 participating ČMPS sections there.

In 2018, the HP department celebrates the 30th anniversary of its foundation. The Book of collection full of articles about history through personal memories, photos and other old written documents mapping the history from birth to nowadays is about to be published.

We hope also that the first interdisciplinary Czech monography for psychologists and other medical staff selectively targeting the main HP topics, is finally coming to its last period.

## **Other issues**