



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Golden Gate Bridge barrier approved, Asia-Pacific Regional Conference and lottery for free hotel in Montevideo

After decades of debate and over 1300 lives lost to suicide the bridge authority approved for the first time the construction of a physical barrier to prevent suicides. The board that controls the bridge opted for putting a metal net along the structure that would partially collapse around anyone who jumped into it, allowing rescuers to fish the person out without harm. Perhaps the letter from IASP and the IASP members around the world who were invited to offer their opinion last August in this column may have had some impact on their decision. However, do not expect construction to start soon. The construction is subject to an environmental review of the net's effect on the pelicans and cormorants that nest on the bridge. Also, they have not yet obtained financing of the \$40 - \$50 million cost.

Asia-Pacific Regional Conference

The Third bi-annual Asia Pacific Regional Conference of the International Association for Suicide Prevention, held in Hong Kong on 31 October to 3 November 2008 included 119 oral presentations on research and interventions in suicide prevention, and 52 poster presentations. Researchers, practitioners, planners, suicide survivors and volunteers from 18 different countries shared their recent discoveries and innovative practices in a welcoming environment hosted by Paul Yip and his dedicated staff of the Hong Kong Jockey Club Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention, The University of Hong Kong. The conference theme, "Suicide Research and Prevention in Times of Rapid Change in the Asia Pacific Region: Opportunities and Challenges" was particularly appropriate in the context of the world economic crisis and was the focus of attention of journalists who covered this event. The 2010 Asia Pacific Regional Conference will be held in Australia and we are currently open for proposals to host the 2012 regional conference.

Lottery for Free Hotel in Montevideo

For those of you who are planning to attend the 2009 World Congress on Suicide Prevention in Montevideo, I would like to remind you of an opportunity to win a free complimentary hotel stay at the congress venue, the Radisson Montevideo, during the Congress. Registration has just opened for the congress and we are ready to accept early registration (at a substantial discount). There will be a lottery of the first 50 persons to register and pay their full registration fees: the winner will receive a 4-night free stay at the Radisson during the congress. All you need to do in order to be eligible is to be one of the first 50 persons to send in your registration with fees.

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JOIN A IASP TASK FORCE

Task forces play an important role in IASP's contributions to suicide prevention. They offer the opportunity for the IASP community of members, researchers, professionals, lay people and volunteers to focus deeply on a specific aspect of suicide and suicide prevention. There currently are seven very active IASP task forces targeting suicide prevention in the elderly, prisons, and defence and police forces, studying cross-national differences in certifying suicide deaths or the role of genetics in suicide, developing guidelines for media reporting of suicide, and supporting suicide survivors (see www.iasp.info/task_forces.php). In addition, one new task force is currently prepared, i.e. suicidal behaviour and emergency medicine and the development of best practice standards for helplines.



Kees van Heeringen
IASP Vice President

IASP cordially invites its members to share their knowledge and expertise with others by joining these activities, and thus contribute to IASP's goal i.e. suicide prevention. In addition, members are invited to propose new topics for task forces. An example of a possible new task force could be 'Decreasing the availability of means to commit suicide', thereby aiming at developing guidelines for policy makers and mental health professionals. Members interested in joining an existing task force may contact the Task Force chairs (see list column right). Those interested in starting up a new task force can contact Kees van Heeringen, IASP Vice President, via cornelis.vanheeringen@ugent.be.

IASP TASK FORCES AND THEIR CHAIRS:

- **Cross-national differences in certifying suicide deaths:** Paul Corcoran (paul.nsr@iol.ie)
- **Suicide prevention in the elderly:** Annette Erlangsen (aer@ncrr.dk), Sylvie Lapierre (Sylvie.Lapierre@uqtr.ca)
- **Suicide and the media:** Jane Pirkis (j.pirkis@unimelb.edu.au), R. Warwick Blood (warwick.blood@canberra.edu.au)
- **Suicide in prisons and jails:** Marc Daigle (marc.daigle@uqtr.ca)
- **Suicide in defence and police forces:** Aaron Werbel (aaron.werbel@usmc.mil)
- **Postvention:** Karl Andriessen (karl.andriessen@pandora.be), Michelle Linn-Gust (chellehead@aol.com), Seán McCarthy (sean.mccarthy@console.ie)
- **The genetics of suicide:** Dan Rujescu (Dan.Rujescu@med.uni-muenchen.de)
- **Emergency medicine and suicidal behaviour:** Greg Larkin (GLuke.Larkin@Yale.edu), Annette Beautrais (Annette.beautrais@otago.ac.nz), Murad Khan (Murad.khan@aku.edu)
- **The development of best practice standards for helplines:** Dawn O'Neil (dawns@lifeline.org.au)

REVISED

IASP/WHO MEDIA GUIDELINES

Preventing Suicide: A Resource for Media Professionals

The updated 2008 media resource prepared by the IASP Media Task Force is now available and can be accessed and downloaded at: www.iasp.info

XXV IASP WORLD CONGRESS MONTEVIDEO, URUGUAY 27-31 OCTOBER 2009



The Second Announcement
is now available:
www.iasp.info

LOTTERY

A lottery will be held with the prize
FOUR FREE NIGHTS
in a double room
at the Radisson Hotel
during the congress.
The winner will be
drawn from the first
50 people to complete
and register with pay-
ment for the congress.

IASP

XXV IASP WORLD CONGRESS

