June 8 2022

Re: Application for EACH President

Dear Selection committee,

I write to offer my motivation letter for the role of President of EACH. I am honored to be nominated and considered for this vital role. To support this application I will briefly outline my academic training, my history with EACH, my varous roles in EACH over the years and my vision for the progress for EACH moving forward.

I developed a career in the field of Communication in Health Care beginning with academic training in 1995 with a Masters degree, 2003 a PhD (both at the University of Sydney School of Medicine) and ending in 2005 with a Post Doctoral fellowship at Case Western Reserve Univerity in the United States. The focus of this training was in cancer patient and oncologist interventions to improve a) patient engagement in cancer consultations through question prompt lists and decision aids and b) oncologists interactions through communication skills training. Since then, I have continued my path as a communication in health care researcher and have held academic positions at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center / Cornell Medical School, 2005-2010, in New York City and now at the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine in Richmond Va, 2010-2022.

During these years, I commenced my long standing association with EACH and attended the inaugural conference in Warwick England in 2002. Since then I have attended, and presented data, at 12 ICCH EACH/ACH conferences. I have developed long standing academic relationships and taken on various leadership roles in EACH. This commitment to EACH is driven by my respect for the vision of EACH and my personal view that EACH is my academic home.

Along with various contributions to EACH, such as membership of conference scientific committees, pairing with colleagues senior on 6 occasions and leadership in networking activities, I was elected to be the United States (US) National Representative (NR) to EACH in 2014 and was reelected to three consecutive two year terms that concluded in 2020. During that time, I was involved in two substantive EACH transitions, one from European Association to International Association and the second, the EACH Steering Committee shift to the EACH Advisory Committee. As US NR, these transitions offered me the opportunity to learn about EACH processes and policies. Moreover I was able to help shape these important shifts in the way that EACH views itself and the processes that guide how EACH leadership interacts with EACH members. In addition, this role gave me valuable insights in to how EACH and ACH interact and some of the challenges that face the EACH US NR as EACH continues the important collaboration with our sister organization. In 2021 I was honored to be awarded the ACH fellowship and contiure my collaboration with ACH as a Putnam Scholar Mentor.

At the conclusion of my third term as US NR in 2020, I was asked to take on the role of Co-chair of the Advisory Committee (AC). I enthusiastically accepted and after one year was reelected to a second two year term that concluded in 2022. Over the years of my tenure as AC Co-Chair I was fortunate to work with talented and dedicated NRs and DNRs. During that time the committee made a significant contribution to EACH and the EACH executive. As a participant, in collaboration with the NRs and DNR’s and the co- leadership of the AC, Lode Verreyen and Eva Doherty, I offered support to the NRs and DNRs, developed optimal processes to interact with the executive and ultimately served the EACH membership.

In the role of AC co-chair during 2020, I commenced the initiative to establish an EACH Fellowship program. After two years of fruitful negotiation between the AC leadership and the EACH executive, the EACH Fellowship has now been realized. The first EACH fellows will be announced at the ICCH/EACH conference in Glasgow. As Chair of the EACH fellow committee, I lead a diverse team of four EACH members to ensure that the application and selection processes are equitable and transparent. Our goal in this endeavor is to honor the substantive contribution of the many international members who have ensured the ongoing success of EACH. A second goal is to incentivize engagement and leadership in EACH. In my view offerering other non financial incentives for engagement and leadership, such as leadership awards, certificates of appreciation and formal opportunities to congratulate members achievements for EACH, are in order.

My vision for the six year role of incoming President, President and then past President of EACH is to promote growth in three areas.

The first area is **Networking**. As AC co-chair we engaged EACH NRs and DNRs in multiple discussions about networking and the role of NRs and DNR’s in the networking process, in my view, we need to focus on developing **tailored networking plans**. Each of our participating countries has different needs, existing collaborations and networking processes that need to be considered in developing tailored plans that will optimize the potential for success. To that end, I have already worked individually with the current US NR to consider approaches that will meet unique needs of the US constituents. My goal will be to **extend these discussions to other NRs and futher our networking goals**.

The second area is **Reach**. I hope to extend the potential reach of the EACH organization in collaboration with the AC leaders , EACH executive and in consultation with the NRs and DNRs in each country. As the field of Health Care Communication (HCC) has diversified over the past 20 years, many country specific academic organizations have attracted HCC academics and clinicians. In my view, this diversity represents an opportunity for EACH AC NRs and DNRs to **partner with these different academic and clinical groups** with a view to **fostering collaborations that can expand our presence** and potentially our **membership**.

The third areas is **Engagement.** For many NRs and DNRs the opportunities for enagagement with the organization are limited to AC meetings and conference attendance. In order to promote engagement ,I think we need to consider expanding these possibilities to include **task groups** within the AC to realize the goals of the AC. These task groups can be formalized around various aspects of the AC including **networking, constituent communication and EACH resource dissemination**, among others. In my view, NRs and DNRs could be encouraged to involve and engage their constituents to realize these goals and in turn offer members more opportunities to participate in EACH.

I hope it is clear that I am enthusiastic to take on the role of President. I think I bring the necessary experience, knowledge and skills to facilitate the ongoing success of the EACH. I can provide the vision and leadership to drive initiatives and realize the goals of EACH and further the strategic plan. I have truly enjoyed being an EACH member and I look forward to my future involvement.

Yours Sincerely



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