



EDITORIAL

The new Section of ‘‘Psychosomatic Psychiatry’’ in the *European Journal of Psychiatry*



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In this issue of the *European Journal of Psychiatry* we launch a new *Section on Psychosomatic Psychiatry*. In a context of discrepancies about the use of the appropriate term for the discipline, we have argued in favour of this denomination, because it is intended to be the psychiatric contribution to a more general field of Psychosomatic Medicine.¹ I believe two basic pillars sustain this discipline. First, the humanistic, holistic view of Medicine, traditional in the ‘psychosomatic movement’. And, second, the empirical view, which is linked to the ‘evidence based’ approach. The empirical bases of *Psychosomatic Psychiatry* were very early made explicit by pioneers of the consultation-liaison psychiatry: there is a high prevalence of psychiatric morbidity among medical patients; this morbidity is often undiagnosed and therefore untreated; the psychological morbidity is associated with the risk of somatic disturbances and complicates its clinical course and prognosis; and, there is some evidence that the adequate treatment of the psychological morbidity improves the prognosis, and probably decreases the costs of medical care.

The discipline is called again *Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry* in the USA, and its development is quite apparent in that country.² With different models, the expansion of the field was also shown to be considerable in early European studies,³ and is now confirmed in countries such as Spain,⁴ as well as in different countries around the world.⁵ While the American consultation-liaison approach has been very positive internationally, some

experts have proposed the expansion of the model to cover clinical and epidemiological needs in areas such as primary care or even in the general population.⁶ A parallel development of international publications might be required.

The *Eur J Psychiatry* is intended to cover a wide spectrum of subjects, and this new Section helps the expanding of the field, is timely, and will be welcome by both clinicians and researchers. The Section is certainly not restricted to psychiatrists, and experts from fields such as Clinical Psychology, General Medicine, Epidemiology or from basic disciplines will find favourable reception.

In relation to this, it can be of no surprise that the responsibility of the new Section is given to Prof. Christina van der Feltz-Cornelis. She is a real expert in the field and, as she writes in the Editorial, emphasizes the particular relevance nowadays of ‘translational research’, trying to link the medical discipline and psychiatry closely with basic sciences. We encourage new submissions. Independent from its European name, the journal is committed from its inception to publishing good articles from all over the world. The research can involve not only the general hospital setting, but also primary care settings, specialty mental health care setting or general population studies.

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Conflict of interest

The author has no conflict of interest to declare in relation to this study.

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