



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOGOPEDICS AND PHONiatrics

The non-profit worldwide organization of professionals and scientists in human communication, voice, speech language pathology, audiology and swallowing

Dear Affiliated Societies, Members of Affiliated Societies, Individual Members and Supporters of IALP,

It is a great honour to become the President of this important Association. I am standing on the shoulders of many who have taken our professions forward in the service of those with speech, language, communication, hearing and swallowing difficulties.

The recent IALP conference held in Taiwan was one of the most successful that I have attended with more than 900 people participating from 44 countries sharing excellent scientific and clinical knowledge and experience.

OBJECTIVES OF MY PRESIDENCY

I would like to share with you the objectives that I intend to drive over the next 3 years.

Improving knowledge of the impact of communication disorders. Whilst there may be some general knowledge by the public and governmental offices regarding the more obvious difficulties faced by those with communication disorders, there is less awareness and understanding of the impact that this has on their lives and the lives of their families. Those with communication difficulties are more likely to perform less well in school, achieve less in work, have more restrictive social lives, be more likely to have behavioural problems and be more likely to have contact with the judicial system. Depression, financial instability and divorce are more prevalent in those with communication difficulties. Our professions are central to alleviating and managing the consequences of communication disorders.

Improving equity of access

All countries have communities which are underserved by our professions and in some countries all of those with communication disorders are underserved. Whilst most government departments recognise the needs of those with physical disabilities some still feel that the ability to communicate is more of a 'cosmetic problem'. Furthermore, some governmental departments have good understanding but limited resources. We need to support colleagues in all countries by providing easily accessible resources to support raising awareness, improving identification, improving flexible interventions and increasing educational opportunities. By working together, and only by working together, we can improve services for all of those with communication disorders.

In order to achieve these objectives I feel that the **following actions** are necessary:

- 1. Change of Name.** We need to improve awareness of the Association (IALP) so that all of those concerned with communication disorders know us and can join a global pressure group to improve the lives of those with communication disorders. The majority of professionals (speech and language pathologists, phoniaticians, audiologists, clinical linguistics, psychologists et cetera) are either completely unaware of IALP or do not appreciate its relevance. This also goes for those working in International Agencies. I strongly believe that the title ‘International Association of Logopaedics and Phoniatics’ is not helping us to communicate our business and intent.

Following a long process to shortlist 4 possible alternative names, a vote was taken at the Congress in Taiwan which indicated that the majority favoured a change by voting for one of the other 3 names. However, as none of the other names received more than 50% of the vote, it was decided that another vote will be taken either to retain the existing name, International Association of Logopaedics and Phoniatics or to change it to The International Association of Communication Sciences and Disorders.

It is clear that I favour a change but I do appreciate that some who have given a lot to IALP are upset by this possibility.

I sincerely believe that the proposed new name will make the Association’s purpose clearer to the professionals that we wish to represent, to the government bodies that we wish to influence and to the public that we wish to serve.

In the event that election indicates that the name is to be changed, then the Board will agree a process going towards its launch in 3 years time at the next Congress. The former title will be printed on all materials i.e. ‘formerly known as----’ for an appropriate period.

- 2. Reducing costs of individual membership.** You may be aware that to be on one of the 14 committees of IALP, it is necessary to become a paid up individual member. I believe that the diversity of our individual membership is limited by the high cost of the Individual membership subscription. Additionally, I feel it is a little perverse that those who do the majority of the work in the Association have not only got to give their time but also pay a significant price for doing so. However, we will not be able to reduce the cost unless we find other resources or income streams to support the infrastructure of the Association. This may take time but I feel it is an achievable ambition.
- 3. Improving communication within.** I feel we can improve communication between ourselves to ensure that we are aware of, and support each other’s initiatives. It is likely that this difficulty with communication is related to the fact that we are all busy people! I will start with a quarterly letter (which will be brief--- and definitely shorter than this one) to keep you updated on what the Association has been up to!
- 4. Working closely with other related organisations.** IALP is already in official relations with the WHO and it is important that we continue to strengthen our work with them. Additionally, there are other organisations, groups and Associations who

address issues which are relevant and related to our mission, and I believe that it is important to improve communication across all such organisations and support activities of common interest.

At the end of my term, I will review how successful we have been in these areas but I am clear that we will not make an impact unless we work together and focus on this direction of travel.

I will need your help and support with this!!

Sincerely,

Pam Enderby OBE, PhD, DSc, MSc, FRCSLT

President IALP