

# **Report on the International Conference for Public Health Students (ICPHS) and Pre-Conference Workshops**

**1–2 November, 2024**

**University of Warwick, Coventry, United Kingdom**

I attended the pre-conference workshops on Grant Writing and Presentation Skills on 1 November, and the International Conference for Public Health Students (ICPHS) at the University of Warwick on 2 November 2024. The conference was an enlightening experience that broadened my horizons and allowed me to view public health from another perspective. It underscored the critical importance of disease prevention and enabled me to engage with diverse viewpoints on global health challenges.

## **Pre-Conference Workshops**

### *Grant Writing Workshop*

The Grant Writing workshop, led by Dr Tamar Abzhandadze and Mr Usoro Akpan, clarified the process of securing research funding through group critiques of grant applications. The presenters emphasised the importance of a straightforward application with defined goals, specific measures, timelines, and a detailed plan. The skills I acquired will be helpful in my career, where there are many grants to apply for and effective writing is critical.

### *Presentation Skills Workshop*

The Presentation Skills workshop, led by Prof Debbi Marais and Dr Abimbola Ayorinde, was particularly impactful. It helped me identify areas for improvement while introducing precise messaging techniques, techniques for audience engagement, and effective visual aids. Key takeaways included maintaining eye contact, using concise slides with no more than six lines of text, incorporating high-quality images and simple graphs, avoiding cluttered layouts, and ensuring clear contrasts.

## **Conference Highlights**

One of the most significant moments was the keynote speech by Professor Kevin Fenton, President of the Faculty of Public Health. His talk, "*Leading in Complex Times: What is the Future of Public Health?*" provided profound insights into tackling health inequalities, infectious disease prevention and control, climate justice, and urban health. His talk highlighted the complexities and future directions of public health leadership. Apart from core topics, I participated in parallel sessions on *Antimicrobial Prescribing, Resistance, and Stewardship*, as well as *Mental Health and Health Systems*. In the parallel sessions, a variety of topics were presented in a short time, enabling me to learn a great deal quickly.

During the conference, I had a unique opportunity to serve as an evaluator for presentations and posters. Assigning grades and offering feedback deepened my engagement with the material and enhanced my analytical skills. I learned that while providing feedback is essential, remaining fair and objective can be challenging.

At the end of the conference, I established connections with the Organising Committee and began discussing options for future collaboration. I believe my participation further strengthened the partnership between my faculty and the University of Warwick.

Overall, the experience was incredibly beneficial for my personal and professional growth. It equipped me with new skills and perspectives that will be valuable for my career. The conference reinforced my belief that prevention should take precedence in managing diseases and emphasised the vital role of public health in global well-being.

I thank the University of Ljubljana for this opportunity and the University of Warwick for hosting. Special thanks to Dr Philip Anyanwu, the key organiser, for making the conference remarkable.

*Oslo, Norway, 20 November 2024*

*Sašo Mravljak, Medical Student*