

## Chair's Report 2024

Membership numbers continue to increase at a steady, manageable rate.

This year, the NCH gave support to the UK Hypnosis Convention which proved a successful exercise in public relations and giving the NCH an, 'in person' platform to communicate and listen to fellow hypnotherapists. In November 2024 the NCH will repeat their support for this convention. We had previously concluded that whilst we may enjoy running a conference and meeting our members, our own NCH conferences have proven both costly in resources and board members' time and are not a viable expense regarding all our membership money, given that the maximum of attendees have only ever been 150, and we have around two thousand paying members. Invariably our conferences run at a loss, if we consider the NCH online conferences, these too appear to be successful in terms of finance, however taking into account the Board members redirected time, online conferences still command a cost that means the NCH Board are not attending to the regular demands of the business.

There have been a couple of additional expenses this year, in addition to the running of the business: the conference attendance above and the NCH strategy meeting in April. The last few years it has become increasingly evident how important is to for the NCH to run as a viable business for its members and while we have moved our regular Board meetings to online it was important to look at the direction of the company in person to understand directly how to focus our attention based on the membership surveys and responses created earlier on in the year.

Over the years the company has relied on the goodwill of Directors and contractors to put in the work and effort needed. The Directors receive a small honorarium and the Executive, again, payment is disproportionately smaller compared to their input to the organisation.

To be an ethical, future facing Board, the company needs to balance the books fairly; the traditional expectation was that Board members devoted their time freely to the company and whilst we have been able to run on that goodwill, the test of a company is whether it can pay for itself - fairly and ethically, and run within it's budget. Since Covid and Brexit, the expectation of people to donate their free time has been too much of an expectation, the move has been to pay more contractors for the work. From October 2023 it had been agreed to make the Chairman a paid Executive Director role both to respect the Chairs time given but also to pave the way to the possibility for succession planning but also to pave the way for paid Directors across the Board.

What we have concluded looking through the accounts that a viable business model just cannot work with the membership structure and income fees as they stand, finances are dipping and the board are looking to increase membership payments to £85 rather than the existing £70 for full HPD members, in line with competing professional associations but a far cry from other peripheral directories which charge £195 per year.

The Board has listened to member's suggestions and identified the need for a better, more scaleable directory / therapist finder. In the background the NCH have been reviewing systems; our database; storage and website and have moved the Board's entirety over to Google, using Google's systems for emails, document shares etc for a much smoother process and making sure that we are receiving all communication. The process has been time consuming, expensive but a necessity. Stage one completed the NCH have been working towards finding a more improved data base than the traditional a member pro. The NCH's technology requirements has outgrown its capabilities and this has led us to actioning the beginnings of a move to 'Brilliant Directories'. This directory system will fulfil our requirements and enable us to remain fully competitive in the market place and crucially provide our members with better exposure and promotion opportunities.

The NCH social media accounts have been successfully growing. We are pleased the NCH Facebook group numbers are increasing weekly and the Youtube visibility is accessing wider areas. Our NCH podcast has been launched and is available on all streaming services. It provides interviews with members of the NCH as is a facility open to all members: we invite you to take advantage of it.

The Board has been looking to work with schools to continue to increase membership numbers,

improving benefits to members via such channels as our monthly CPD taster chats and working with schools to look for further opportunities to grow the community while maintaining and driving standards at all times. In doing so, we have found outmoded processes which we are remodelling in the hope to smooth pathways of communication and registration. The NCH have also been reflecting on where membership routes can be improved in areas other than our schools.

The NCH will shortly be launching CPD accreditation which is an option for training establishments to use and demonstrate the NCH logo in their publicity to represent their ethical and quality training.

As with every year, this year we have devoted particularly serious attention to the NCH journal. Over the years we have fought to keep some of the journal publications in printed form. We already provide the online version satisfying our environmental considerations as well as convenience preference for many. However, the exponential increase of postage costs over recent years and the print runs render the printed journal an untenable option. We have looked into other options and looked at the marketplace. It seems many organisations are transferring journal production to online. In the coming year the NCH will follow suit. We have looked into the options of members opting in for a paper journal and producing a smaller print run, but owing to economies of scale this costs become even more unsustainable.

This year we have said goodbye to Lisa Wade our Director of Education. Yvonne Hannah our Business Director has kindly picked up the slack with relations and standards connected to the HPD for the NCFE. We have also said a fond farewell to Sarah Whittaker, our Ethics and Supervision Director, Marc Johnson will be taking on the role of Ethics and Sue Pitman our Standards Officer, Sue Pitman will take over the responsibility for the Supervision work with schools.

We are currently undertaking a thorough assessment of our services to understand and identify the areas requiring greater attention and where we can make improvements both with systems, processes and team working.

While all at the NCH appreciate our monies are looking lower than they have done in many years the figures provides us with a serious litmus test evaluation: when functioning as a fair and payment ethical, not for profit company, we suffer financially.

Over the past two years we have engaged in detailed analysis of comparative PAs, directory companies, memberships and schools, and identifying how our income is spent and how impacted we are by climate considerations, all of those findings have shown that as an organisation it is a time for exciting growth and development, while the research shows that many of the NCH internal systems are ready for update, the plans are in process and all the Board are all working as hard as ever to bring them into being for the membership as a whole.

To conclude, overall the accounts have continued to demonstrate a loss once again this year due to economic conditions and increased costs; this is being addressed by core actions including and not restricted to;

Review of membership structure and fees of individual members and schools

Review of income streams considering alternative, ethical options to enhance members benefits that members have requested, including and largely requested, an enhanced Directory and therapist finder.

Review of director and executive pay

Review of the NCH operating model 2024

-including a reduction in head count

Review of IT structures, registrations and communications

Whilst the NCH have significantly reduced funds compared to previous years' wealth, the reduction has highlighted the effectiveness of the business model in the current economic and commercial climate, the functioning is being addressed and will continue to be adapted and the NCH will grow into the future continuing to be the, 'Home of Hypnotherapy' for ethical members.

