

European Health Psychology Society

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## **Health Psychology in Context**

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The theme for this conference is 'Health in context'. The focus of this presentation is on the discipline itself. The society has been in existence for over two decades. During this period it has not only developed certain rules and procedures but certain expectations about the nature of the discipline. There have been various critical histories written about the discipline of psychology but not of the sub-discipline. There are admittedly what could be described as Whig histories which are characterised by a rather uncritical reflection on theory and method and the assumption that each piece of research builds upon another and contributes to an increasing understanding of health and illness. A critical history considers the epistemological and methodological assumptions underlying any discipline. This presentation considers the positivist assumptions underlying much of health psychology and the implications of adopting more critical approaches for both research and practice.