

International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis: Present and future

1 | INTRODUCTION

Last year was not what we expected when we took over as president and president-elect of the International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis (ISTH), and this year is bringing much of the same. Nonetheless, with COVID-19 vaccination programs well under way, there is finally a light at the end of the tunnel. Despite the global pandemic, the ISTH has seen unity, collaboration, and continued advancements in science. The purpose of this editorial is to showcase our achievements and to provide an update on what is ahead. We will focus on what is new in terms of membership; diversity, equity, and inclusion; the annual congresses; education; guidelines and guidance; global outreach, and public affairs.

2 | MEMBERSHIP

In 2020, membership at the ISTH rose to 7767 with representation from 105 countries. This is the highest membership in the history of the society. Members are equally split between women and men and 37% are from Europe, 31% from North America, 11% from Asia, 9% from Latin America, 6% from Oceania, 3% from West Asia and the Middle East, and 3% from Africa. Therefore, the ISTH is truly an international organization.

3 | DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Recognizing that people are the drivers of success for our international organization, the ISTH released this statement in 2020: "The ISTH is a leader for global innovation and excellence in the fields of thrombosis and hemostasis. Our success depends on creating an environment that welcomes, respects, and empowers our multicultural community. The ISTH fosters a culture that celebrates the unique identities and recognizes the contributions of each member. We strive to harness the potential of our diverse community to deliver transformative research and clinical practices for the benefit

of all people. Every action of the Society is grounded in these guiding principles, and commits to actions that advance the following tenets:

- Cultivate diverse leadership and visible representatives within all levels of the Society.
- Create an inclusive environment that allows every member to fully participate and contribute to scientific discourse and Societal decisions.
- Empower our members to champion diversity, equity, and inclusion, and to hold each other accountable to these commitments.

Our vision is to provide a positive research culture which supports all our members to reach their full potential. We aim to inspire our community to courageously question the status quo both within the Society, as well as their place of work. Through these actions we aim to position the Society as a positive force in international efforts to promote equality to all people. We are stronger together and the ISTH asks every member and collaborative partner to join us in forging a path toward a more equitable and inclusive future."

This statement reflects a core focus for the ISTH, and we are proud to commit this statement to practice and to work with our members globally to ensure all practices meet the diversity, equity, and inclusion standards of the Society. Furthermore, we will apply these principles in our collaborations with related societies, corporate partners, and beyond.

4 | CONGRESSES

The annual ISTH Congress is the premier event in the field of thrombosis and hemostasis and features the latest scientific breakthroughs and clinical updates. It also provides an opportunity for the Scientific and Standardization Committees (SSCs) to showcase their progress and to plan new research activities. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Congress in Milan was virtual, and the 2021 Congress in Philadelphia will be the same. Despite the virtual format of ISTH 2020, there were more than 18,000 registrations with 12,000 participants in the live virtual congress, which significantly exceeded the 9700 registrants

for the most attended congress to date, ISTH 2017 in Berlin. Registrants from 145 countries attended the live virtual event and a mean of 7372 participants were online each day with daily trainee attendance surpassing that of previous congresses. With one virtual congress behind us, we expect the 2021 Congress in Philadelphia to be even more successful, offering new features and innovations and of course the absolute best science and education. Nonetheless, everyone is longing for a return to face-to-face meetings, and we hope that the 2022 Congress in London will enable this.

The ISTH 2023 Congress will be held in Montreal. Moving forward, the ISTH has implemented a formal rotation pattern for its annual congresses and will host 38% in Europe, 38% in North America, and 24% in other regions of the world. Such a rotation pattern creates more frequent and consistent opportunities for engagement of the global community, better reflects the changing membership distribution, and will help ISTH fulfill its global mandate in a more proactive manner. The site for the 2024 Congress will be selected soon and will be outside of North America and Europe. These exciting destinations on the horizon give us something to look forward to when we finally put the COVID-19 pandemic behind us.

5 | EDUCATION

The ISTH is a leader in education for the thrombosis and hemostasis community. The volume of educational activities will increase in 2021 with continued emphasis on online and virtual learning, in addition to in-person formats. The ISTH Academy remains the most comprehensive hub for online education in our field and to facilitate knowledge dissemination, educational resources on COVID-19 will continue to be made freely available. Upcoming topics related to COVID-19 include the science behind the disease and its complications, updated guidance on thromboprophylaxis, and information on completed and ongoing clinical trials. The ISTH monthly webinar series on topics in hemostasis and thrombosis will continue to provide a blend of clinical and basic science and includes a new series of webinars entitled "How I Treat." The ISTH Academy also provides many self-paced courses on topics such as cancer-associated thrombosis, diagnosis, and management of thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura and gene therapy for hemophilia, as well as laboratory modules to support the recently published ISTH Laboratory Core Curriculum. Finally, the ISTH will offer virtual sessions that will review the highlights of the ISTH 2021 Congress. Therefore, the ISTH educational platform continues to provide a forum that brings the latest science to the bedside. While ISTH members have access to the full catalogue of educational opportunities available on the ISTH Academy, registration is free to everyone and offers non-members limited but meaningful access to a wealth of content.

6 | GUIDELINES AND GUIDANCE

The ISTH successfully launched guidelines on thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura in 2020. In collaboration with the American Society of Hematology (ASH), the National Hemophilia Foundation (NHF) and the World Federation of Hemophilia (WFH), the ISTH will publish guidelines on the diagnosis and management of von Willebrand disease early in 2022. Capitalizing on recent progress in hemophilia treatment, the next set of guidelines will focus on extended half-life products and non-replacement therapies in the settings of prevention and treatment of bleeding events and perioperative management. These guidelines will enhance the profile of ISTH and will provide a foundation for additional educational efforts in the management of bleeding disorders.

Guidelines are expensive and time consuming to produce and focus mainly on topics for which there is evidence from randomized clinical trials. For practical assistance, the ISTH will continue to add to its already extensive list of frequently released guidance documents that provide expert opinion that informs laboratory and clinical practice through the efforts of the SSC (see https://www.isth.org/page/Published_Guidance).

7 | GLOBAL OUTREACH

In keeping with our global impact, the 2020 World Thrombosis Day (WTD) campaign soared to new heights and achieved more than 4.7 billion impressions worldwide, which is 1 billion more than 2019 (see www.worldthrombosisday.org/campaign-materials/impact-reports/2020-impact-report/). These impressions cover all metrics including social media, media placements, global activities, engagement online, and partner activities. The link between COVID-19 and thrombosis was one of the drivers of the heightened interest in WTD activities and the ISTH provided real-time guidance on this topic to the public, to patients, and to health-care providers. As the pandemic moves into its second year, we expect even more engagement in 2021.

8 | PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Last year, the ISTH pulled together 85 related societies and organizations from around the world to sign a consensus statement on management of venous thromboembolism in patients with COVID-19. This statement garnered interest from the World Health Organization (WHO) and Beverley Hunt and Claire McLintock, the chair and vice-chair of the ISTH WTD campaign, respectively, were invited to join the WHO COVID-19 Taskforce and to contribute to the recently updated WHO recommendations. These achievements highlight the global prominence of the ISTH. This is just one example of several collaborative activities between the WHO and the ISTH aimed at increasing global awareness about thrombosis and

promoting universal adoption of venous thromboembolism risk assessment for hospitalized patients.

We have provided a snapshot of where we are and where we are going. The impressive progress we have made would not be possible without the commitment of hundreds of volunteers who serve on the ISTH committees, expert groups, and task forces as well as the dedicated and talented staff at the ISTH headquarters. Without them, we could not have achieved our prominent standing on the world stage, and we thank them for their hard work on your behalf. The strength of the ISTH is our people, and we thank you for your continued support of the ISTH and for your tireless efforts during the global COVID-19 pandemic. We appreciate each one of you in all corners of the globe and we look forward to what the future brings.

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