

Council highlights: 17–18 June 2021

Countdown to the 2021 World Congress – ‘Registration, registration, registration!’

FIGO presented the highlights of our Congress preparations, chief among which was the necessity to encourage healthy registration! In addition, it will be vital to promote trainee registration and utilise sponsorship contacts. The Scientific Programme (approximately 250 sessions and 800 speakers, spread over six days and three timezones) is robust and comprehensive. An added advantage of the FIGO virtual platform will be the ability of attendees to reference recorded material during and after the event, so they do not miss out if a ‘clashing’ commitment occurs.

In common with many other organisations during the pandemic, FIGO has risen to the challenge of building a virtual platform for its activities, and is optimistic for Congress success. We are delighted to announce that Israel has been chosen as the preferred destination for the Congress in-person Forum and final talks are in progress. FIGO is hugely appreciative of all the bids received to hold this exciting component.

See: <https://figo2021.org/register>

Going virtual! Voting at the 2021 FIGO General Assembly

FIGO Council Meeting attendees were given a unique opportunity to help analyse the voting procedures for the General Assembly at the October 2021 Congress (for the first time in its history, General Assembly voting will be virtual, due to the hybrid nature of the Congress). While this has inevitably presented new challenges, FIGO has been able to review the methodology and refine procedures, where appropriate. The voting system will still be broadly based on FIGO’s previous, in-person voting structure. The fact that voting will be virtual will open up the opportunity for greater participation from Member Societies, and we are excited about the possibilities for this new level of engagement.

See: <https://www.figo.org/figo-elections-2021>

2023 Congress – planning well ahead

FIGO is currently reviewing options for the location of our 2023 World Congress, having received comprehensive and engaging bids from four shortlisted cities. We look forward to reporting on the final decision very shortly.

Financial update – highlights

FIGO maintains a steady financial position, despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, and the obvious effects on FIGO’s work activities. Although there are understandable difficulties in some areas (e.g. delays in receiving project funds and overhead payments), FIGO is working hard to maintain and bolster its income. FIGO is in close, regular contact with donors, who are fully understanding of the situation and its impact on organisations. FIGO is also looking at ways in which the payment of Member

Society dues can be made more equitable, especially in regard to valued low- and middle-income country colleagues.

Risk management – highlights

FIGO's annual risk assessment review is considered 'good practice' by the UK Charity Commission. Adequate checks and balances have been put in place to minimise the risk in those areas where FIGO is vulnerable to loss or liability and to ensure that, should an unexpected adverse event occur, the organisation would be able to function to a large degree without major disruption to its activities. Areas presented on the Register included membership, projects and grants' income, staffing, litigation, IJGO, legislative change, financial, dissolution/liquidation, reputation, competition, building security and the Congress.

Of particular note, in the current climate, it will be especially important to maintain good relations with current donors (e.g. timely reporting etc) and to work hard on securing future project funding to maintain the stability of the organisation. In addition, FIGO is adopting a realistic, cautionary attitude to the financial success of the Congress, but we remain confident of a positive outcome.

IJGO – going from strength to strength

Congratulations were expressed to the IJGO editorial team on its increasing Impact Factor and subscriptions. The Journal will continue to monitor the challenges posed by WHO's 'open access' policy with regard to its publicly-funded research, and it's likely that future discussion will be held to re-open the complex issue of IJGO becoming a fully 'open access' journal.

See: www.figo.org/resources/ijgo-international-journal-gynecology-obstetrics

FIGO taking a lead on World Patient Safety Day 2021

An update was provided on the very valuable work that FIGO is doing with respect to World Patient Safety Day 2021. FIGO is currently progressing several important areas, including the development of the International Childbirth Initiative as a global initiative; a Childbirth 'Bill of Rights'; and a 'Model for Safe Childbirth'.

See: www.figo.org/international-childbirth-initiative-working-group

See: www.who.int/campaigns/world-patient-safety-day