



A message from the SCTC executive committee

It has been a very challenging year getting to grips with the Covid-19 pandemic which has affected many of our member organisations very significantly. The executive committee extends our best wishes to all of our members and our hopes that their patients are protected from ill effects caused by the pandemic. There will be many lessons to learn from Covid-19. The putative inter-relationship between inflammation, vasculopathy, prothrombotic tendency and (potential) future aberrant tissue remodeling have interesting parallels with systemic sclerosis that may provide valuable insights into aetiopathogenesis in our field. In the meantime, much of the focus of this newsletter concern changes to the plans of the scleroderma community for 2020 and ensuring we learn as much as we can about the implications of this pandemic on our patients well-being. We also bring news of work to update the SCTC by-laws that will ensure the organization continues to thrive in the future.

We wish you all the very best in the coming months ahead and hope you shall continue to stay safe.

Lori, Sherwin, Tracy & John

Updated SCTC By-laws

The SCTC executive committee and advisory board have reviewed our by-laws which had been last updated in 2017. Professor Chung has led a programme of work with our attorney to update our by-laws to ensure they comply with state legislation and our charitable mission. We concluded that updates to the by-laws were necessary to ensure appropriate governance and accountability within our organisation as it continues to grow in size and stature.

We shall report the proposed amendments to our by-laws at our next Annual General Meeting and shall seek the approval of our members to institute these changes. We shall present further details on the amendments and voting mechanisms in due course.

6th Systemic Sclerosis World E-Congress

A you know, the planned World Congress in Prague in March was postponed due to the developing Covid-19 pandemic. This was a difficult but entirely appropriate decision given the rapidly evolving situation. The steering committee have provided updates for plans for an eCongress on 12th-14th July 2020:

'After careful consideration and evaluation of the risks of the virus progression, we have decided to cancel the face-to-face congress and to offer you a virtual congress experience.'

All registered participants will receive the personal access code to get into the E-Congress platform in the week 20-25th June 2020. Participants can contact the organizing secretariat (ssc2020.reg@aimgroup.eu) should they not receive their access code by June 25th.

The presentations of the congress sessions will not run during the live congress days. They will be recorded and will be made available in a dedicated section on the platform (RECORDED SESSIONS) for participants' viewing starting from June 29th, until December 20, 2020 (including recordings of the 'live congress' days after July 14th). During the initial viewing, participants may submit written questions (by July 7th) which will be evaluated by the speaker and moderators and possibly discussed during the 'live Discussion Sessions' (between July 12th-14th). Sessions 1, 2 and 3 will only be recorded and not discussed, therefore questions will not be possible. Participants will also be able to access the ePosters, sponsor area and other aspects of the congress using the E-Congress platform. The pre-congress workshops have unfortunately been cancelled.

The 7th Systemic Sclerosis World Congress will be in Prague in 2022. Further details about the E-Congress can be found at the following website:

<https://web.aimgroupinternational.com/2020/sclerosiscongress/e-congress-info/>

World Congress Travel Award Winners

The SCTC, in conjunction with the World Scleroderma Foundation and the Friends of the World Scleroderma Foundation, were pleased to present Awards to the following investigators for abstracts submitted to the 6th Systemic Sclerosis World Congress. Further details on our website.

Kimberly Showalter - New York, USA

Sabrina Hoa - Montréal, Canada

Antonia Valenzuela - Chile

Rebecca Ross - Leeds, UK

Sandra Maximiano - São Paulo, Brazil

Fan Xiubo - Singapore

Raluca Dumitru - Leeds, UK

Boyang Zheng - Montreal, Canada

Janine Schniering - Zurich, Switzerland

Melody Pei-Shien Chung - Stanford University

Sue-Ann Ng Pei Lun - Singapore

We're sorry not to have the opportunity to celebrate with the awardees in person but congratulate each award winner warmly for their excellent contributions and success in receiving these awards.

COVID-19 Global Rheumatology Alliance

If you have a patient with systemic sclerosis and COVID-19 infection, please consider entering the data in the COVID-19 Global Rheumatology Alliance registry at <https://rheum-covid.org>. Once you click on systemic sclerosis under Primary rheumatic/ autoimmune diagnosis, and complete the original survey, it will ask you to participate in the optional SSc registry.

The Betty Benedict Award

The deadline for the 2020 SCTC-SRF Betty Z. Benedict Award has been postponed to July 1st 2020 to provide additional time for investigators to prepare applications. The award shall provide support for a high impact, collaborative project that advances a shared mission of the SCTC and Scleroderma Research Foundation: to advance the conduct of clinical trials for patients with SSc. Applicants must be from SCTC member institutions in good standing. Further details can be found at our website at :

<https://sclerodermaclinicaltrialsconsortium.org/>