

## General Body Meeting of Indian Immunology Society

### Minutes of GBM held during Immunocon-2018 at THSTI, Faridabad, 1<sup>st</sup> Nov., 2018.

The meeting was chaired by the incumbent-IIS-president Dr DN Rao and co-chaired by Dr Alpana Sharma the-incumbent-IIS-treasurer.

At the onset, Dr Rao thanked Dr Sarat Dalai, the Election Officer for IIS elections held in Sept-2018, for the smooth conduct of the IIS elections held in Sept-2018.

Dr Alpana Sharma read out the audited statement of accounts of the society with details of the spending the society made during last financial year (2017-18).

Dr N K Mehra narrated the anecdote of how the surplus money from 1998 ICI meeting held in N. Delhi was used to establish the 'Immunology foundation' which is funding various immunology related activities including the annual IUIS fee. Dr Mehra and others thanked Dr Talwar for his philanthropy.

In response to a query raised by Dr Sunil Arora, Dr Rao clarified that the medals, citations etc. given during Immunocons were always sponsored by the Society.

Dr Kaustuv gave the details of the person maintaining the website and cost involved in response to a query raised by Dr N K Mehra. Dr Mehra along with other members observed the need for website overhaul even if the society has to spend more.

An important question raised by Dr Uma regarding expenditure statement of 'higher projected value of expenditure compared to earnings by IIS' to which Dr Alpana replied that her presentation of figures was an approximation and the final audited statement; which is yet to be obtained would have it corrected. There was a brief discussion that new methods of income to be thought of, if IIS

spends more than the annual earnings. Dr Mehra suggested simplification of statement of accounts (SoE) for circulation in GBM so that members quickly get a clear status. He further suggested CA's consultation for exploring additional means of managing the IIS deposits so as to increase the income from deposits.

Current practice of projecting lower than half members to IUIS; though seems economical yet was criticized in general. Dr Arora, stated that as membership details are accessible on IIS website, this practice should be stopped immediately. Dr Rao stated that society is now reporting 750 members to IUIS and bearing the cost difference of enhanced cost@7USD/member which was initially borne by Immunology foundation @ 3USD/member. Dr Talwar clarified that the IIS is now matured enough to bear its costs in response to Dr Uma's suggestion for Immunology foundation to continue the financial assistance with reporting of true membership numbers. Dr Mehra reiterated that this money was from the corpus funds saved from the 1998 International Congress of Immunology held at Delhi.

Dr DN Rao put forward the proposal of holding next Annual Meeting of Society in 2019 to be hosted by Dr Savita Kulkarni from BARC. The GBM unanimously endorsed the proposal and then the organising secretary of Immunocon-2019, Dr Savita Kulkarni thanked the GBM for allowing her to conduct the IMMUNOCON-2019 at BARC Mumbai in collaboration with Dr. Taruna Madan of NIRR, Mumbai and she warmly invited the members to Immunocon-2019 at BARC, Mumbai. She gave details of the facilities (Hostel, Guest house, conference hall) at BARC. She informed that Dr Shubhada Chipulunkar of ACTREC, Mumbai will also be associated with the organising team.

Dr Mehra suggested for open call of bids for future Immunocons and then a decision to be taken more systematically. Dr Sunil Arora welcomed the suggestion and added that the incoming EC plans to follow proper SOP for selection of Immunocons in the future.

Dr Rao welcomed the newly elected executive committee and invited the incoming elected President Dr Sunil Arora to come on the stage and take-over with his new team of elected IIS EC members.

Dr Sunil Arora officially took over as the president along with his new team. He thanked Dr Sarat Dalai for a great job of conducting 'free and fair elections', and then introduced his new team to the General Body of IIS : Dr Amit Awasthi (Secretary), Dr Kaustuv Nayak (Joint Secretary), Dr Uma Kanga (Treasurer), Dr Dil Afroze (VP North), Dr Balakrishnan (VP South), Dr Girdhari Lal (VP West), Dr Shashi Baruah (VP East) and EC members Dr Kalpana Luthra, Dr Geeta Rai, Dr Gaurav Sharma, Dr Deepak Rathod, Dr Arindham Bhattacharya, Dr Archana Singh, Dr SB Anand, Dr Dipyaman Ganguly.

Dr Arora gave a snapshot of the vision and future course of action to be adopted by New EC. He brought out the ideas point-by-point to improve the functioning of the society and invited suggestions from the house.

- Requirement for amendments in the Constitution of IIS  
It is felt in general that there is a need for the amendments in the constitution of society which is pretty old now. He suggested that a team of some senior members of the society be constituted to revisit the constitution and suggest necessary amendments. He invited suggestions from the house and members in general through website or emails.
- Revamping the Membership list  
It was felt that during the election the membership list became a topic of resentment as many email ID's were not updated and many members were not traceable. As per details submitted by previous EC nearly 500 members are not responding at all as their contact details are very old. There is a need to have revamped database of the members that will be more user

friendly and more search-friendly. It was suggested to put all non-responding names in a quarantine-list instead of deleting the names. He asserted that all-out efforts will be made to trace the latest details of such members and revive their status. He called for open support from all members to revitalise the membership list.

- Website overhauling.

A new revamped website is very much needed and that needs to be made more professionally. Thus it was suggested that the society is ready to spend more money to make the website more interactive and user-friendly. A facility for login for each member through user ID-password, enabling to update his/her profile and contact details and interact with other members is envisaged.

- Nomination for various activities

He emphasised on the need to generate SOPs for all activities including nominations being made for any meetings, talks, conferences etc.

- Recognition of 'Immunology' as a subject at college/university level

He invited suggestions and support from all members to make immunology as an active subject at university/college level. He proposed to constitute an IIS Education Committee to look into all aspects of this issue in a serious manner to move forward.

- CME and Hands-on workshop

Dr. Arora reiterated that there is an urgent need to make the society academically more vibrant in terms of conducting many hands-on workshops, immunology courses and symposias, besides the CME programs. He emphasised the need to devise new strategy. He suggested creating a pool of resource persons and invited names from members in general to volunteer for this cause. He suggested creation of Four Zonal Chapters of IIS to work under the leadership of each Vice president of that

zone. The resource persons will cater to meetings held in these zones. This will help the society saving lot on travel related expenses. He further emphasised that the IIS must conduct at least 15-20 such programmes in resource limited set ups in a year

- Corporate funds

Dr Arora made a strong point to bring in corporate funds into IIS. Corporate partners will be integrated into IIS outreach activities and thus both will mutually gain. Corporate funding agencies are more than happy to fund IIS activities like Hands-On workshops and immunology courses that reaches far flung areas thus giving both IIS and the funding agencies edge to reach people. The society will formally reach-out to multiple prospective corporate funders in this regard.

Dr Amit Awasthi, the incoming secretary while agreeing to the vision statement made by Dr Arora also added that “we have a huge vision and have lot to do for the society”. He elaborated his plans to get travel grants for IIS young members for attending meeting outside India.

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Suggestions from the house:

- Dr Mehra- He raised his concern regarding the way GBM was conducted. He emphasised that holding the GBM should be taken more seriously and proper protocol should be followed. There should have been an agenda made and circulated before the GBM is held. Secretary should have been on the stage. The handling of takingover charge is a very formal procedure. It should have been handled in a very professional manner. He informed the house about an IUIS training course being planned in October/November 2019 at Jaipur, India.

Response: Dr Arora agreed to the suggestions of Dr Mehra and reiterated that the new EC will generate many SOPs including the one for holding EC and GB meetings also.

He thanked Dr Mehra for his efforts to bring prestigious IUIS Immunology Course to Jaipur, India and promised all support from the IIS EC.

- Dr Javed Agrewala revealed his long association with IIS and shared that it used to be very vibrant and thrilling. Students liked to attend these meetings as many stalwarts of immunology used to give talks including Nobel laureates. He made a point that we must keep raising our benchmark to encourage and attract young immunologist for these meetings. One major bottleneck is integrating work/activities between IIS-Research institutes- Research centres. This will attract lot of students.

Dr Arora responded positively and thanked Dr Agrewala for his suggestions. Dr Arora- suggested that the mentors/Principal investigators should try not to leave early during conferences/courses. Presence of seniors during the sessions will encourage the students and young researchers to sit through the talks. He also reiterated the need for more hands-on workshops giving example of such workshops organized by Prof G P Talwar and other contemporaries in early years of society, which helped many including him to learn so many advanced techniques.

Dr Santosh Kar- apprised the GBM regarding his efforts of starting Immunology courses for students and young researchers through NII N.Delhi. He added that Dr Panda (Director, NII) has consented to facilitate conducting some hands-on-workshops in association with IIS. Dr Kar gave his views of how to change the system and encourage students to

get integrated into the activities and make them to ask questions. He also added that GBM meeting attendance should be taken in a 'Register note book' rather than on loose sheets. This note book needs to be kept on record in the IIS secretariat.

Dr. Arora welcomed the suggestions made by Dr Kar specifically for involving NII Director with possibility of starting educational activities in association with IIS. He reiterated full support from IIS-EC in this endeavour.

Further he opened the house for more suggestions and then closed the meeting with thanks to all the members.