2022 living life again
I am optimistic for the future of travel medicine as we enter 2022.

Peter Leggat,
President, ISTM
We’ve Lost So Much, But Let’s Keep Our Sense of Awe

As I take over the helm as Editor-in-Chief of TMN, I’d like to acknowledge what many of us have lost in the past two years, but hopefully strike a positive note.

An article in the New York Times from late November resonated with me: in it, the author reflects on why the current crop of space tourists may not experience the same awe as ordinary folks from their highly anticipated travel that comes at a most dear cost (an exception may be found in Netflix’s Countdown: Inspiration4 Mission to Space). Yes, space travel may arrive affordably for some of us in the future but it was challenging of its own accord, as our family said final goodbyes to our parents who passed away (not from COVID-19) within 3.5 months of each other, at the ripe ages of 96 and 95. They lived through some of the most trying times of anyone alive now, but told us repeatedly that absolutely nothing compares to this pandemic, and the incendiary friction and mistrust among great swaths of society.

President, Counselors, Committee Chairs, Professional Group Chairs, Interest Group Chairs, CISTM Chairs), and this will be a chance for those leaving to reflect on their tenure and for incoming leaders to outline their plans. A fall issue will cover whatever remains to be reported.

Read on for words from our leaders, about ISTM’s programs, and think about joining a committee or group. For those of you who have renewed your annual ISTM membership, thank you! And for those who have let yours lapse during the pandemic (membership has almost halved), restore your faith that travel will return soon, along with your beloved and sorely missed travel clinic, and please renew! And keep those discussions coming on TravelMed - it was refreshing to see in early December a lively discussion about a stingray injury. It felt so…back to normal.

Sandra Grieve has moved on from Editor-in-Chief of TMN to bigger and better things as Chair of the POC. We thank her for her warm and comforting manner (like a nice cup of tea) and exemplary leadership as EIC. We expect exciting things in the coming years under her leadership of the POC – see her note below. We also welcome Luis Furuya-Kanamori as Associate Editor of TMN. And thanks to Whitney Alexander and the rest of the Secretariat for all of their continued hard work and patience. You’ll see this mentioned quite a few times in this issue, but please welcome Jodi Metzgar as ISTM’s Executive Director! And congratulations abound for special recognition winners Jane Chiodini and Dipi Patel, and for David Freedman, President-Elect of ASTMH.

Things will get awesome again.

Nancy Pietroski, Editor-in-Chief, Travel Medicine News

Welcome new TMN Associate Editor, Luis Furuya-Kanamori

Luis Furuya-Kanamori is a medical graduate from the Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia in Peru with a dual Master degree (Epidemiology and Public Health) from the University of Queensland, and a PhD from the Australian National University (ANU). Currently, he is a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Fellow and Senior Research Fellow at the University of Queensland Centre for Clinical Research. His research focuses on identifying more efficient use of current drugs and vaccines in travelers, and to improve meta-analytical methods for research synthesis.

Tuesday, 29 March 2022 04.00 EDT
Check the 29 March exam time in your time zone.

Wednesday, 30 March 2022 16.00 EDT
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Thursday, 31 March 2022 10.00 EDT
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29, 30, 31 March 2022
Online Exam administered by ProctorU

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W ith great pleasure I add my congratulations to Jodi Metzgar on her confirmation as Executive Director of ISTM with effect from 1st January 2022. Jodi has worked tirelessly since her appointment as Acting Executive Director in March 2020 in the most difficult of circumstances. ISTM owes both Jodi and past President Lin Chen a huge debt of gratitude for their courageous leadership.

At the Membership Assembly during our Virtual CISTM in May, I estimated that net assets at the end of the last financial year at 30th June might be as high as $2.3 million and I am delighted to confirm that our auditors, Fulton and Kozak, have confirmed the final confirmed figure is $2.346 million, an increase of $822,000 over the year, and to a level not seen for 5 years. This improvement is despite the year characterized by lower income, injections of expenditure, and higher expenditure, followed by each biennial CISTM year during which we expect to see an increase in net income. We still need to be prudent with expenditure and ensure that net assets further recover to a safe level.

At 09.00 on 10th December, I attended an airport site for a same day PCR, received the result at 20.20, and entered the result on the VeriFLY App, used by AA and BA, which was finally approved at 23.30. I left home for Edinburgh, and London Heathrow airports with no problems, arriving in Atlanta that evening. Mine was the first visit to Atlanta by an ISTM leader since Lin Chen and I visited in January 2020 to manage the resignation of Di Nicholson. Our current President, Peter Leggat, cannot yet travel beyond the boundaries of Australia.

It was a busy week. On 13th December, Jodi and I met with Dan Soles, our auditor, and on Tuesday 14th with Todd Weiland, our investment manager, at his office in Buckland. At our staff meeting on 15th December at the Alpharetta GA site, it was wonderful to be able to meet face-to-face with Jodi, Whitney Alexander, and for the first time, Carol Timme, and Hannah Emretulu. Elena Axelrod and Aisha Rizwan were copings with family issues which prevented them attending. We also each spent valuable time with Danny Rips, of Gabai Strategic Advisors, who flew in from New York as part of his operational review of ISTM, conducting back-to-back interviews. Finally on Thursday and Friday 16th-17th December, it was a privilege to attend meetings with the GeoSentinel Leaders, Michael Libman and David Hamer. On Thursday 16th Dr. Brad Connor, former ISTM President and now President of the independent funding agency, the GeoSentinel Foundation, with which ISTM has an MDU, also joined us. Ralph Hults, confined to the Netherlands by COVID-19, joined us by Zoom as did members of the CDC staff.

My return journey overnight on Saturday 18th was not as smooth with COVID-19 affecting ancillary staffing at US and UK airports. A reduction in cleaning staff at the Atlanta airport caused a two hour delay in the departure of my flight, and reduced baggage handling staff at London Heathrow mislaid my hold bag which arrived three days later. Omicron has injected further confusion into the recovery of the travel industry and our work as Travel Health Specialists.

In a few days, I return to COVID-19 vaccinating here in Midlothian and am looking forward to a visit to Basel in February for the Scientific Program Committee of CISTM18. The ISTM Executive Board met remotely on 12th January and, we hope, face-to-face in Madrid in May.

Welcome greetings to all our members.

Mike Jones, Secretary-Treasurer
The Secretariat celebrated many accomplishments in 2021 including ISTM’s first virtual course, exams and congress. Our team was dynamic and swift in efforts to pivot during the pandemic. We are encouraged by worldwide vaccination efforts and look forward to reinstating in-person activities.

Planning is in place for CISTM18 in Basel, Switzerland 21-25 May 2023. Please save these dates and plan to join us! The theme for CISTM18 is “Dawn of a New Era in Travel Medicine.” David Hamer, Scientific Program Committee Chair is working diligently with Co-Chairs Eric Caumes, Camilla Rothe, and Associate Chairs Colleen Lau and Miguel Cabada to offer a dynamic and rich Scientific Program. We are planning to offer a hybrid meeting with a virtual component for those unable to meet in-person.

ISTM’s popular Travel Medicine Update and Review Course is being offered 11-12 February. The 2022 course is a live, virtual course with fresh and engaging content from leading Travel Medicine experts. In addition to speakers, the course will also have international panels on yellow fever and malaria. Read more about the course, accreditation and how to register on the website here. All course components will be available to registrants for review on ISTM’s Learning Management System for 12 months following the course.

ISTM will also be offering the 21st Certificate of Knowledge™ Online Examination on Tuesday, 29 March, Wednesday, 30 March and Thursday, 31 March 2022. We are offering the exam online at varying times to accommodate international time zones. Read more about the exam and how to apply on the website.

For those unable to take the CTH® Exam online, an in-person exam will be planned when it is safe to meet in large groups.

Finally, I am excited to announce that I have accepted the role as Executive Director at ISTM. It has been my pleasure to serve in the role of Acting Executive Director and I look forward to continuing to lead the Society in this role. I am delighted that travel has begun, and look forward to seeing many of you in person soon.

Wishing us all a healthy and prosperous 2022!
GeoSentinel

In May 2021 we were full of optimism that COVID-19 was evolving into a relatively well-behaved nuisance that would allow a resumption of travel activities to levels which would allow us to get back to our real jobs in travel and tropical medicine. Ah well, as someone recently quipped, today’s date is actually Monday, March 680th, 2020, COVID standard time.

Nevertheless, we are using the lull in fevers and rashes to work on building up GeoSentinel’s research infrastructure and portfolio. To this end, we have set up a new Scientific Research Committee, with Karin Leder as chair. Now that the Network will be able to fund research projects from our cooperative agreement, as well as via donations from the GeoSentinel Foundation, we needed a mechanism to evaluate the scientific merit of project proposals objectively and transparently. The committee will have input from CDC and ISTM delegates as well as GeoSentinel members experienced in research and, as needed, outside content experts. The first round of letters of intent have been received, and invitations to submit full proposals will be sent out shortly.

Our ability to fund projects has been greatly enhanced through a fantastic fundraising effort by the GeoSentinel Foundation, Inc., led by Brad Connor, with assistance from David Hamer, Phyllis Kozarsky, and Robert Steffen. Many of the donations are unrestricted, and others have been directed towards research in specific areas such as COVID-19 and insect-borne infections. Up to now, most of the donations have come from the United States. We would be very happy to hear from others who have leads or connections to other potential donors in other parts of the world.

Many of our sites have struggled these past 2 years, as acute post-travel illness has become a rarity. Many of our Network members have been called on to provide pandemic-related services desperately needed by their hospitals and communities. Human and other resources have been pulled from our clinics. Stress and fatigue have made it hard to think about our plans for when the worst is over. Yet I am heartened by the many discussions we have had with sites individually, with site directors remaining overwhelmingly enthusiastic and optimistic that they will be able to regain most of their activities as soon as circumstances become more favorable. Several sites have managed to maintain remarkable levels of activity, often related to their work with migrants, which has not been impacted to the same extent.

A few of our sites have closed because their directors have moved on to new challenges, and we take this opportunity to thank them for their great help and contributions over many years: Sarah Borwein in Hong Kong, Stefan Hagmann at Northwell, New York, and Anne Terry in Seattle. We also would like to express our gratitude to some of our long serving stalwarts who have decided that the time has come to pass on their mantles to younger colleagues, including Rogelio Velez-Lopez in Madrid and Mogens Jensenius in Oslo.

On the other hand, now that we have our new funding and new directions, we are exploring options for new sites. Sites with the resources and expertise to participate in our upcoming research plans are an important priority. However, we also remain interested in sites having a geographic location or catchment which can add to our surveillance proficiency (e.g. Eastern Europe, North Africa, South Asia, etc.). One new site we expect to join shortly will be Heidelberg University, a highly regarded institution involved in travel and tropical medicine, under the directorship of Claudia Denkinger.

Please let us know if you or any of your colleagues are working at sites that might fit this bill.

Like many others, our recent efforts have shifted to include COVID-19. One study looking at biomarkers associated with severe outcomes in COVID-19 infections has completed patient enrolment. Lab analyses are proceeding, and data analysis will hopefully commence soon. Our COVID-19 Sentinel Surveillance study, looking at the prevalence and epidemiology of imported COVID-19 is just beginning enrollment. We have also been advancing rapidly with a project that departs from our usual clinic-based focus by looking at imported COVID-19 in a large cohort of US Major Soccer League players and their contacts in North America who tend to travel regularly to play in their home countries or elsewhere.

We are also updating protocols for our more traditional work in travel medicine, including projects started before COVID-19, looking at outcomes of severe imported illnesses, pathogen discovery and advanced diagnostics for febrile illnesses, and neurocognitive sequelae of malaria. We hope that many of our sites can use this time to prepare to enroll in the near future.

Finally, on behalf of the GeoSentinel leadership and the entire network, I would like to wish you all a happy and academically prosperous new year, which will surely be better than this last one. The silver lining of our recent travels is that there is lots to look forward to.

Michael Libman
On behalf of the Office of the Principal Investigator for GeoSentinel: David Hamer, Ralph Huits, Kristina Angelo, Phyllis Kozarsky, Aisha Rizwan, Hannah Emetulu
New ISTM Website in Development!

We are excited to announce that a new ISTM website is in the works! The goals are to improve the look, functionality, and user experience of the website including additional means to engage and inform the public about travel medicine. This project was initiated in 2019 when the Digital Communications Committee (DCC) submitted an extensive report on the current ISTM website functionality and user experience including the results of a member wide survey. The recommendation of the DCC was to plan for a full update of the website and the Executive Board (EB) supports this important initiative.

The pandemic put a pause on the plans until early 2021 when a Website Task Force was formed to assist with this project. The Task Force consists of members from the EB (Rebecca Acosta, Chair), and the Leadership Counsel including the Chairs of the DCC (Sarah McGuinness) and PEC (Sarah Kohl), and Dipti Patel; Rudy Zimmer is involved as a liaison with the Publication Oversight Committee. The project and administration are also being actively supported by the efforts of the ISTM Secretariat staff. During 2021, the Website Task Force worked with the secretariat to finalize the selection of a website design firm and the initial stages of the project are now underway. We hope to have the new website ready to launch in 2022. Stay tuned!

Rebecca Acosta, Website Task Force Chair

The ISTM COVID-19 Task Force's tenure ended in May 2021 after having worked with the Executive Board on several initiatives, including two membership surveys, to assist the Society in responding and adapting to the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Task Force suggested that, owing to the ongoing pandemic, each level of the society, all of its activities and initiatives integrate and maintain a COVID-19 “lens” and consideration for as long as necessary.

A final activity of the COVID-19 Task Force has been to complete the second membership survey (opened during the first quarter of 2021) to gauge the ongoing impact of the pandemic on our members and their practice of travel medicine. Our preview indicates that this representative group of survey respondents plans to renew their membership and aim to return to a more normal professional engagement with the specialty as international travel begins to rebound. However, many of our members continued to be practicing at a level of 25% or less compared to pre-pandemic levels when the survey was open. Most of the survey respondents miss in-person meetings and value the sense of community afforded by being a member. A majority are very supportive of the on-line and virtual professional and learning opportunities, including the popular COVID-19 webinars that the society has provided during the pandemic. A report has been prepared for the Executive Board and plans are underway to share the findings with the membership and more broadly in early 2022.

It was our honor to have supported the ISTM in responding to the initial phase of the pandemic. Although everyone had hoped that we would be seeing the start of the post-pandemic era by early 2022, we are heartened and encouraged by the vibrancy and resilience of the ISTM and our members as the pandemic moves into its next phase.

We wish everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Rebecca Acosta, United States of America
Gerard Flaherty, Ireland
Jenny Visser, New Zealand
Professional Groups

NURSING

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic there continues to be disruptions affecting domestic and international travel. The impact of this on travel medicine has been significant, but there has never been a time where travel medicine has been more important.

Travel medicine practitioners are required to have an even greater level of knowledge of, the COVID-19 burden of disease, medical resources at destination, border entry and airline requirements, and limitations of insurance. It has been a very challenging time to navigate this information that has been continually changing.

During 2021, new members were elected to the NPG steering committee. We also farewelled Heather Connors as Chair, Lisa Lynch Jones, and Ruth Anderson, who contributed enormously to the NPG over the past few years. Please review the NPG page on the ISTM website for further details about our steering committee members and feel free to reach out to any of us.

On behalf of the NPG and the wider nursing community, we would like to extend our congratulations to Jane Chioldini, former NPG Past Chair, who was awarded a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) in the UK New Year’s Honours for “Services to Training and Development in Travel Medicine”.

A number of NPG members contributed to and attended the virtual CISTM17 in 2021. CISTM18, to be held in Basel, Switzerland in 2023 presents opportunities for our group to advance travel medicine nursing practice. In the meantime, we look forward to continuing to engage with members.

Caroline Nash, Chair, NPG Steering Committee

PHARMACIST

Pharmacists Professional Group (PPG) Council members Sherlyn Houle, Derek Evans, and Patricia Schlagenhaufl-Lawlor, along with librarian Caitlin Carter, recently published a review article on the benefits and risks of ayahuasca use among travelers. Ayahuasca is a psychotropic drink made from the Amazonian vine Banisteriopsis caapi, containing beta-carboline alkaloids and the hallucinogen N-N-dimethyltryptamine (DMT). While the proportion of travelers to the Amazon region that consume ayahuasca is unknown, tourist-focused websites offering spiritual experiences including ayahuasca use exist, as do case reports of negative experiences following its use among travelers. The aim of this review was to identify and summarize the literature on the safety and effectiveness of ayahuasca among recreational users.

The review summarized the findings of 39 publications identified in November 2019 following comprehensive searches of PubMed (MEDLINE), Ovid Embase, Ovid International Pharmaceutical Abstracts, LILACS, Scopus, and Web of Science. Included articles were organized into 4 themes: (1) Case reports and case series; (2) The use of ayahuasca for depression or grief; (3) The use of ayahuasca and other psychiatric or neuropsychological outcomes; and (4) Studies examining ayahuasca use and physiologic outcomes.

Ayahuasca use was found to be associated with a risk of both psychiatric and non-psychiatric events including hallucinations, agitation or aggression, vomiting, seizure, and rhabdomyolysis, with five fatalities reported in the literature following ayahuasca use. Open-label studies assessing ayahuasca use in depression found favorable results persisting across 21 days. Ayahuasca was also found to influence the MINDSENEG scale for mindfulness, with mixed results observed for impact of ayahuasca on cognitive function and creativity, and benefits observed for measures of self-acceptance and overall wellbeing. The article also reminds clinicians about concurrent use with drugs that have serotonergic potential (e.g., selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, tricyclic antidepressants), dextromethorphan, dopamine agonists (e.g., levodopa), lithium, trazodone, and triptans, among others.

The article was published in the November/December 2021 (Volume 44) edition of the journal Journal of Travel Medicine and Infectious Diseases.

Sherlyn Houle, ISTM Pharmacist Professional Group

Meetings and Conferences

- Northern European Conference on Travel Medicine (NECTM)
  Rotterdam, the Netherlands
  8-10 June 2022
  https://mkon.nu/nectm_8

- American Society of Travel Medicine & Hygiene ASTMH 2022 71st Annual Meeting
  Seattle, Washington, United States of America
  30 October – 3 November 2022
  https://www.astmh.org/annual-meeting/future-meetings
Responsibility and Travel Medicine

Over the last year, the global pandemic has slowed travel and tourism down to a standstill at points, allowing us to take the time to reevaluate and rethink the impact that travel has had not only on our profession, but also on environments and communities around the world. Carbon emissions plummeted, natural landscapes recovered, noise pollution dissipated, and hidden wildlife emerged – but on the flip side, conservation dependent on tourism protection fees suffered, illegal activities such as poaching increased with lack of enforcement and scarcity of tourists, and involved stakeholders and tourism sectors suffered huge economic and job losses. Now, more than ever, there is a need to examine the impact that we as travelers have on ecosystems, economies, populations, and future generations. We, as responsible travel professionals and stewards of travel medicine, should take advantage of this unique moment in time to address some of the greatest systemic challenges caused by the acceleration of travel and tourism in recent years. As we emerge from the pandemic, sustainability and responsibility needs to be interwoven and embedded within the framework of travel medicine.

The Responsible Travel Interest Group this year developed infographics on ways to reduce the “health impact” of a traveler – the beneficial or detrimental influence that can be had on another person or community, expressed as a measure of medical resources potentially used due to illness or injury while abroad. From measuring carbon footprints, to health resource utilization, to contributing to increasing antimicrobial resistance, to ethical and behavioral considerations such as vaccine hesitancy, to serving as vehicles for the spread of disease and fueling a global pandemic, we want to highlight the “health footprint” that a traveler can be aware of the consequences that climate change can have on our travelers and vice versa. In July 2021 the Responsible Travel Interest Group in collaboration with the ASTMH Clinical Group held a webinar discussing Climate Changing the Landscape of Tropical & Travel Diseases: Past, Present & Future which garnered over 600 registered attendees. There is a great opportunity to combine the overarching framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) with this group’s mandate. Our projects this year will focus on how responsible travel relates to and has a role in each SDG - such as climate action, life below water, responsible consumption, decent work and economic growth, reduced inequalities, sustaining cities and communities, and developing partnerships for the goals.

We will endeavor to focus this year on promoting education and ethical travel choices, alongside guiding principles of social responsibility and responsible tourism practices. Our goal is to take this unique opportunity to create a more sustainable future for destinations, communities, and travelers, while promoting responsibility and awareness through a collaborative travel medicine platform. As the pandemic evolves and we recover, so must we reassess, discourse innovative solutions, and adapt our practices and choices to ensure a more sustainable travel future that generations to come can benefit from, experience, and enjoy.

If you are inspired, interested, and have ideas to share, consider joining us as a member of the Responsible Travel Interest Group. And best wishes for a happier and healthier new year.

Dr. Aisha Heggie
Chair, Responsible Travel Interest Group
We bid a very fond and gratitude-filled farewell to doctors Anjali and Neal Silva of University of Virginia, who are retiring from their travel medicine work at UVA and from their roles with STA. They were founding STA members and their contributions over the years are greatly appreciated. Wishing you both all the very best, Anjali and Neal!

We are always actively seeking new members and ideas for STA activities and involvement. Please be in touch with Julie and Catherine any time with any thoughts - we’d love to hear from you!

Wishing everyone a healthy, peaceful 2022!

Julie and Catherine

Julie Richards
Chair, Student Travel Abroad

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**Members and ISTM Leaders IN THE NEWS**

Congratulations to ISTM Fellows Jane Chiodini and Dipti Patel

It gives me enormous pleasure to congratulate two of our Fellows on their awards in the Queen's UK New Year’s Honours, both of whom have made a massive contribution to travel health development and education.

Jane Chiodini, MBE, MSc, RGN, RM, FFTM RCPS(Glasg) FISTM, QN, becomes a Member of the Order of the British Empire. Sandra Grieve wrote this summary of Jane’s considerable achievements and I am grateful for her permission to reproduce this.

Jane, who completed her nurse training at St George’s Hospital, London, has been a tireless advocate and mentor for nurses and practitioners engaged in travel medicine since her interest in the specialty began in 1990. Her focus has been mainly on education, training and mentoring nurses engaged in travel medicine, particularly those in General Practice, the main providers of travel health services in the UK.

Jane's contribution to travel medicine and health development is supported by her husband and family. Perhaps less well known is that she is talented in craftwork and has a love of musical theatre, each of which continue to offer her pleasure in her scarce free time.

We extend our sincere congratulations to Jane for this well-deserved recognition of her work.

Dr Dipti Patel, OBE, MB,BS, MRCGP, FRCP, FFOM, FFTM RCPS(Glasg), FISTM, LLM, Dip RCOG is awarded the Order of the British Empire (MBE) for “Services to Training and Development in Travel Medicine”, in the UK New Year’s Honours.

Dipti’s contribution to travel medicine has been huge, she has been a frequent lecturer at ISTM and she has a special interest in complex travelers, travel health education, medico-legal issues, and occupational travelers. We are delighted that she also became a FISTM in the Fellows Class of 2021.

Mike Jones
COMMITTEES

EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

ISTM Exam Committee update

The year 2021 has been busy for the Exam Committee. For the first time ISTM proposed an online exam, first in March, with around 190 candidates and then in October with around 40 candidates. The committee had to check that all conditions for security and applicability were fulfilled and some members tested the system online before the exam day. The online exams take place over a few days so that people from different time zones can attend easily. Both exams went uneventfully. As usual, the Exam Committee met in numerous virtual meetings to prepare for the exams and then to discuss the results and the health check reports from the psychometricians.

In 2021, 50 new questions also were written and many others reviewed to complete our question bank. This year, 120 meetings of the members both by time zones (4 groups) and then one together.

In 2022 we will prepare a new form for the next exams, an online exam in spring, and if possible an in-person exam in September in Atlanta, GA, USA. We will use this opportunity to do some more question writing and reviewing with committee meetings at the same time as the exam in Atlanta.

Also in 2022 we will plan a standard setting process with Alpine to check the quality of our question bank.

PUBLICATIONS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

I send you greetings of the season and I am pleased to present this report for the Publications Oversight Committee (POC). Thanks to Gerard Flaherty for his continued support during the transition period, and we wish him success in his role as President Elect.

We thought, perhaps prematurely, that 2020 was a year like no other but here we are looking back at 2021 and wondering when life as we knew it will return. As I write this, the new highly transmissible Omicron variant, first reported by South Africa, is running amok round the world and causing concern for already stretched health services.

Following evidence that immunity waned after two COVID-19 vaccine doses, a marathon booster vaccination program was initiated to offer added population protection. Once again, the coronavirus was in charge of the Festive Season, but hopefully you managed to meet with friends and family.

Global travel had a yo-yo, up-down, stop-start year again. Countries issued their requirements for entry and departure with travelers aware that advice could change in an instant, so they must be prepared for the unexpected. Traveling abroad has become a major logistical exercise in planning, with extra costs incurred for testing, and loss of income when quarantine is required. It’s testimony to the human spirit that despite the challenges, people still want to connect with family and friends based abroad or indeed to just “get away”.

We are mindful of the effect that COVID-19 and endless restrictions have had on people’s mental health. Homeschooling children was difficult for many as was the constant disruption to families when quarantine was required.

The ISTM members have risen to the challenge of sharing research and writing evidence-based articles to support practice. The Journal of Travel Medicine (JTM) continues to publish high quality articles on travel-related topics including COVID-19, and the impact factor continues to rise. Under the leadership of the JTM Editor-in-Chief, Annelies Wilder-Smith, her team of editors and the editorial board, collections of related articles have been published and warmly received. https://academic.oup.com/jtm/pages/collections.

The pandemic has changed many things and as Gerard reported last year, when looking to the future, it is likely that current approaches to publishing will continue to evolve and appear in a different guise to the erstwhile more traditional methods. A third party is in early discussions with the ISTM, JTM editors and the Oxford University Press (OUP), to present articles in varying alternative multimedia formats, thus allowing wider access while retaining the integrity of the authors and the JTM.

We welcome the new ISTM President and Executive Board, and look forward to working with them gratefully to my POC colleagues and long-standing members, Charles Ericsson, Rudy Zimmer, Joseph Torresi, and Effrosyni Gkrania-Klotsas, each of whom has agreed to continued involvement.

Multiple activities continue behind the scenes with each member going beyond amazing and all in a personal capacity, no mean feat during the pandemic. Nancy Pietroski has willingly taken up the role of Editor-in-Chief of Travel Medicine Review and Update Course returns February 11 & 12 under the guidance of Dr. Elizabeth Talbot. In addition to a thorough review of the body of knowledge, expert panels will convene to discuss regional differences in the approach to malaria and yellow fever.

We have enjoyed a robust webinar schedule from subject matter experts covering all facets of COVID-19 and dengue in 2021. Next year, thanks to the hard work of Dr. Yen Bui, we will enjoy a well-rounded assortment of webinars ranging from pediatric travel, rabies, and the impact of COVID-19 on travel.

As the POC is involved in every area of the Society, working collaboratively with other ISTM committees is important and invaluable.

Meeting in person remains impossible, but thanks to technology we can meet online and put a face to a name. Thanks to Whitney Alexander, Jodi Metzgar and the ISTM Secretariat, time zones are managed as conveniently as possible. If you would like to consider joining the POC, have a look at our Charter and get in touch. https://www.istm.org/content.asp?contentid=202

“Do not write merely to be understood. Write so you cannot possibly be misunderstood.”

Robert Louis Stevenson 1850-1894

Sandra Grieve, Chair, Publications Oversight Committee

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Professional Education Committee (PEC) continues to innovate to meet the needs of our members during these challenging times. The online Travel Medicine Review and Update Course returns February 11 & 12 under the guidance of Dr. Elizabeth Talbot. In addition to a thorough review of the body of knowledge, expert panels will convene to discuss regional differences in the approach to malaria and yellow fever.

We have enjoyed a robust webinar schedule from subject matter experts covering all facets of COVID-19 and dengue in 2021. Next year, thanks to the hard work of Dr. Yen Bui, we will enjoy a well-rounded assortment of webinars ranging from pediatric travel, rabies, and the impact of COVID-19 on travel.

A new subscription email course of Challenging Cases in travel medicine was launched by Derek Evans. You may enroll to have these thoughtful cases delivered by email, with a follow-up expert opinion discussing options in care.

The PEC is quite busy developing learning modalities. Look for exciting additions to suit the educational opportunities in the coming year.

Sarah Koli, Chair, Professional Education Committee

SPECIAL RECOGNITION COMMITTEE

I urge all members to consider application for fellow status in ISTM. The criteria are published on the ISTM website here. Fellow status is reflective of work done in ISTM. It is not reserved for academicians or those holding high level political office, but it is expected that applicants have participated in committee or interest group work either as members or in leadership roles.

I also urge our interest groups to consider recognizing exceptional productivity by creating their own awards.

If anyone has questions about applying for fellow, emeritus or distinguished fellow status, please feel free to contact me.

The SRC members look forward to the post-COVID-19 period when we can honor our awardees in person!

Charlie Ericsson, Chair, Special Recognition Committee

20 Travel Medicine News

21 Travel Medicine News
The Journal of Travel Medicine has had a tremendous year.

We continue to receive high quality manuscript submissions, the majority of which are still related to COVID-19. Thanks to much hard work by our Editorial Board and the popularity of our published manuscripts, our Impact Factor rose to 8.490.

In addition to several dedicated Issues on COVID-19, JTM published three collections in 2021:

- Travelers’ Diarrhea
- The Older Traveler
- Mental Health and Well-Being for Travelers and Migrants

Serving ISTM through JTM,

Annelies Wilder-Smith, Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Travel Medicine

Journal of Travel Medicine Editorial Board
The ISTM would like to thank the tireless work of the JTM Editorial Board for their continued support and commitment to the JTM.

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