



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF TRAVEL MEDICINE
Promoting Healthy Travel Worldwide

TRAVEL MEDICINE News

Dec 2022





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Peter Leggat,
President, ISTM

It is a great pleasure to invite you to the 18th Conference of the ISTM that will be held in Basel, Switzerland, from 21-25 May 2023.

After several years of COVID-19 impacting on our ability to meet face-to-face, we are looking forward to meeting each other once again, while having some virtual options. After a long wait, what a wonderful place to meet again – Basel, Switzerland's third largest city based on the beautiful Rhine River and located close to the French and German borders and the rest of fabulous Switzerland. Basel is the cultural and historic capital of Switzerland and home of the famous Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute, which has recently expanded into an amazing sustainable four story headquarters building in Allschwil on the outskirts of Basel.

The Scientific Program Committee led by David Hamer has built a superb program that addresses many of the contemporary issues in travel medicine and migrant health. We hope we can share this wonderful event with you. We also look forward to your participation and discussions. There will be state-of-the-art lectures, prominent speakers, workshops and debates, ample opportunities to discuss controversies in travel medicine, as well as free oral communications on latest research findings.

The Local Organizing Committee led by Christoph Hatz has ensured that participants of CISTM18 will engage closely with Basel and its culture and history. You will not be disappointed by their efforts.

Peter Leggat, *President, ISTM*

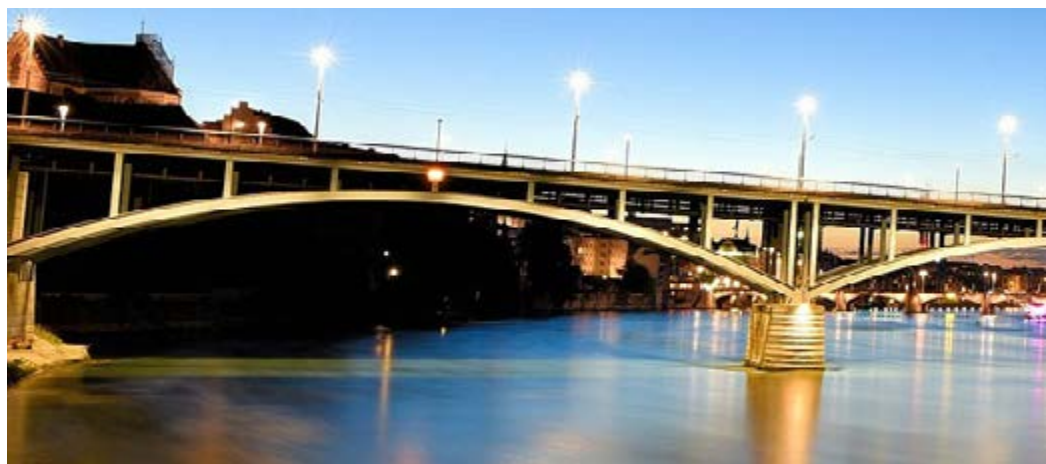
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CISTM18 Scientific Program Committee Chair ***WELCOME LETTER***

It is my great pleasure to invite you to attend the 18th conference of the International Society of Travel Medicine! The last two years have been extremely challenging as the global COVID-19 pandemic has greatly disrupted international travel and has resulted in many of our travel medicine practices being substantially curtailed and even temporarily suspended. We are pleased therefore that the world is re-opening and that international travel volumes are steadily increasing.

We are planning an exciting in-person meeting in Basel, Switzerland with the theme “Dawn of a New Era in Travel

Medicine”. Basel is a wonderful city on the banks of the river Rhine River with a well-equipped, modern conference center, excellent museums, great restaurants, and close proximity to France and Germany. Given the widespread disruptions in global travel secondary to the COVID-19 pandemic, the unfolding tragedy in Ukraine with a resultant massive outflow of refugees to neighboring countries (many of which have active ISTM members), and the profound impact of climate change, the world is changing and we as travel medicine practitioners will need to be prepared to adapt to these changes. Our conference will address these and other topics of importance to the travel medicine community.

We have convened a highly experienced Scientific Program Committee, which has been hard at work developing a comprehensive and attractive program for you. Some of the program highlights include plenary and symposia on the impact of COVID-19 and climate change on travel, antimicrobial resistance, tick-borne diseases, migrant health, and the rising threat of artemisinin treatment failures for malaria-infected travelers. We will also have many excellent workshops including several introductory sessions for novel

travel medicine providers as well as others on highly specialized topics such as migrant health, a focus on leishmaniasis, human trafficking, and dengue. In addition, Christoph Hatz and the stellar Local Organizing Committee are planning some exciting events for the meeting including special entertainment at the opening ceremony, an opportunity to explore Basel on the third day of the meeting, and a special dinner for all attendees.

We look forward to seeing you in Basel. Please mark your diaries for 21-25 May 2023!

David Hamer,
*CISTM18 Scientific Program
Committee Chair,
United States of America*





CISTM18 Local Organizing Committee Chair

WELCOME LETTER

Dear Colleagues,

An early warm welcome in Basel, Switzerland from the Local Organizing Committee to the 18th Congress of the International Society of Travel Medicine from 21 to 25 May 2023. Although Switzerland's third-biggest city has just 200,000 inhabitants and a surface area of only 37 km², it nonetheless boasts a vibrant social and an astounding cultural life. The appeal of this region lies both in its unique position at the point where three countries (Switzerland, France and Germany) meet – offering direct access to all the key transport routes and the world's oceans – and in its long tradition as a science and research location.

May 2023 is still many months away, but the preparations of the local organizing committee for the CISTM18 in Basel are already in full swing. After an on site meeting of the ISTM earlier this year, the local organizing committee started shaping a novel format within CISTM18: we will offer a cultural program on Tuesday 23rd May 2023 (starting at 16.00h) for all participants and accompanying persons. Thanks to generous contributions of additional,

mainly local sponsors, and a very modest contribution from you, we will offer you a wide selection of tours and activities in and around Basel, sports activities, visits of scientific institutions such as the oldest University of Switzerland or its latest institution building of the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute. Town walks with special themes (e.g. architecture, view from the top of a pharma building, urban social science experience of the past and present) for all ages and background will bring the host city's pearls and realities closer to you. One of the highest museum densities worldwide is reflected by an offer from art exhibitions to natural science insights and many surprises.

At the end of a two and a half hours leisure program, we intend to bring together all participants for a joint dinner in one of Basel's hip places, the old power station, enjoying local food and the company of our international travel medicine family.

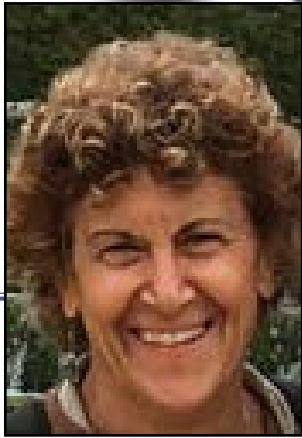
You can see that your physical presence makes a lot of sense, not only for enjoying a stunning cultural program with a taste of the famous 'Laeggerli', but above all profiting from a sublime scientific program which will offer the long-awaited exchange of ideas and lively discussions beyond

avatars. So please make sure you start planning your trip to the very heart of Europe in the traditional area of Basel.

Obviously, we have also compiled a pre- and post-Congress program of various duration for you and your companions. Please see below some options, so you can already plan your leisure time in Switzerland, including the personal choices of the Local Organizing Committee. We will be happy to provide you with further advice on request. We acknowledge that travel to Basel may contribute to climate problems, but we are convinced that getting together after more than three years will be important for our constituency. The Congress aims to set landmarks in environmentally conscious behavior in dealing with water and other resources, in reducing material and food waste and – hopefully – in convincing those who come from Europe to use the train rather than airplanes.

We will provide you with more information as the meeting gets closer and look forward to seeing you in Basel.

Christoph Hatz,
*CISTM18 Local Organizing
Committee Chair, Switzerland*



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

EDITOR'S *note*

After the Great Pause, Are We Poised for Perseverance?

While the thick of the COVID-19 pandemic has been referred to as “The Great Pause”, many parts of the world may think we are past this and ready to hit full play again. But as the head of the WHO, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, addressed the annual World Health Assembly in May: “It’s not over anywhere until it’s over everywhere.” That’s just COVID (and the “tridemic” of COVID, RSV, and flu). The same global problems still persist: restless people (violence, protests, political and social unrest, strikes, displacement), restless weather (flooding, wildfires, earthquakes, volcanoes), restless diseases (increased cases of malaria,

cholera, dengue, measles, JE, shigellosis, and a new explosion – mpox). But at least we had the World Cup to bring sports fans the world over together for several weeks of riveting play.

The theme of CISTM18 is the “Dawn of a New Era in Travel Medicine” and we need to be poised to gear back up and persevere through these world-without-end challenges. [Registration is now open for the Basel meeting](#), so get your discount if you sign up before 31 January, 2023.

In this end-of-2022 edition of Travel Medicine News, we say a fond farewell to Jodi Metzgar, thanking her profusely for her energy and leadership through some tumultuous times at ISTM, and extend a warm welcome and good luck to Whitney Alexander (and other ISTM staff, see below) as we continue to navigate this trying period in the world.

Congratulations to Dr. David Shlim for the publication of his refreshingly insightful and candid reflections in his book, “A Gentle Rain of Compassion”. I highly recommend accompanying Dr. Shlim on his life’s journey as a physician and his incorporation of Buddhism’s core tenet of compassion, which he delivers especially for challenged healthcare providers. I’ll mention another terrific book that I took off my shelf and am currently rereading: “Travel Medicine: Tales Behind the Science.” If you are a travel medicine provider, I recommend it as required reading. Published in 2007 and comprised of essays from 36 of the Who’s Who of Travel Medicine (unfortunately some of whom are not with us anymore), it is

extremely educational and eminently entertaining. Both books would make terrific holiday gifts that are food for the brain and soul.

The TravelMed forum is gearing back up but is not in full play –in the years 2015-2019, there were about 450-500 posts/year. In 2020, when COVID first appeared, there were about 250 (as you can guess, many about COVID), and in 2021 and 2022 so far, about 150, so we’re not back to our pre-COVID days.

We are excited about the new ISTM logo and cannot wait until the new website is up and running. Professional Practice Groups, Interest Groups, and Committees always need energetic new members, so please volunteer! And if you are a member of one of the aforementioned groups, please mark your calendars to get your reports in on time for each edition of Travel Medicine News – the membership needs to hear from you! And members - don’t forget to make sure your ISTM profile (“My Profile”) is current, and sign your practice up for the Global Travel Clinic Directory.

Happy Holidays 2022 from the snowy Pacific Northwest of the US.

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

Registration is now open for the Basel meeting, so get your discount if you sign up before 31 January, 2023.

03-04 February 2023

Virtual Travel Medicine Review and Update Course

ISTM produces the Travel Medicine Review and Update Course each year. The 2023 Virtual course date is 03-04 February 2023. The Virtual Course date gives greater accessibility to the course worldwide. The course agenda and presentations remain similar, providing a thorough update and review of the Body of Knowledge for the practice of travel medicine.

Register Today!

CME Credit has been applied for and will be updated on the ISTM site when more details are available.

Course Agenda

View the course agenda [here](#).

Course Speakers

Chair: Elizabeth Talbot
Elizabeth Barnett
Lin Chen
Gerard Flaherty
David Freedman
David Hamer

Aisha Khatib
Sarah Kohl
Sheila Mackell
Natalie Prevatt
Mary-Louise Scully
Henry Wu

Christina Greenaway
Sapha Barkati
Yen Bui
Mui Bui



International Panel on Malaria Chemoprophylaxis

Dipti Patel (United Kingdom), Francesca Norman (Spain), Mike Starr (Australia), Shigeyuki Kano (Japan) Moderator: Kristina Angelo (United States)

International Panel on Yellow Fever Vaccines

Leo Visser (Netherlands), Aluisio Segurando (Brazil), Salim Parker (South Africa), Watcharapong Piyaphanee (Thailand) Elizabeth Barnett (United States) Commentary

Moderator: Yen Bui (Canada)

Additional Commentator-Moderators

Steven Schofield, Francesca Norman, Gerard Flaherty, Yen Bui, Elizabeth Barnett, Kristina Angelo, Christina Coyle, David Shlim

Course Description

The Travel Medicine Review and Update Course is designed to review the ISTM Body of Knowledge for the Practice of Travel Medicine and to highlight recent developments in Travel Medicine. The curriculum will cover topics relevant to physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals who provide medical care and advice to travelers, expatriates, and migrants.

Sessions offered will include principles of immune response, risk assessment, and a travel vaccine overview. The expert faculty will present topics including adventure travel, bites, envenomation, cases, food and water exposures, ill returning travelers, risk assessment, malaria, special travelers, vaccines, and vectors. The care of special groups such as pregnant women, pediatric travelers, immigrants, VFR travelers, diabetics, and immunocompromised hosts will also be discussed. Recent developments and advances in travelers' diarrhea, immunizations, malaria medications, emerging infectious diseases, and navigating COVID-19 will be highlighted.

Participants will have ample opportunity to meaningfully engage with faculty through interactive sessions and informal discussions.

SECRETARY TREASURER'S *report*

Mike Jones,
Secretary-
Treasurer



A difficult Last Quarter

The past 3 months have seen the most far-reaching change in Secretariat Leadership and staffing that I can recall. **Carol Tinnie** resigned in August having done a wonderful job as Program Coordinator. We were deeply sorry that she felt that she had to leave the staff team. I conducted her exit appraisal. **Jodi Metzgar** has now finished her active role as Executive Director after 8 years of intensely dedicated work for ISTM, and her contract finishes on 31st December. She became Deputy Director in 2017 and Acting Executive Director in March 2020 after Diane Nickolson finished her decade of service as ED. Jodi was confirmed as ED on 1st January 2022 on a one-year contract. She demonstrated remarkable resilience in the face of significant pressure in 2019 and has worked tirelessly for the Society. It was a great privilege to join the gathering on 7th December in Dunwoody, Georgia to celebrate Jodi's achievements and to express our heartfelt thanks to her.

Jodi's Farewell Celebration in Atlanta, Georgia 7 December 2022 (see photo above). Pictured left to right: Mike Jones, Elena Axelrod, Jodi Metzgar, Aisha Rizwan, LaVelle Johnson, Hannah and Jenna Emutulu, Kim Gray, Whitney Alexander, Lin Chen, Phyllis Kozarsky, and Elizabeth Barnett.)

I visited Atlanta in September and made another visit 4th-8th December during which interval Whitney and I completed a full round of staff



appraisals, some of which had lapsed during the transition in Leadership.

The New Secretariat

I am delighted that **Whitney Alexander** accepted the role of Deputy Director in September 15th and Acting Executive Director with effect from 18th November.

LaVelle Johnson accepted the post of Acting Deputy Director with effect from 5th December. She will assign her time 37.5% (15 hours) to GeoSentinel and retain the brief of Membership Coordinator for the time being.

Jaclyn Simon, who is an accomplished Accountant, joined us in July and has made a huge difference to the reliability of our bookkeeping and budgeting. My appreciation for her is shared by GeoSentinel officers. We are actively reviewing her job title.

Elena Axelrod continues as Finance Manager with over 10 years in direct employment by ISTM. We are grateful

for all she does to ensure the smooth running of reviewing invoices and making payments.

Kim Gray has joined us as Program Coordinator and has all the skills that we need for her to succeed in this role

Sheena Vollmer has been engaged as Events and Meetings subcontractor and, with a wealth of experience in the hospitality industry, is already proving her value on the team for both GeoSentinel and ISTM. She is problem solving for the CISTM18 Scientific Program Committee meeting in February 2023

Dawn Keough is a remotely located IT contractor and provides support for both GeoSentinel and ISTM.

I would also like to thank **Jennifer McKenna** of JMac Consulting for her skilled guidance for the Secretariat Team as they navigated the path of change during an understandably difficult transition. I was able to join

one of her sessions with the team for a star quality interactive well-being webinar with staff shortly before my December visit.

Our auditors, **Dan Soles** and **Victoria Gilbreath** have nearly finished their work on our accounts for the financial year ending 30th June 2022. Our reserves have reduced in value due to the economic impact of the scandalous and brutal invasion of Ukraine by Russia. This last financial year is also one of reduced income and increased expenditure as we approach the next CISTM. In these circumstances it is remarkable that our net assets are expected to have only fallen by only \$300,000. Todd Weiland our RBC Investment Manager predicted slow recovery of the market and the S&P 500 which was about 4800 on January 1st reached a low point of 3600 a few months ago and is now climbing steadily, currently just under 4000. Another significant plus has been the recent notification of the GeoSentinel Foundation (GFI) who have undertaken to fund ISTM Research Awards this year. We extend our profound thanks to the GFI Board for their generosity.

Lastly, we thank **Danny Ripps** of Gabai Strategic Advisors who has completed his review of ISTM and has presented his findings to the Executive Board at the end of September and a larger group comprising all those whom he interviewed on 1st December. Detailed work with a planning committee now follows.

Warm greetings to all our members as we approach the forthcoming holiday season.

Mike Jones,
Secretary-Treasurer

Mike Jones joined the Secretariat holiday party 8 December, 2022 in Atlanta, Georgia.



Pictured left to right, back to front: Jaclyn Simon, Elena Axelrod, Sheena Vollmer, LaVelle Johnson, Aisha Rizwan, Kim Gray, Whitney Alexander, Mike Jones, and Hannah Emetulu.



2023 CTH[®] Examination

ISTM will offer its 23rd Certificate of Knowledge[™] in Travel Medicine examination in May. This in-person exam will take place on Sunday, 21 May 2023 at 9.00 (GMT +1) CEST at the Convention Center in Basel, Switzerland where CISTM18 will be held.

Apply to sit for the examination [here](#).

FROM THE SECRETARIAT

2022 has been a big year of change for ISTM. Travel is back in full swing and secretariat staff were delighted to have in-person meetings among staff and leadership, an in-person CTH® examination in Atlanta, Georgia, and participate as an in-person exhibitor at the American Society of Travel Medicine and Hygiene's (ASTMH) conference in November.

As you read in Mike Jones' Secretary-Treasurer article, we have had much change and growth in the Secretariat office team. Staff has been working very hard to continue to ensure a great programming and membership experience, and we are looking forward to CISTM18 with great anticipation. We look forward to warmly welcoming you and all of our ISTM members and leadership in Basel, Switzerland May 2023!

In the meantime, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the new secretariat team to you:



(Left to right: Aisha Rizwan, Jaclyn Simon, Hannah Emetulu, Whitney Alexander, LaVelle Johnson, Elena Axelrod, Sheena Vollmer, and Kim Gray; not pictured: Dawn Keough)

Aisha Rizwan | GeoSentinel Program Manager

Favorite travel destination:
Anywhere and everywhere!

Hometown: Miami, Florida

Aisha is a dedicated public health professional with over 15 years of healthcare-related experience. She obtained her Master's degree in Public Health in 2018 and shortly thereafter

joined the GeoSentinel team to help manage the large Network of clinics and healthcare providers who monitor infectious diseases and other travel-related health issues among international travelers and migrants. Aisha enjoys how her role aligns well with her mission of collaborating with global leaders to work towards meaningful change in the travel medicine and public health fields.

Dawn Keough | Freelance for ISTM and GeoSentinel

Dawn updates both the ISTM and GeoSentinel websites. She also does graphic design for ISTM and is currently a graphic designer/web designer at Shoreland.

Favorite travel destination: The Northwoods, Wisconsin

Hometown: Oconomowoc, Wisconsin

Dawn has a degree in Data Processing and much experience with graphic and web design. She has been with ISTM for over 20 years as a graphic designer and web designer. She helped design the current website as well as the site before it. Dawn enjoys working for both ISTM and GeoSentinel as they are dedicated to promoting travel health worldwide.

Elena Axelrod | Financial Manager

Favorite travel destination: Nashville, Tennessee

Hometown: Atlanta, Georgia

Elena has enjoyed working for the ISTM and GeoSentinel for the past 20 years, both in database management and on the financial side of things. She personally connects with the mission of medical professionals uniting globally to share information. She has an international background and love of international travel.

Hannah Emetulu | Data Manager for GeoSentinel

Favorite travel destination: Jamaica

Hometown: born in Lagos, Nigeria and lives in Atlanta, Georgia

Hannah has a Master's degree in Public Health and worked in research/clinical research for 5+ years prior to beginning her work with GeoSentinel. She has a bachelor's in biology because infectious disease has always been an interest of hers. Hannah enjoys working at ISTM because she is able to continue to learn and expand her skills, while

interacting with people from all over the world.

Jaclyn Simon | Accountant

Favorite travel destination: National Parks in the Western United States of America

Hometown: Ovid, Michigan

Jaclyn began working for ISTM in July 2022 to serve as ISTM's first in-house accountant. She specifically handles the monthly and annual closings, reporting and other projects. Jaclyn also works with GeoSentinel staff on budgeting and reporting. She enjoys the work she does, the opportunities she sees for improvements to processes, and the diverse ISTM staff that she has met and hopes to get to know better.

Kim Gray | Project Coordinator

Favorite travel destination: Miami, Florida

Hometown: Long Island, New York

Kim has a background in Communications and Public Relations from Hofstra University. Her degrees allow Kim to create communication strategies, be a problem solver, and manage projects and tasks effectively for ISTM. Kim enjoys working at ISTM because the organization aligns with her mission and purpose; to make a positive and lasting impact on the community and improving lives of people around the world. As ISTM's newest staff member, Kim looks forward to continuing to learn, grow, and contribute her skill-set.

LaVelle Johnson | Acting Deputy Director

Favorite travel destination: Anywhere that's warm with white sand

Hometown: South Bend, Indiana

LaVelle Johnson received her Bachelor's in Science from Indiana University with Honors in Public Affairs/Management. In her last semester of college, she was selected to work for the Department of Education Public

Relations department in Washington, DC. LaVelle has a Master's degree in Acupuncture and was a business owner in Midtown Atlanta before joining ISTM. She has been a licensed medical aesthetician for the last 25 years, and spent the last 10 years concentrating in medical administration. She enjoys working for ISTM and assisting the Society grow and achieve our goals.

Sheena Vollmer | Meetings and Event Specialist

Favorite travel destination: Amalfi Coast, Italy & Costa Rica

Hometown: Gulfport, Mississippi

Sheena is brand new to the ISTM team but has been working in the event industry for a couple of decades. She loves producing exciting, meaningful, and engaging events. She recognizes the ISTM team has tons of drive and passion and that makes her excited to see what the future holds.

Whitney Alexander | Acting Executive Director

Favorite travel destination: Anywhere that is culturally diverse

Hometown: Chattanooga, Tennessee

Whitney has a Bachelor's degree in Marketing, and was awarded a Graduate Assistantship during graduate school where she earned her Master's degree in Business Administration with a concentration in International Business. She has experience working in both the for profit and non-profit industry including The Salvation Army, University of Tennessee, and the Public Education Foundation. She enjoys volunteering in the community and currently serves with her son's cub scout pack and serves on the Parent Advisory Committee for her daughter's preschool. Working at ISTM matches Whitney's passion for building community, strengthening public health awareness and fostering international cooperation and collaboration.



GeoSentinel

The big news for GeoSentinel is that travel has picked up tremendously in 2022, and inevitably we are once again seeing ill returning travelers and migrants. We are not at pre-pandemic rates of cases, and perhaps some types of travel will indeed remain less common for the near future. However, network activities are all ramping up, including outbreak alerts, surveillance activities, and research projects. We were also able to pivot from our usual activities and rapidly design and execute a protocol designed to explore the epidemiology of the recent Mpox epidemic. We are enthusiastic about the great potential 2023 will bring as we move forward in our recent designation as a research network in addition to our core surveillance activities.

The big news for GeoSentinel is that travel has picked up tremendously in 2022

For those of you working in or with Network sites, we encourage you to watch out for the initiation of a variety of research projects and consider how you might help identify patients for enrollment. We have approved (or very close) protocols looking at Monkeypox evolution and outcomes, neurocognitive effects of malaria on naïve patients, and biomarkers for risk in febrile disease, as well as pathogen identification and discovery. Very shortly we expect to have an approved protocol which has been generating great interest among many research groups looking at the molecular epidemiology of malaria and using genomics to track and understand the spread of resistance to antimalarials. Finally, we are beginning new work on developing Machine Learning algorithms to our surveillance database in near-real time to identify outbreaks and emerging infections more rapidly and accurately.

In the meantime, Network membership continues to evolve. A few sites have closed, mostly as site directors have moved or retired. New sites have been recruited this year, including Tulane, Gainesville Florida, Oklahoma City, Frankfurt, Heidelberg, Brussels, and Vienna.

Publications from the Network slowed during the pandemic but are picking up once again. A number of alerts have been published, including Dengue in Cuba, Chikungunya in Bali, and Zika in Thailand. Journal publications include

our Mpox study published in Lancet Infectious Disease, and reviews of our data on multi-drug resistant typhoid and Hepatitis A in our flagship JTM.

For all of you who see post-travel patients, we are always happy to have among our Network affiliates. Let us know at Geosentinel@geosentinel.org

Michael
Libman *for the*
GeoSentinel
Office of the PI



A Note From President-Elect GERARD FLAHERTY



ISTM Executive Board Elections

As President-elect, it has been my privilege to assemble and chair an excellent Nominating Committee comprising nine members from all over the world, whose task it was to propose suitable candidates for election to the Executive Board. The committee has been busy since June 2022 in identifying potential nominees. Our significant outreach efforts yielded a healthy number of nominees for each of the three Board positions to be filled – one for President-elect and two for Counselors, one of which must be a Nurse. The relevant ISTM bylaws governing our election process can be viewed [here](#).

The Nominating Committee, following very careful consideration and discussion of each nomination, has voted to select at least two preferred individuals in each category. As Chair, I will confirm these candidates in early December to the Secretary-Treasurer, Dr. Mike Jones. The Secretariat, under the guidance of our Acting Executive Director, Whitney Alexander, will engage with the successful candidates in constructing a ballot, to be distributed electronically in early January 2023 to all current ISTM members.

I appeal to you, our members, to participate in our democratic elections by reading the candidates' biographies and casting your votes using our secure platform. This is an important privilege but also a central responsibility of membership. Someday, you may be one of the candidates for election. It is important that an Executive Board enjoys a strong mandate and represents the full breadth of the membership base to the greatest extent possible. The Executive Board is here to serve your interests.

The results of the election will be made known to the Executive Board in late March 2023, and both successful and unsuccessful candidates will be personally informed of the outcome by me. The make-up of the new Board will be publicly announced at the General Membership Assembly to be held at CISTM18 in Basel in late May 2023. On that occasion, I will take the opportunity to publicly acknowledge all the efforts of our three outgoing EB members.

I wish to express my gratitude to the Nominating Committee (listed on the ISTM website) for their time, professionalism, and wise counsel. I am also most grateful to all the nominees for putting themselves forwards for consideration. We hope that those leaders in travel medicine who were not ready on this occasion to submit a nomination will consider doing so in future elections.

I am committed to promoting active mentorship of the ISTM leaders of tomorrow. Let us all help in this endeavor and not be afraid to serve in a position of leadership ourselves when the Society needs our skills and experience .

Gerard Flaherty,
President - Elect, ISTM

I appeal to you,
our members, to
participate in our
democratic elections
by reading the
candidates' biographies
and casting your
votes using our secure
platform.



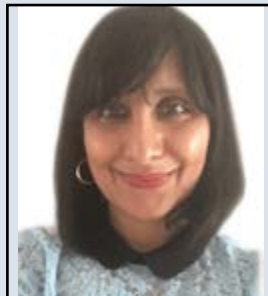
Rebecca Acosta,
Chair



Sarah McGuinness,
Leadership Council



Sarah Kohl,
Leadership Council



Dipti Patel,
Leadership Council



ISTM Website **TASK FORCE**

New ISTM Logo!

The Website Task Force, appointed by the Executive Board (EB), began working on a fully revitalized and refreshed website in early 2022 collaborating with the Secretariat staff and a professional website design firm. The first phase of the project is nearly complete including a reorganization of the structure to help ensure the new website more streamlined and “user friendly”. The next phase will be focused on the visual elements such as updated colors and graphics.

An important development during the early phase of the project was the realization that this was an optimal time to consider an updated logo for the society. The Executive Board initiated a project to explore and design a new logo in early 2022. Although the current logo has served the society well and will remain an important part of the society’s legacy, it was missing something that has been identified as very important to many members - people and community. In addition, it was determined that a more refreshed color palette, including greens and blues, better reflects the vibrancy of the society.

The new logo was recently approved by the EB and the Publications Oversight Committee (POC) and will now become an important part of the ongoing website design and the Society imagery as it continues to flourish and evolve. We are very pleased to present the new logo here for the first time to the membership. Stay on the look-out for it on ISTM materials in the near future and the website when it is ready to launch in 2023!

Submitted by the Website Task Force:
Rebecca Acosta (Chair), Sarah Kohl,
Sarah McGuinness and Dipti Patel.



ISTM Membership **TASK FORCE**

Helping to Build Back Membership

The recent pandemic has been very challenging for societies' economies and our members. Membership in the ISTM has decreased during the pandemic for many reasons but the Society is committed to renewal and growth in the coming years. This newly created Membership Task Force, appointed by the Executive Board, aims to help develop strategies to retain, strengthen, and increase the membership of the ISTM.

Both current and future membership categories are being reviewed and consideration is being given to areas of growth that may follow the pending approval of 501c3 status in the US. Strategies are being developed to reach out to those who have recently let their membership lapse, to facilitate the targeting of specific groups of interest to ISTM, as well as those who have never been members, to increase the Society's numbers.

We hope to continue building our membership to maintain a successful and representative ISTM global community.

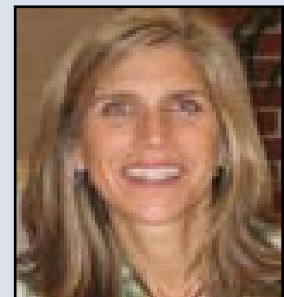
Jenny Visser (Chair), Francesca Norman (Co-chair), Rebecca Acosta, Hilmir Ásgeirsson



Jenny Visser, Chair



**Francesca Norman ,
Co-chair**



Rebecca Acosta



Hilmir Ásgeirsson



Professional Groups

NURSING

D The opening of borders and the move to normalization has hopefully resulted in our members experiencing a resurgence of travelers seeking travel health advice. Having undertaken many domestic and international trips for both work and leisure in the last six months, there is an obvious enthusiasm and demand for all types of travel. Many of our members have enjoyed a return to travel by taking the opportunity to attend and present at local and regional travel medicine conferences. I hope as an extension of this, many NPG members will attend CISTM18 in Basel, Switzerland in May 2023. There will be a number of NPG events at CISTM18, including

a pre-conference workshop, nursing reception, and after the great success of the NPG dinner at CISTM16 in Washington, we are planning to host another social event. The NPG events are a great way to network and meet new colleagues and friends. Further details will follow in the New Year.

Caroline Nash,
*Chair, NPG
Steering
Committee*

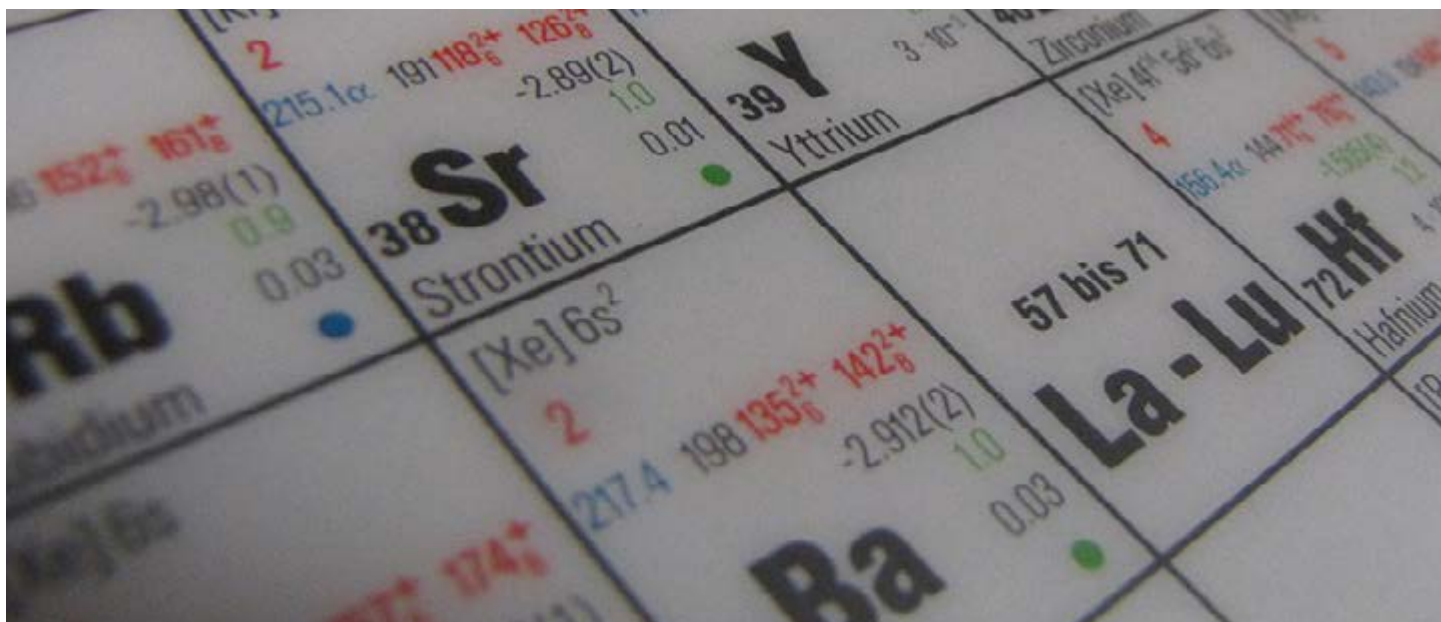


Calling All **MEMBERS**

Get connected with ISTM Professional
and/or Interest Groups!

Learn more [here](#).





PHARMACIST

Database for carrying medicines across international borders

A frequently asked question in the travel clinic is “can I carry my medicines to the destination country and what are the requirements at customs?”. The simple answer is that in all countries there are restrictions on most drugs of potential abuse, principally narcotics and psychotropics, but others such as anabolic steroids might also be included. However, it can be quite difficult to identify the precise requirements of entry for individual countries if carrying such medicines. Such restrictions though are usually on quantities and demand a variety of different types of documentary evidence. The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) has attempted to gather statements from countries regarding such requirements, but many have not submitted information, and in other cases, information may be out of date or difficult to interpret. The only other source is to identify information on government websites which can be time consuming or may not even be available.

As a result, the Pharmacist Professional Group (PPG) felt that there was a need for a database which gathered together

available information in one place that could be used by practitioners. In 2016, funding was made available to the PPG to construct a database and it was felt the most cost-effective method was to involve pharmacy students in the project. Therefore, a summer internship was offered to students at the Leicester School of Pharmacy, De Montfort University in the United Kingdom to combine information from the INCB website and individual country government sites into a database that could be made available through ISTM. This was first published in 2017 and has been subsequently updated by summer internship students through to 2019. The database has been widely used and is cited by a variety of travel health organizations and publications and is presently available at the PPG’s webpage found [here](#).

This database as it stands is intended as a guide only for practitioners wishing to research information on the importation of medicines for personal use across international borders, rather than a definitive statement on individual country requirements which may change between updates. In addition, the implementation and enforcement of the country regulations may deviate from the stated information and the accuracy of translation into English cannot be guaranteed, so ISTM cannot

itself accept responsibility for any inaccuracies arising. The database is therefore only one of a variety of resources that should be used when exploring the potential issues in advising travelers.

Currently, the database is updated by members of the PPG Council, but as international travel resumes post COVID-19, any help from ISTM members who use the database would be much appreciated. Therefore, if you notice that a web link is not working, if published information in the database is out of date, or if you have information on a country that the database does not currently list, please email the ISTM Secretariat at ISTM@ISTM.org.



Larry Goodyer and Karl Hess,
Pharmacist Professional Group



Interest Groups

EXPEDITION AND WILDERNESS MEDICINE

On 28th September 2022, as board members of the Expedition and Wilderness Medicine Special Interest Group, we held a webinar entitled "Into the Wild: Joys and Perils of Adventure Travel". Through some short talks we dealt with specific tasks to face during preparation for more adventurous travels, mainly focusing on risks of trauma, mental health, dementia, and proper fitness. About 150 people followed the program worldwide and we received many positive feedbacks that prompted us to think to other programs for the future!

In the meanwhile, we are excited about the forthcoming 18th Conference of the International Society of Travel Medicine, scheduled in Basel, Switzerland, next May. We hope to meet many enthusiasts of the wilderness and the outdoors joining us in one of the sessions we are building.

Let me take the opportunity of this end-of-year issue of our Newsletter to wish all of you all the best for the upcoming festivities and for a brilliant 2023!

Andrea Rossanese,
Chair,
Expedition and Wilderness Medicine Interest



MILITARY TRAVEL

Dear Colleagues,

As you all know, CISTM18 is less than 6 months away and once again our group will be organizing a military pre-course.

Our CISTM pre-course will be focused on inter alia, the impact of COVID-19 on armed forces, and we will reflect on the current situation in Eastern Europe, combat casualty care. The Military Interest Group will also have a military workshop on eye and dental issues during deployment, and a military expert presenting at the diving medicine session.

On 9 December, the Military Travel Interest Group held a Webinar "Medicine in Conflict Zones: Stories from the Frontline." We had a very lively and thoughtful discussion with our experts who had hands-on experience in conflict zones in Eastern Europe and Africa. You may view the webinar recording [here](#).

Hope to see you and/or hear you at all these exciting events!



Olivier Aoun,
*Founding Member,
Military Travel Interest Group*

PEDIATRIC

The pediatric interest group has had a productive educational year!

Past council members are also frequently available to join activities and Zoom calls.

We had several educational activities this year that promoted pediatric travel medicine and resources available through ISTM.

The Travel Medicine Review and Update course in February 2022 covered aspects of pediatric travelers along with breast-feeding and pregnant travelers. Sarah Kohl additionally gave a superb talk on "Epidemiology Made Relevant" that applied to many aspects of travel medicine and decision making.

March 2022 featured a well-attended international [webinar](#) on pediatric COVID-19 Vaccines and Kids. The webinar featured pediatric lessons learned, update on COVID-19, vaccine hesitancy, and an update on pediatric COVID-19 vaccine from Elizabeth Barnett, active ISTM member and ACIP representative. Leah Kern and Margie Danchin (Australia) gave excellent presentations and resources are available on the ISTM LMS.

In April 2022, Leah Kern spearheaded "Taking Flight: Pediatric Travel Medicine Update for General and Sub-Specialist Pediatricians during the COVID-19 Pandemic", a workshop at the Pediatric Academic Society meeting in Denver, USA. Drs. Kern, Kohl and I did an innovative, case-based, participant driven workshop with enthusiastic engagement and feedback.

In June 2022, there was a workshop in Netherlands at NECTM by Shirley Molitor-Kirsch (emeritus Pediatric Interest Group member), Sarah Kohl, and Natalie Prevatt. Topics covered included the traveling pediatric patient with bleeding disorders, special-needs pediatric travelers, and pediatric travelers with inflammatory bowel disease. The audience was



engaged, and the presentations were well received.

Questions are regularly posed to the ISTM listserv regarding child travelers, and we urge anyone interested in caring for pediatric travelers to join the Pediatric Interest group. We have an interest group-specific listserv on which discussion can also occur. We invite networking with members of the group electronically or at any of the in-person conferences. We look forward to seeing you all at CISTM18 in Basel and hope to have pediatric presence at the pre-course meeting.

Please consider applying for the steering committee of the Pediatric Interest Group in the coming cycle!

The current members of the group are:

- Chair: Sheila Mackell, United States of America
- Immediate Past Chair: Eyal Leshem, Israel
- Leah Kern, United States of America
- Sarah Kohl, United States of America
- Natalie Prevatt, United Kingdom
- Francisco Silva, United States of America
- Mike Starr, Australia

Respectfully,

Sheila
Mackell,
*Chair, Pediatric
Travel Interest
Group*



RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

As travel and tourism re-emerges from the obstacles faced during the pandemic, it will be important for us as responsible travel professionals to take the time to reevaluate and rethink about the impact that travel has on our profession, environments, and communities around the world. We have heard about the "Reiseangst", or anxiety related to travel but also increasing are novel trends such as multigenerational and "revenge travel" - combining several bucket-list destinations into single, more complex itineraries. But with rapid increases in tourist growth, we have seen bottlenecks and challenges with restarting, staffing shortages, slower supply chains and inequitable resource allocation. Concomitantly, we are seeing greater consciousness around sustainable approaches to travel, renewed interest in rural and nature-based tourism and more appreciation of an instilled purpose for or value of travel.

But we have a lot of work to do. As we emerge from the pandemic, sustainability and responsibility needs to be interwoven and embedded within the framework of travel medicine. Now, more than ever, is there a need to examine the impact that we as travelers have on ecosystems, economies, populations, and future generations while addressing some of the greatest systemic challenges caused by the acceleration of travel and tourism in recent years, most pressing

RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

continued on next page



Meetings and Conferences

- » **33rd European Congress of Clinical Microbiology & Infectious Diseases ECCMID**
Copenhagen, Denmark –
15-18 April 2023
www.eccmid.org
- » **18th Congress of the International Society of Travel Medicine CISTM18**
Basel, Switzerland,
21-25 May 2023
www.ISTM.org/CISTM18

RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

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being the climate emergency. There is a great opportunity to combine the overarching framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) with this groups' mandate. We hope to engage members this year in a workshop 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 member engagement, education, and ethical travel choices, alongside guiding principles of social responsibility and responsible tourism practices. With the hybrid CISTM18 meeting planned for May 2023 in Basel, Switzerland, we have advocated for a small but impactful carbon offsetting donation as part of the registration fee to help compensate for carbon emissions from flights to the meeting. By being the examples leading innovation and change, we can hope to have a positive and beneficial butterfly effect in the actions that we take. The Responsible Travel Interest group hopes this year to better develop a collaborative platform to 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, while promoting responsibility and awareness. Although the task at hand can seem daunting, thousands of small individual incremental actions will summate to transformative outcomes and necessary change.

Aisha Khatib,
*Chair,
Responsible
Travel Interest
Group*



STUDENT TRAVEL ABROAD

Despite being somewhat derailed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the STA Interest Group is happy to report that our international research collaboration with the US Centers for Disease Control produced some intriguing results. Thanks to project leaders Sarah Kohl and CDC's Kristina Angelo's committed efforts, multiple universities inside and outside the US participated in the project. The research focused on health-related events while traveling abroad. In May, Dr. Angelo hopes to share our findings at CISTM18 in Basel, Switzerland, and publish the report later this summer.

The study revealed some opportunities for further research and collaboration. We encourage anyone working with students to join us in our efforts.

Julie Richards
and Catherine
Ebelke,
*Co-Chairs,
Student
Travel Abroad
Interest Group*



COMMITTEES

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

As of Fall 2022, the CPD Committee is completing its second CTH renewal cycle. As ISTM members may recall, individuals earning their CTH starting in 2011 are required to renew their credential every ten years either by submitting evidence of continuing professional development activities (continuing education, publications, presentations, clinical hours, etc.) or retaking the CTH examination. A subcommittee of CPD members has been working hard to review a selection of renewal applications as part of this ISTM effort to promote quality travel health care and professional development in our field. At the completion of this year's review, the committee will report back to the Executive Board its recommendations for future renewal cycles. As chair, I want to express my gratitude to the 2022 review team: Karl Hess, Ken Dardick, Tara Lombardo, Andrroula Pavli, Nelson Agudelo, and Jeff Goad, former chair, and mentor to our committee.

And if you are someone who was awarded your CTH in 2013, just a reminder that it will soon be time to start applying for your renewal.



Gail Rosselot,
Chair, Continuing Professional Development Committee

DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Update from the Digital Communications Committee

The Digital Communications Committee (DCC) was established in 2017 to promote the use of digital information and communication technology in research and in communication with our members, travelers, and other health professionals. In 2022, DCC members have been integral to the Website Task force, which is working on a complete overhaul of the ISTM's website. In 2023 we are planning to develop some new digital ISTM resources to be featured on the new website (once it is launched). We are always on the lookout for new members, so if you have an interest in digital communications and technologies in the travel medicine space, we would love to hear from you – please contact the ISTM secretariat (ISTM@ISTM.org) or sarah.mcguinness@monash.edu.

Sarah McGuinness,
Chair, Digital Communications Committee



EXAM COMMITTEE

At last an in-person meeting!

Our committee met on the 22nd and 23rd of September in Atlanta for 2 days of reviewing flagged exam questions and newly written ones. Eight committee members and two ISTM staff members made it to the meeting, and it was great to meet some of our new members admitted in the committee during the COVID_19 period and never seen face to face until then. We managed to do the job swiftly and in a much more comfortable way than during the previous online review.

An in-person CTH exam was held at the same place on the 24th of September, with a somewhat disappointing low attendance.

The revised questions will now be integrated into our bank and be ready for use in future exams.

The next planned exam will be in May at the CISTM18 in Basel, Switzerland. We hope more people will be able to attend, as travelling is resuming.

Pierre Landry,
Chair, ISTM Exam Committee



LIAISON COMMITTEE

Liaison Committee - What's That?

Liaisons are an important function which facilitates a close working relationship between people and organizations. Recognizing this need, the Liaison Committee (LiCom) was somewhat special in the structure of the Society — in that all members are experts with a specific competency and area of expertise, and can only join this committee by invitation. Currently we have the seven members who assure the liaison to the following institutions:

- Elizabeth Barnett, USA — Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)
- Miguel Cabada, USA/Peru — Latin America (SLAMVI)
- Tony Gherardin, Australia — Asia-Pacific Travel Health Society (APTHS)
- Phyllis Kozarsky, USA, Co-chair — Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Salim Parker, South Africa — Pan African Travel Medicine Federation and South African Society of Travel Medicine
- Robert Steffen, Switzerland, Chair — World Health Organization (WHO)

Fiona Genasi, former President of ISTM and thereafter liaison to the Northern European Conference of Travel Medicine (NECTM) has resigned from the LiCom; we are very grateful for the services rendered. The ISTM President-Elect, Gerard Flaherty is assuring the liaison to NECTM.

Robert Steffen,
Chair, Liaison
Committee



PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

As we close out the year 2022, we reflect on how the world of travel is evolving. For now, planes, trains & automobiles still dominate how our travelers get around. Looking ahead, sustainable travel practices and on the other hand, promises of a new space hotel by 2027 hint at coming changes. The PEC continues to offer you educational programs and resources to keep you abreast of the latest trends so that you can be well prepared to assist your travelers.

During this period of transition within the Secretariat, the committee has continued to produce a slate of timely webinars, deliver subscription courses, and refresh the annual Travel Medicine Review & Update Course. We remain committed to producing a variety of educational experiences and resources in convenient formats to aid you as you learn about new vaccines, outbreaks, and trends. Our committee is always welcoming new ideas and members. If you wish to join us, simply contact Kim Gray (kgray@ISTM.org).

Sarah Kohl,
Chair,
Professional
Education
Committee

Yen Bui,
Co-Chair,
Professional
Education
Committee



PUBLICATIONS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The POC has again been actively engaged in many areas this year. Individual POC members continue to act in a liaison capacity, working collaboratively with other ISTM groups and committees. Rudy Zimmer took up the position on the Website Taskforce, while Jakrapun Pupaibool (Jak) contributed to the Digital Communication Committee (DCC). The ISTM publications, *The Journal of Travel Medicine* (JTM) and *Travel Medicine News* (TMN) form part of POC engagement. The JTM, expertly managed by Editor-in-Chief, Annelies Wilder-Smith, her team of Editors and the editorial board, continue to publish high quality articles on various travel-related topics and the commendable rise of the impact factor has continued. The TMN Editor-in-Chief, Nancy Pietroski and Assistant Editor Luis Furuya Kanamori, do a sterling job in keeping Society members informed through the magazine. Nancy also continues to manage and monitor the TravelMed Listserv. Charlie Ericsson has a wealth of knowledge of both travel medicine and the ISTM and our gratitude extends to him as our “go to” member on historical and current matters.

I am continually grateful to my POC colleagues, both long-standing and recently arrived members, for their support and engagement over the past year. We said farewell to Effrossyni Gkrania-Klotsas (UK) and Joe Torresi

COMMITTEES

continued from previous page

(Australia). We are grateful to each of them for sharing their expertise and for giving their time and support to the committee.

Reviews and requests submitted to the POC are dealt with by all members in a timely manner and occasionally reveal issues worthy of further discussion and analysis. The expertise within the POC is a valuable asset and much appreciated. To keep everyone up to date the POC meet online quarterly, often a challenge given the geographical distribution of members.

Although international travel has started to increase, world turmoil shows no sign of abating. As we look forward to the year ahead and meeting colleagues in person in Basel for CISTM18, we hope to see you there and please consider joining us on the POC. Details can be found on the website and get in touch anytime.

Wherever you are in the world, I wish you Greetings of the Season and best wishes for 2023. I will keep my hopes alive for more peaceful times ahead.

Sandra Grieve,
Chair, Publications Oversight Committee



RESEARCH AWARDS COMMITTEE

Research Award 2022

I would like to start the report by expressing my gratitude to Mark Riddle for his leadership and Jodi Metzgar for her continuous support to the Research and Award Committee; both have moved into different positions and will be missed in the committee meetings.

We are excited to announce that the 2022-2023 ISTM Research Awards [are now opened](#). We are grateful with the GeoSentinel Foundation contribution towards the Research Award. In this round, there is over \$100,000 USD to be awarded in three categories:

- investigators in low- and middle-income countries;
- ISTM Interest and Professional Group;
- general travel medicine projects.

We look forward to receiving numerous high-quality research proposals before 31 January 2023.

In 2010, [Talbot et al.](#) presented research priorities areas, which have guided research work for evidence base in travel medicine for over a decade. We have now established a working group with Sarah McGuinness, Larry Selkow, and Francesca Norman to conduct an extensive consultation process to update the travel medicine research priorities.

Luis Furuya-Kanamori,
Chair, ISTM Research and Awards Committee



SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS COMMITTEE

The Special Recognitions Committee is presently reviewing applications for Fellow and distinguished Fellow status and nominees for the Jay Keystone award in Education. We have been impressed so far with the quality of applicants and look forward to introducing new fellows and possibly a distinguished fellow at our next meeting in Basel.

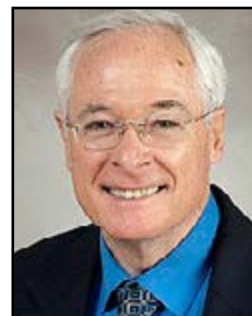
We remind all ISTM members to consider application for Fellow status if they meet criteria that we publish online. The critical issue to remember is that this is an ISTM award and as such an applicant's participation in ISTM affair is highly regarded in the final SRC evaluation and recommendation sent to Board for final approval. Such participation includes membership (including held offices) in ISTM committees and interest groups and of course publication in JTM and presentations at ISTM meetings.

The SRC wishes to express gratitude to Louis Loutan and Fiona Genasi, who are stepping down from their roles on SRC and welcome Leo Visser and Jane Chiodini, who have graciously agreed to replace them.

If any member has interest in serving on ISTM committees or interest groups they are welcome to contract the executive director, Jodi, or me for further information.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlie Ericsson,
Chair, Special Recognitions Committee





THE JOURNAL OF TRAVEL MEDICINE CONTINUES TO THRIVE

The *Journal* continues to receive high quality manuscript submissions, many of which are related to SARS-CoV-2. Many thanks to the hard work of our Editorial Board and popularity of our published manuscripts, our Impact Factor rose to an impressive 39.194.

Beyond several dedicated issues on COVID-19, JTM published a collection on Disease Surveillance in 2022.

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

Contributions from TRAVELMED

We continue discussing clinical cases and patient management recommendations based on posts on TravelMed. Recently, there was a case of a female patient (presumably in Canada) who had been bitten in the finger by a squirrel.

With this post in mind, Dr Deborah Mills discusses the risk of rabies in travelers. Deb is the Medical Director of both Dr Deb The Travel Doctor in Brisbane, and the Travel Medicine Alliance, Australia. Deb has practiced travel medicine since 1988 and has written the book, *Travelling Well* – the must-have guide to a safe and healthy journey, now in its 21st edition.

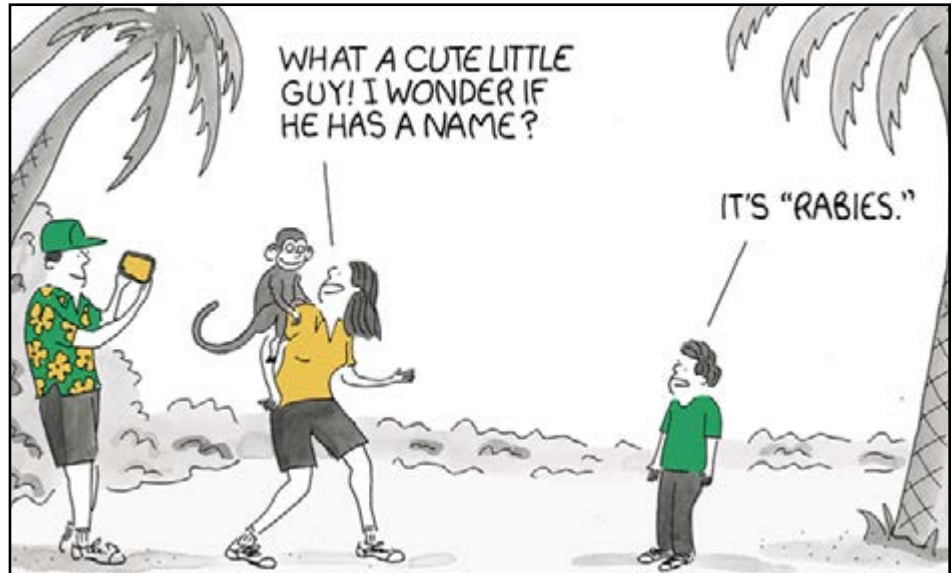


Image property of Dr Deborah Mills

Risk of rabies in travelers

The Steffenogram places “animal bite - rabies risk” as the second most common vaccine preventable disease (after influenza) among travelers to low-income countries.¹ From January 2007 through December 2018, the GeoSentinel Surveillance Network recorded over 6400 animal bites/exposures among travelers. Most of the animal exposures were from mammals (i.e., dogs, monkeys, cats, bats) and thus did have the potential to transmit rabies.²

Gautret et al. compiled a list of 83 rabies cases among international travelers between 1990 and 2019.^{3,4} Most of these deaths were in adult male travelers (despite similar exposure rate in males and females²), and their exposures were more commonly reported in Asia or Africa, and dogs were the most common source of infection.^{3,4}

Pre-travel recommendations

Clinician recommendations usually have a significant impact on the behavior of the traveler. Pre-travel consultations should be an opportunity to discuss rabies risk with travelers,

and rabies PrEP should be a priority.⁵ When contemplating whether to recommend PrEP, the following should be considered:

- Where are they going? Rabies continues to be a widespread problem but is concentrated in Asia and Africa;⁶ however, some places should raise red flags as bites are more common in some popular tourist areas: countries like Indonesia (Ubud), Thailand (Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Ko Phi, Ko Samui, Phuket and Prang Sam Yod), India (Delhi and Goa), Vietnam (Ho Chi Minh City) and Peru (Lima).
- What is the likely standard of medical care if a person was to suffer a potential exposure? Remoteness from medical care should raise a big red flag.
- What are their expected activities? Dogs are frankly everywhere in some countries and commonly seen by travelers – around marketplaces, lying about in the street, mooching in trekking campsites, etc. It may not be practical to ‘avoid dogs’. Admittedly walking around an airconditioned shopping centre is a lower risk compared to a market setting. Walking and cycling are higher risk than sitting in a bus.
- What is the likely lifetime travel risk? There is evidence that benefit from PrEP is lifelong, hence the need to consider the cumulative travel history of this person: One trip of 2 weeks is less risky than 10 trips of 2 weeks over 10 years or more.
- How critical is a trouble-free trip? Disruption of travel plans due to the need to seek medical care for PEP +/- RIG can have different consequences to different travelers and their travel companions. For example, honeymoons may be more highly valued than other trips. Disruption of a large family or group holiday may be more problematic, if one in the party needs medical care, thus potentially affecting the itinerary of the entire group.
- Duration of trip is often suggested as a predictor of rabies risk. However, this is a red herring. Many bites occur on short trips,⁷ 88% of animal exposures occur within the first month of travel⁸.

Deciding whether or not to strongly recommend pre-travel rabies PrEP, is ultimately a matter of balancing of risk and benefit. This is where travel medicine sometimes is a bit of art as well as science. Practitioners need to clearly explain the schedule, costs, and scientific evidence to the travelers and help their travelers decide what best aligns with their own life, values, and budget.

Traveler decides not get PrEP



Source: Wikipedia

If on balance, the traveler decides to postpone rabies vaccination, it is of critical importance that the briefing of travelers should stress the importance of avoiding

animal contact and how to manage the wound.

Evidence suggest that “patting dogs” is an uncommon precipitant for animal exposure, and 40% of animal exposure are not initiated by the traveller.⁸ Travelers get bitten doing things like walking on a beach or road, in a temple taking a photo, watching fireworks, shopping, or sitting in a restaurant.

The discussion might include something like ‘you need to think of dogs while overseas like you think of snakes in Australia – be a very long way away from them and certainly out of “lunging distance”.

Managing an exposure

Instruct travelers to run water and soap over the wound for 15 mins, and then that they should ring their insurance provider to find the best place to get PEP vaccination nearby. Less than 50% of travelers with high-risk activities were aware that they needed to wash the wound when bitten or scratched.⁹

Travelers should be aware that accessing RIG is often difficult. Additionally, receiving RIG may be particularly an unpleasant experience since many travelers are bitten on fingers and hands. In some of the countries where travelers are bitten, fake drugs and substandard medical care are common. Only 5-20% of travelers initiate RIG in the country of exposure,¹⁰ and about two-thirds of travelers with an indication for RIG did not receive it at all.^{11,12}

Case from TravelMed

Returning to the lady and her squirrel bite: 23 squirrel bites and 2 squirrel non-bite exposures were recorded in GeoSentinel from 2007 to 2018.² It was pointed out that small mammals are unlikely to carry rabies “because they die from the bite force of the animal before they have a chance to get infected”. However, squirrels with rabies have been reported in the European Union/European Economic Area,¹³ and “there are [human rabies] case reports in Nepal and Costa Rica”, and India after squirrel bites.¹⁴

Although human rabies cases due to squirrel bites are extremely rare, there was consensus that “low risk is not zero risk”.

Another important point that arose from the posts was that the “values and preference” of the patient carried significant weight in the consideration of treatment. For example, the patient “does not want to take chances” because “she is the sole caregiver for a disabled blind son”. Not knowing for “a few weeks, or up to a year” when someone is “out of danger of developing rabies” creates a lot of anxiety for many patients. Complete, recommended PEP may sometimes serve as “emotional reassurance”.

WHO guidelines for category 3 exposures include the use of RIG.⁶ It is of note that progress is being made developing an alternative to the human or horse derived RIG. The use of monoclonal antibodies for RIG holds great promise for the future availability of RIG to our world travelers.¹⁵

In travelers with category 2 exposure (“nibbling of uncovered skin, minor scratches or abrasions without bleeding (exposure)”, only PEP vaccination is recommended. In this situation, PEP vaccination will serve as PrEP for their future trips, which is not such a bad thing.

TravelMed is open to ISTM Members who wish to communicate with other members on clinical travel medicine discussions. It is an unmoderated discussion forum through email that many ISTM members find of great benefit. Please follow the rules and etiquette (<https://www.istm.org/travelmedlistserv>) when posting on TravelMed.

If you are interested in contribution to this section and share your experience using TravelMed, please contact Luis Furuya-Kanamori (l.furuya@uq.edu.au).



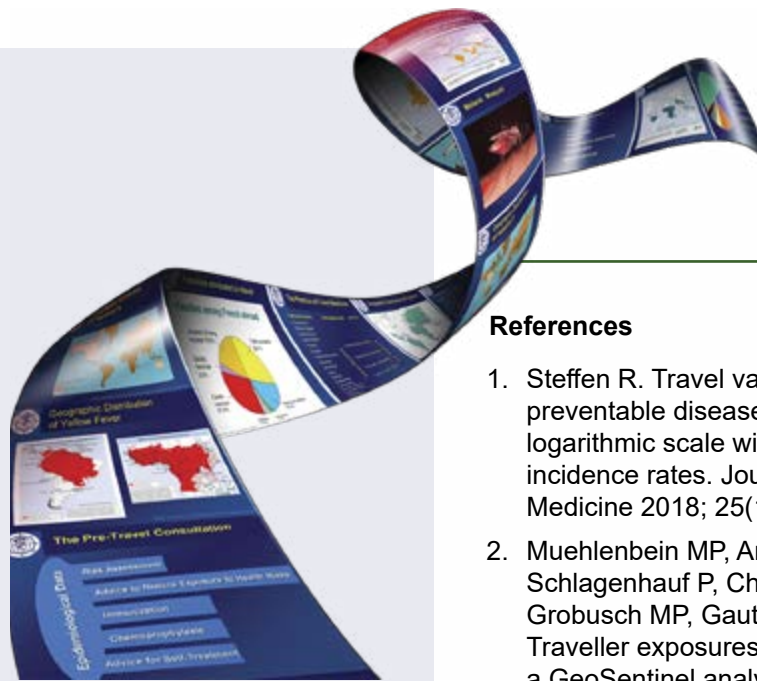
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continued on next page



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IN MEMORIAM



(Left to right: Fabrice Simon, Christophe Rapp, Olivier Aoun)

In Memoriam: Brigadier General Fabrice SIMON, MD, PhD (July 27, 1963- April 29, 2022)

As 2022 is ending, we would like to pay a tribute to Pr Fabrice SIMON, a former ISTM member, who passed away on April 29. Fabrice joined the “Santé navale” military medical academy of Bordeaux in 1982. After graduating as a general practitioner in 1989, he attended the Pharo tropical medicine school in Marseille in 1990. He then spent 6 years as an Army field physician, during which he deployed to Central Africa and Chad. In 1995, he started his infectious disease specialization in Paris before working in Djibouti at the Bouffard military hospital from 2001 to 2003. He was then assigned to the Laveran military hospital where he was the head of the infectious disease department from 2005 to 2015. It is in this period that he witnessed and studied the chikungunya outbreak that occurred in the Indian ocean in 2006 (Mayotte and Réunion island). He then became a chikungunya world expert and WHO senior consultant starting from 2010. He was the armed forces national expert in infectious diseases from 2010-2019.

He was often invited to CISTM meetings to present the latest advances on chikungunya.

He retired from active duty on 2020 with the rank of brigadier general and founded a start up specialized in counseling and auditing on communicable diseases prevention at work.

Fabrice was a straight forward, loyal, and honest person that was beloved by his patients and students. He was very close to military field physicians with whom he created strong bonds of fellowship. He will be dearly missed.

Olivier Aoun,
Chair, Military Interest Group



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