



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF TRAVEL MEDICINE
Promoting Healthy Travel Worldwide

TRAVEL MEDICINE News

April 2024



All roads lead to New Orleans for **CISTM19!**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Prof. Gerard Flaherty, MD, PhD
ISTM President

By the time this April issue of Travel Medicine News has been published, the Executive Board will have returned from the United States, where this year's in-person Board meeting will have been held over two days in New Orleans. Twenty-two separate items will have been discussed with input from the Board members and wider Leadership Council who joined us by videoconference to reduce costs. Earlier that week, the CISTM19 Scientific Programme Committee (chaired by Éric Caumes), Local Organising Committee (chaired by Susan McLellan), and Oversight Committee which I chair, will have met, and deliberated on all aspects of next year's conference. We are so excited to be taking the ISTM conference to this truly unique American city.

Thank you to those members who submitted proposals for CISTM19 scientific sessions. The SPC had received over 80 submissions in total by the time this article went to press. The detailed process of crafting an inviting and innovative programme is well underway and will reach its finale at our second and final in-person meeting of the SPC to be held in Vietnam in February 2025. Our first

call for research abstracts will be issued in September/October 2024. I am pleased that our Executive Board has approved the creation of a special research medal to be presented at CISTM19 in honour of our late friend and colleague, Peter Leggat. Further information about this eponymous award will be provided in a later issue of this newsletter. Meanwhile, the ISTM President-elect, Anne McCarthy, is busy as Chair of the CISTM20 Oversight Committee in preparing her shortlist of venues for consideration by the Executive Board. The 20th CISTM will surely be an extra special anniversary celebration.

Our Professional Education Committee (PEC) has been doing trojan work on behalf of the Society. This year's Travel Medicine Review and Update Course was an outstanding success, attracting some 315 participants on our modern Cvent educational platform. I had the pleasure of presenting on the topic of travellers with chronic illness in a packed programme of outstanding speakers and Q&A session moderators. I am very grateful to all contributors on our flagship course. Sheila Mackell has done a thoroughly professional job as Course Director, leading a dedicated organising committee. Thank you also to Kim Gray and members of the Secretariat team for all their hard work in delivering another technically successful event. I was very pleased that sponsorship obtained by our Development and Planning Committee, led by Past President Lin Chen, allowed us to offer tuition scholarships to underrepresented member categories. We hope to be able to repeat this for future courses.

Aisha Khatib has been working with Yen Bui, Anne McCarthy, and Albie de Frey to produce a series of educational podcasts. This is a new departure for ISTM and one which we hope will be appealing to members. I thank

Annelies Wilder-Smith for participating as Journal of Travel Medicine Editor-in-Chief in our maiden podcast episode. Special thanks to IAMAT for their support of this exciting venture. The PEC, under the leadership of Co-Chair, Darvin Scott Smith, has also completely updated the ISTM teaching slide set which has expanded to an impressive 225-slide resource. I greatly enjoyed viewing and editing this comprehensive and attractive set of slides along with colleagues in the Executive Board. They will shortly be made available to members on our new website. Our Website Task Force continues to work closely with our Secretariat and external website design partners to iron out any wrinkles in our new website and to improve the functionality of its interface with external sites, including our journal website hosted by Oxford University Press.

ISTM is committed to supporting educational efforts in migrant and refugee healthcare and, to this end, the Executive Board has agreed to financially support the Migrant and Refugee Health Interest Group who are leading the McGill Summer Institutes in Global Health hybrid course 'Providing Health Care to Refugee, Immigrant and Migrant Populations' to be held in June 2024 (see <https://www.mcgill.ca/summerinstitute-globalhealth/courses/institute-infectious-diseases-and-global-health/rimhealth>).

We are looking forward to supporting a tempting menu of regional conferences this year – NECTM9 in Copenhagen, May 22-24 (<https://mkon.nu/nectm9>); SLAMVI/SIERJ (RCISTM8) in Rio De Janeiro, August 7-9 (<https://www.infectorio.com.br/en>); APTHS in Kathmandu, September 18-21 (<https://www.apthc2024.org/>); and the Southern Cross Australasian Travel and Tropical Medicine Conference, September 27-29 (<https://>

sctravelmedconference.com/). I hope to meet as many ISTM members as possible at these conferences.

We have made two very important appointments recently. We extend a warm welcome to Brian Stowe, our new Secretary-Treasurer-designate. Brian will succeed Mike Jones as Secretary-Treasurer in New Orleans on May 14th, 2025. He will certainly have big shoes to fill but is enthusiastic about his new role. We are also in productive discussions which we anticipate will lead to the appointment of an experienced Executive Management Consultant. Our President-elect, Anne McCarthy, will soon be putting together her Nominating Committee for the 2025 Board elections, so now is a good time to start thinking about whether you are ready to put yourself forward as a

nominee for the Board positions falling vacant next year at CISTM19.

Congratulations to Rudy Zimmer from Canada, the founder of our new Primary Travel Doctors Professional Group. Rudy has been passionate for many years about giving a platform in ISTM to this important travel medicine community. I am very excited about this group's potential and I look forward to working with the elected members of its Steering Council in due course. Please read Rudy's article in this issue of the newsletter for more information about the group's goals.

I hope to be able to announce details of the approval of three new Interest Groups in the next issue of the newsletter – Clinical Tropical Medicine (led by Christina Coyle), Trauma and Injury Prevention in Travellers

(led by Richard Franklin), and Technology in Travel Health (led by Andrea Farnham). Please look out for invitations to become involved.

Finally, I would like to thank you, our members, for your loyal support to ISTM. Please see yourself as the future leaders of ISTM and do not hesitate to contact myself or Anne if you have any questions about what a leadership role would entail. If we are unified as a travel medicine community, we will be well positioned to seize every opportunity to advance our Society as well as travel medicine practice and scholarship. To quote Helen Keller, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

Prof. Gerard Flaherty, MD, PhD
ISTM President

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

EDITOR'S *note*



What to do in the CISTM Off-Season

Hopefully by now, everyone has settled back into their post-pandemic regular or irregularly regular or even regularly irregular routines. The world never seems to settle, but we somehow push on. Such as, what will ISTM members do in this non-CISTM year?

There's lots to do, as you will see as you peruse this spring (or autumn in the antipodes) issue of TMN. You can:

- Read this newsletter in its entirety to find out all the doings and accomplishments of the society
- Explore every tab on the new [ISTM website](#)
- Sign up for the TravelMed Discussion Board (redesigned) and engage in informative and stimulating discussions with your colleagues
- If you haven't done so, sign up and study to take the virtual CTH exam later this year.
- Take courses on [learning.istm.org](#), including the new "Travel Unravalled" podcasts (coming soon)
- Download and share with your patients ISTM-produced fact sheets on Altitude illness, Insect bite avoidance, Malaria, and TD
- Keep an eye out for the new ISTM teaching slide set available on the [LMS](#)
- Read the Journal!

- Join an Interest Group, a Professional Group, or a committee
- Attend a non-CISTM travel meeting in 2024 (mentioned in this newsletter)
- Get ready for CISTM19 in New Orleans in May 2025

You may be traveling yourself for various reasons, or living vicariously through your traveling patients – whether they're experiencing pleasure, or far too often, pain. Another way to pleasantly pass the time (if you can spare it) is to read, read, read about travel (then go and do it). A quote from one of my favorite adventurers:



Travel not only stirs the blood... it also gives birth to the spirit."

~Alexandra David-Neel

Here are some resources to pique your proclivity to perambulate!

Most traveled persons in the world (AI helped with these; there might be some contention):

First man to visit all countries:
[Rauli Virtanen](#) (Finland)

First to visit every country, not just pass through: [Mike Brown](#) (Canada)

First to visit all countries without flying:
[Torbjorn Pedersen](#) (Denmark)

First woman to visit all countries:
[Cassie De Pecol](#) (US)

Fastest to visit all countries:
[Anderson Dias](#) (Brazil)

Top Travel Books/Lists (in no particular order):

[Covers the history of the universe, going as far back as the Ancient Near East](#)

[Almost as comprehensive](#)

[Wonderlust Travel](#)

[Conde Nast Traveler](#)

[The Guardian: Recommendations from 18 of the world's greatest travel writers](#)

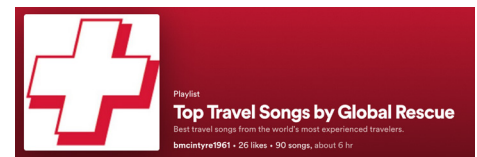
[Travel Medicine: Tales Behind the Science](#) (I mentioned this in a previous TMN and cannot recommend it enough!):

[For adventurers: Best Book List: Outside Magazine's 25 Best Adventure Books of the Last 100 Years](#) (Since 2003, I have been plowing through this list)

[IMDB's Top Travel Movies](#) (there are many more lists of these)

[Top Travel Songs](#) (compiled by a Global Rescue survey; it's definitely US-centric)

Fun fact: Spotify is now available in ~180 countries!



Happy reading, happy listening, and happy travels!

Nancy Pietroski
Travel Medicine News Editor-in-Chief

SECRETARY TREASURER'S

report

Mike Jones
Secretary-Treasurer



Past months seem to have been bombarded by one Secretariat staffing crisis after another, with rather short periods of calm before we are impacted by the next one. Recent shocks included the resignation of Elena Axelrod. In late November Elena headed to New York as her father became severely ill and then passed away, and her mother was hospitalised after a serious fall. Elena did her utmost to ensure that Jaclyn had as much information as possible as these family pressures built. An icon of reliable service for 21 years, initially funded by ISTM to work with CDC, Elena transferred her work directly to ISTM in 2012. We are deeply grateful to her and wish her well as her life now changes direction. Whitney is supervising the search for her replacement. As announced to the membership in December family health issues forced Whitney to take leave of absence in early December, placing huge additional responsibility on LaVelle and Jaclyn. For LaVelle this was co-incident with the launch of the new website with inevitable snags to fix, and for Jaclyn it was co-incident with Elena's leave of absence. Both LaVelle and Jaclyn deserve our warmest thanks for keeping Secretariat functions on track, but it has been very tough for both of them.

Outgoing officers are not involved in the selection process for their replacement and the appointment of the next Secretary Treasurer (ST) was no exception, but I know that the search for a new ST was conducted with great care and integrity. A notice to ISTM members about the appointment of Brian Stowe, from Ottawa in Canada, has already been posted and I add my warmest welcome and congratulations to him. I am particularly pleased that he brings the strengths and experience of a pharmacist into this role and to the Executive Board as an ex officio non-voting Board member. Brian now commences detailed shadowing and becomes ST at CISTM19 in May next year.

The draft audit conducted by Dan Soles and his colleagues at Fulton and Kozak has been submitted and the loss I was expecting for 2022-23 was not as large as I feared for CISTM19. Since return to fulltime work at the end of February Whitney has reviewed receipts for sponsorship and secured payment for a missing invoice which has been incorporated into the audit.

The first Scientific Program Committee (SPC) for CISTM19, chaired by Eric Caumes and Colleen Lau, took place in New Orleans March 20th to 22nd and a great program is

under construction. The Executive Board in the same hotel followed immediately, facilitating economies on accommodation and flight costs. Arriving ten days earlier, Elizabeth and I were able to experience the diversity and rich heritage of this wonderful part of the USA which I hope others will share, if they have time, in May 2025. A highlight was a swamp tour on the Pearl River where we saw alligators, raccoons and a rich variety of bird life.

What lies ahead? NECTM9 in Copenhagen in May, the Regional CISTM in Rio de Janeiro in August, and APTHC in Kathmandu for several ISTM speakers in September. We expect the second SPC for CISTM19 to take place in the Far East, offering venue and overall flight cost reduction in January 2025. I continue to applaud the work of the Development and Planning Committee chaired by former President Lin Chen, which has secured generous sponsorship for important aspects of ISTM's program over past months.

Warm greetings to all,

Mike Jones
Secretary-Treasurer

In the Southeastern United States, brightly colored azaleas, forsythia and tulips are popping up around every corner, and the gentle hum of cicadas have begun to fill the evening air. A new season is upon us and there are exciting things in the year ahead for ISTM.

As with most non-conference years, our society will be participating in several attractive conferences this year. We hope you will join us:

- 8th Regional Conference of the International Society of Travel Medicine RCIST8 in partnership with Sociedade de Infectiologia do Estado do Rio de Janeiro SIERJ and Sociedad Latinoamericana de Medicina del Viajero SLAMVI at IX Infecto Rio, 7-9 August 2024 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- 9th Northern European Conference on Travel Medicine NECTM9, 22-24 May 2024 in Copenhagen, Denmark
- 14th Asia Pacific Travel Health Society Conference APTHC, 18-21 September 2024, Kathmandu, Nepal

- 7th Southern Cross Australasian Travel and Tropical Medicine Conference, 27-29 September in Brisbane, Australia

Read more about these conferences and registration on the ISTM website [here](#).

In March ISTM's Oversight Committee, Scientific Program Committee and Executive Board met in New Orleans, Louisiana at the 19 Conference of the International Society of Travel Medicine CISTM19 venue – the Hilton Riverside hotel. Located in the heart of New Orleans, the hotel features two outdoor pools, indoor tennis courts, and is located steps away from the Riverwalk on the Mississippi River, outlet shops, and a stroll to Jackson Square the French Quarter. We had a week of productive meetings and explored all the wonder that the city has to offer our attendees and speakers. Our team aims to open the conference registration by the end of May.

It is with regret that I share that ISTM Finance Manager, Elena Axelrod's last day at ISTM was in March after 21 years of service. When Elena first began working at ISTM she worked exclusively with the GeoSentinel Project. Over the years her primary focus became Finance and Bookkeeping, but she still worked with GeoSentinel in a limited capacity. ISTM work highlights include the volunteers and staff that she worked with and traveling.

We hope to see you at upcoming conference events this year and are excited to share more details about CISTM19 in the coming weeks.

Regards,

Whitney Alexander
ISTM Interim Executive Director





ISTM Podcast Series

“TRAVEL UNRAVELLED”

Launching
SOON!

We are thrilled to announce the upcoming publication of our inaugural ISTM podcast *Travel Unravalled*. This will be an annual six-part series in 2024 and 2025, made possible through the continued efforts of the ISTM Professional Education Committee.

Join us as we explore latest development, challenges, and innovations in travel medicine.

Anne McCarthy (Canada) and Albie de Frey (South Africa) host the series with podcast director Aisha Khatib (Canada). These podcasts are made possible from a generous IAMAT (International Association for Medical Assistance to Travellers; www.iamat.org) grant and the support of ISTM.

All podcasts will be available free of charge and published on the ISTM and IAMAT websites as well as on popular podcast platforms such as Spotify, Apple, and YouTube. They will be available in audio and video (with subtitles) formats, designed for ease of use, for example, in travel medicine clinic waiting rooms.

EPISODE 1:

The Battle of the Buzz, What to Know About Malaria.

Future topics being considered include Rabies, History of Travel Medicine, Dangers of Travel (including risks of schistosomiasis, toxins, and envenomations), Migration, Women in Travel Medicine, Types of Tourism. Or any other requested by the members?

The end of each podcast will feature a “JTM Pearls” section where a member from the Journal of Travel Medicine will highlight a Clinical Pearls or interesting recent Journal article.

We are so excited to be launching this series and hope that you enjoy it, maybe learn something, and share it with your travelers.

Anne McCarthy, Albie DeFrey, Aisha Khatib



Photo credit: Albie De Frey





GeoSentinel

GeoSentinel has started the year running, with a variety of projects published or under review. Publications included a retrospective review of intestinal protozoal infections led by Thomas Weitzel (CHL), a review of travel-related chikungunya infections led by Rachel Bierbrier (MTL), and a perspective on machine learning to enhance the surveillance capabilities of our network, led by Stan Heidema and our collaborators from the Eindhoven University of Technology in the Netherlands, in the January 2024 edition of JTM. A long-awaited review of infections in refugees, immigrants, and migrants led by Elizabeth Barnett (BOS) was published in the November-December 2023 issue of *Travel Medicine and Infectious Disease*.

In addition, GeoSentinel antimicrobial resistance (AMR) surveillance activities conducted over the last 7 years have resulted in 3 manuscripts, with the first already submitted. AMR is clearly an area where we believe we can make important contributions to our understanding of the epidemiology of travel-related bacterial infections.

We are also taking advantage of the extensive expertise in travel and tropical medicine within our network to provide guidance for questions where there may not be adequate data to generate true evidence-based recommendations. The first such project is a Delphi survey led by Francesca Tamarozzi (NGR), with the goal of standardizing the clinical definitions describing the phases of schistosomiasis infection. The resulting manuscript was accepted for publication in *Lancet Infectious Diseases*. This project should create a standard framework for observational and interventional studies in the future, and demonstrates the leadership of our Network members in this area. Ralph Huits led two timely editorial/perspective pieces in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* looking at malaria transmission within the United States. A third submission looking at the recent global expansion of dengue outbreaks and endemic transmission is under review.

We have had a number of personnel changes, both at the GeoSentinel OPI and at the CDC Travelers' Health Branch and the Division of Global

Migration Health. As mentioned in the last newsletter, our CDC project officer, Kristina Angelo, has moved on to a new post within the CDC and will be sorely missed. Dan Payne, who has now been named acting branch chief for the Travelers' Health Branch at the CDC, briefly assumed her work and we are now very happy to welcome a new project officer, Kevin O'Laughlin (picture attached). Attendees at our next annual network meeting in Copenhagen or the Northern European Conference on Travel Medicine (NECTM) meeting immediately prior will have the opportunity to meet Kevin in person. Finally, Steph Berntson, a part-time administrative assistant for the network, unfortunately had to leave us, and we will try to fill this position again in the very near future.

Meanwhile, GeoSentinel itself continues to recruit new sites and expand existing sites. We are in the final stages of reactivating our site in Singapore which had gone dormant for technical reasons for the past few years. We are also expanding our reach into eastern Europe with a new site in Prague. Our sites in New

Orleans, Minneapolis, and Seoul have all added important satellite clinics to their site.

Many of us will be at NECTM in Copenhagen in May. Please come to say hello! We are looking forward to discussing travel and tropical medicine with our colleagues, and will endeavor to answer any questions you may have about the GeoSentinel Network.



Michael Libman



Kevin O'Laughlin

GeoSentinel Publications

January-March 2024

[From GeoSentinel data to epidemiological insights: a multidisciplinary effort towards artificial intelligence-supported detection of infectious disease outbreaks.](#)

Heidema S, Stoepker IV, Flaherty G, Angelo KM, Post RAJ, Miller C, Libman M, Hamer DH, van den Heuvel ER, Huits R. *J Travel Med.* 2024 Jan 17;taae013. doi: 10.1093/jtm/taae013.

[Chikungunya infection in returned travellers: results from the geosentinel network, 2005-2020](#)

Bierbrier R, Javelle E, Norman FF, Chen LH, Bottieau E, Schwartz E, Leder K, Angelo KM, Stoney RJ, Libman M, Hamer DH, Huits R, Connor BA, Simon F, Barkati S; GeoSentinel Network. *J Travel Med.* 2024 Mar 1;31(2):taae005. doi: 10.1093/jtm/taae005.



SAVE THE DATE!

www.nectm9.com



NECTM9

Northern European
Conference on Travel Medicine
Denmark, Copenhagen, May 22nd-24th, 2024



Professional Groups

NURSING

It has been a busy start to 2024 for the NPG with several projects in progress.

In late 2023 the NPG members were sent a link to a survey requesting feedback on how the NPG steering council can further support members. Thank you for your time in completing this survey. In summary the findings were,

- Increased communication with the members
- Help and support more nurses to get onto ISTM committees
- Educational webinars (yellow fever, starting a travel clinic, a comprehensive travel consultation, malaria, dengue, altitude, climate change and travel, new vaccinations, VFR travellers, paediatric travellers, protocols, and policies for nurses – working to their full scope)

- Clinical resources
- Newsletters
- Online practical learning aimed at nurses
- Support for expanding the role of nurses
- ISTM examination support
- Monthly travel medicine case studies to discuss.

As a committee, we have listened and taken on board your requests.

We are working with the ISTM Professional Education Committee, and a nurse led Yellow Fever Webinar is planned. Date and time of this webinar will be advertised in the next few months. Hopefully, this will lead to further webinars on the requested topics.

A case study will be posted every 2 months via the ISTM Discussion

Board, and I would encourage members to respond and discuss.

We are currently working with Jane Chiodini to provide further assistance for NPG members. This will include extensive resources and assistance with preparing for the ISTM examination. More details to follow in the next few months.

The NPG Steering Council wishes you the very best for 2024, full of travel and happiness.

Catherine Keil, *Chair*
Nursing Professional Group



TRAVEL MEDICINE AND REVIEW COURSE

Together with the organizing committee, I am thrilled to announce that we had an extremely successful Travel Medicine Review and Update Course. We had 315 registrants that spanned 32 countries and five continents.

There were compelling sessions on vectors of disease, malaria chemoprophylaxis, altitude, pediatrics, pregnant travel, complex travelers, VFRs, carrying medications while traveling, fever in returning travelers, and adventure medicine.

Two panel-based live sessions occurred. One discussed controversies in yellow fever vaccine with representatives from Brazil, Netherlands, South Africa, Canada, and US. A second live panel tackled malaria chemoprophylaxis and the panel had representation from South Africa, Australia, Spain, United Kingdom and United States of America. The cases posed in both sessions were fascinating and provided insights into country decisions on specific travel medicine practices.

We pivoted from the COVID focus of that past three years and included several new topics. An update from CDC on new aspects and information in the Yellow Book provided critical updates on malaria, medical tourism and relevant travel topics.

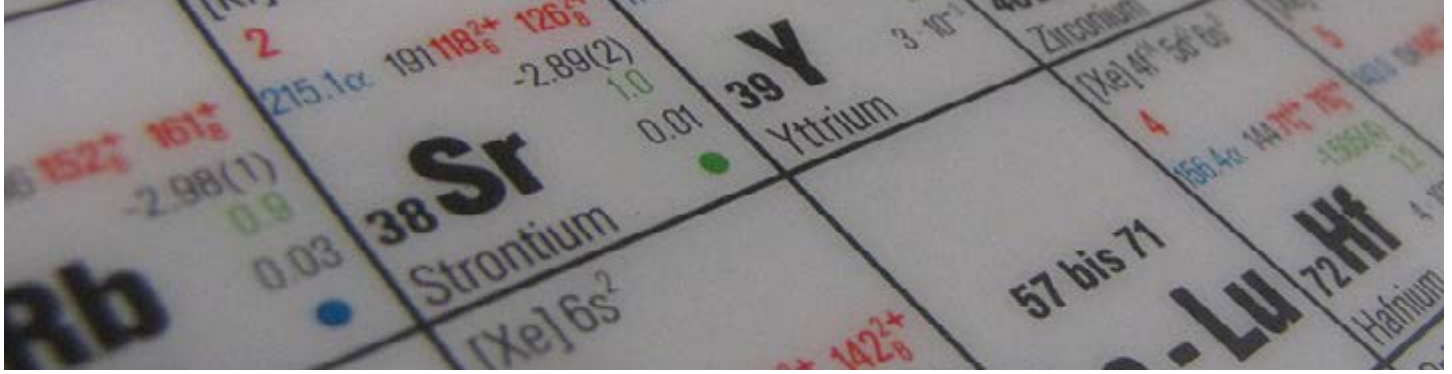
Talks on travel dermatology, rabies, travelers with immune compromise and travelers' diarrhea provided ample questions taken during live Q&A sessions.

Thanks to the support of the PEC and ISTM Executive Board, a new conference hosting platform was used and provided a user-friendly experience for attendees. Grant supported scholarships are still available for attendees from LMICs, students and trainees.

It was a great effort made successful by a dedicated organizing committee (Kim Gray, Drs. Yen Bui, Lin Chen and Henry Wu) and support from all of the ISTM staff. We look forward to feedback on future topics and further educational opportunities.

Sheila Mackell,
*Chair Travel Medicine
and Review Course*





PHARMACIST

The Pharmacist Professional Group (PPG) is excited to announce the adoption of two new awards to be presented to pharmacist members of ISTM next year at CISTM19 in New Orleans.

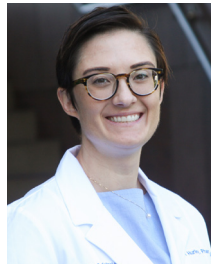
Pharmacy is a small profession worldwide, but one whose stamp on the field of travel health and medicine continues to grow. Pharmacists are involved in patient care, including full scope preventative practice in many countries, as well as research and other activities related to travel health and medicine. The PPG awards aim to recognize notable individuals whose past achievements and present work contribute to improving the health of travelers and communities.

The Excellence and Achievement in Travel Health Award will honor an individual whose body of work has resulted in a long-term contribution to travel health pharmacy. The Outstanding New Travel Health Practitioner Award will recognize an exceptional colleague who has joined the travel health field more recently, demonstrated either by obtaining the CTH designation within the last five years or receiving a terminal degree within the last 10 years. Travel health pharmacist researchers and pharmacists who provide direct patient care in travel health are eligible for both awards and may be nominated by any ISTM member or self.

As we approach the midpoint between CISTM meetings, we ask that all members please consider any

extraordinary pharmacist colleagues who may be candidates for these awards. Look out for additional details which will be circulated in early 2025 ahead of the nomination process.

Keri Hurley-Kim, *Chair Pharmacist Professional Group*



PRIMARY TRAVEL DOCTOR

In early December 2023, the ISTM Executive Board approved the creation of the Primary Travel Doctor Professional Group following informal discussions during CISTM18 in Basel, Switzerland in May 2023, and a formal presentation to the Executive Board in September 2023. Nearly 60 ISTM physicians signed up to be founding members, and an interim Steering Council has been formed until the professional group conducts a formal election in conjunction with CISTM19 in New Orleans in May 2025. The new professional group's charter has been approved by the Executive Board.

While interest groups focus on the needs of specific travel client populations, professional groups focus on the needs of various types of travel health providers. The Primary

Travel Doctor group will support practice in primary travel medicine among community-based physicians. The three main functions include 1) research and knowledge translation, 2) networking, peer support and outreach, and 3) professional development specific to the unique style of primary travel medicine practice, characterized by a continuum of care from pre-travel clinical prevention to post-travel medical care.

The interim Steering Council leading up to our first formal election at CISTM19 is as follows:

Chair:
John Byron
(New Zealand)

Co-Chair:
Stacey Ler
(Australia)

Treasurer:
Parmjit Sohal
(Canada)

Secretary:
Deb Mills (Australia)

Social Media: Aisha Husain (Canada)

Continuity:
Rudy Zimmer (Canada) - founder

Research:
Jenny Visser (New Zealand)

Any physician interested in learning more about this new professional group may contact primarytraveldoctor@gmail.com.

Rudy Zimmer



Interest Groups

MILITARY TRAVEL

Dear colleagues,

As you all know, CISTM19 will be held in New Orleans, USA, 11-15 May 2025 and in addition to a military topic symposium, the Military Travel group of interest will organize a 3h long Pre-Congress Course broken down into several 15-20 min presentations. So please feel free to reach out to me at olivier.aoun@gmail.com if you have any military-related topic and/or speaker in mind. As ISTM will not be able to cover the transportation fees of the Pre-Congress Course speakers, virtual presentations as well as local speakers are encouraged.

Looking forward to hearing from you!

Olivier Aoun
Military Travel Group *Chair*



RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

We hope that you had a good start to 2024 and have some trips or events to look forward to this year.

A concise information sheet about Responsible Travel ideas for healthcare professionals to email travelers is something we are working on. This may be useful to have on the

ISTM website to allow it to be easily accessible.

Any thoughts on what you may like to have included in this would be very welcome.

We are always open to your ideas and suggestions.

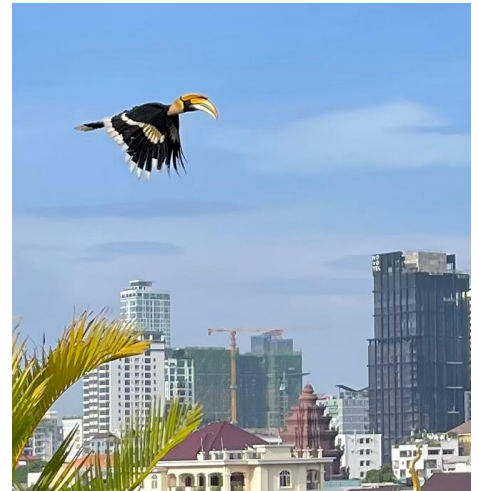
We prepared an infographic some time ago which we are waiting to have authorized so that we can share it with others.

LaVelle kindly sent out an email asking members to consider joining the Steering Group of the Responsible Travel Group. Is this something you may be interested in, or do you have a friend or colleague who may consider joining?

There is an enormous amount of scope in this field, and we all have a part to play to help educate our travelers, friends and colleagues to take care of each other and of our precious planet.

The photos show on one hand how nature can survive in urban environments (Greater Hornbill in flight over Phnom Penh) and how irresponsible some travelers can be!

Anne Maclean, *Chair*
Responsible Travel Group



STUDENT TRAVEL ABROAD

We have the following updates and resources from our group that we hope anyone involved in providing Travel Health services to students might find helpful. We also warmly invite your participation in our Interest Group! Please contact us with any questions – we'd love to welcome you into our group!

With all best wishes,

Julie Richards
(julier2@stanford.edu)

Catherine Ebelke
(cathebelkepa@gmail.com)

- Our long-anticipated article the STA team worked on in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention under the leadership of Kristina Angelo and Sarah Kohl is coming out in April. There are some key findings those of you working with student travelers will likely find helpful, especially in the arena of mental health and travel. Once the article is released, we will offer a webinar featuring our CDC collaborator Kristina Angelo, who will share our findings.

Kristina M. Angelo, Kaitlyn Ciampaglio, Julie Richards, Anjali Silva, Catherine Ebelke, Gerard T. Flaherty, Gary Brunette, Sarah Kohl (2024). Travel Health-related Preparation Practices of Institutes of Higher Education and the Occurrence of Health-related Events among Undergraduate Students Studying Abroad. Frontiers the Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad

- Below is an article that reviews the nuts and bolts of actually implementing changes in a student health clinic to improve the uptake of vaccines. We noted dramatic improvements by tweaking a few of our processes. For more details on that, feel free to contact me at julier2@stanford.edu, I'm happy to share specifics.

Richards J, Brunacini K, Stoll N, Tepper R. Implementing Effective Care in a University Population Based on National Vaccination Recommendations (2024). American Journal of Medical Quality. 2024;39(1): 42-49. doi: 10.1097/JMQ.000000000000162.

https://journals.lww.com/ajmqonline/abstract/2024/01000/implementing_effective_care_in_a_university.6.aspx

- A Guide to Travel Health Practices at Institutions of Higher Education has been published by the American College Health Foundation (authors include ISTM members Gail Rosselot and Catherine Ebelke) which those of you working in Student Health may find useful. The free download including multiple appendices, checklists and handouts can be found here: ACHF Guide to International Travel Practices at IHEs.
- ISTM Fellows Jane Chiodini and Gail Rosselot have created a CE free program on the new US rabies guidelines.

In the May 2022 MMWR, ACIP issued modified recommendations for the use of rabies vaccine. The pre-exposure series has now been changed from 3 to 2 doses on a 0, 7-day schedule. (MMWR May 6, 2022 www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/wr/mm7118a2.htm.) With this reduced dosing schedule, more travelers can potentially benefit from rabies vaccination. ATHNA now offers a FREE and On-Demand Educational Activity. <https://athna.clcmoodle.org/>

Julie Richards and Catherine Ebelke, Co-Chairs



MIGRANT AND REFUGEE HEALTH

One of the primary aims of the Migrant and Refugee Health Interest Group is to provide healthcare providers with the knowledge and skills needed to deliver culturally sensitive and patient-centered care. This includes understanding the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and healthcare needs of migrant and refugee communities, as well as the impact of migration on health outcomes. The Migrant and Refugee Health Interest Group has been involved in the development of a new migrant health course within the McGill summer institute in global health: **Providing Health Care to Refugee, Immigrant and Migrant populations.** The course will be hybrid and live in Montreal, Canada to both the in-person and online participants and will be held from June 12 to June 14, 2024. The curriculum of this program offers a comprehensive overview of the approach and management of priority healthcare issues encountered by refugee, immigrant, and migrant communities. Delving into both clinical and public health dimensions, it will cover prevalent infectious and non-communicable diseases among these groups, alongside the barriers and facilitators of healthcare access. Additionally, it will underscore the significance of integrating culturally sensitive care while showcasing successful regional initiatives and their strategies. The Migrant and Refugee Health Interest Group, along with the course co-directors Dr. Christina Greenaway, Dr. Sapha Barkati, and Dr. Lavanya Narasiah, express their gratitude to ISTM for their financial support, enabling the invitation of experts from diverse regions to share invaluable experience and expertise.

You can register for the course here: <https://www.mcgill.ca/summerinstitute-globalhealth/courses/institute-infectious-diseases-and-global-health/rimhealth>

In addition, the Migrant Health Interest group is planning a webinar on an important group of international travellers, the Visiting friends and relatives (VFR) travellers, who are at increased risk for several infectious diseases and travel related conditions. For CISTM19, we have submitted a proposal for a symposium delving into mental health and resilience of refugees aiming to explore the post-migration factors impacting the mental health of refugee populations. Finally, pertinent guidelines and informational resources on migrant health will soon be accessible via our website.

Please consider applying for the steering committee of the migrant and refugee health interest group. Council members meet periodically on zoom to discuss new ideas and projects.

The current members of the group are:

Sapha Barkati, Canada

Federico Gobbi, Italy

Stefan Hagmann, United States of America

Anita Heywood, Australia

Godwin T. Igodo, United Kingdom

Susan Kuhn, Canada

With warmest regards,

Sapha Barkati, *Chair*
Migrant and Refugee Health



PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH OF TRAVELERS (PHoT)

Closing the Gap: PHoT's Commitment to Addressing Mental Health

Screening in Travel Medicine

The Psychological Health of Travelers interest group (PHoT) is committed to proactively addressing the gaps in academic literature and current travel medicine practice of mental health screening.

The first phase of addressing this gap has been reflected in the travel medicine literature by PHoT committee members Dr. Peter Felkai, former PHoT Chair Tullia Marcolongo, former PHoT Chair Dr. Thomas Valk, and former PHoT committee member Dr. Marius Van Aswegen by elucidating both the risks of mental health decompensation during travel and the importance of patient screening and education, culminating in the development of the first Mental Health Checklist (<https://www.patmf.org/travel-mental-health>).

In 2023, PHoT continued to build momentum by highlighting the Mental Health Checklist as a screening tool at the CISTM18 symposium, garnering academic interest and guidance on practical application from attendees. To capture this interest, a recent evaluation of QR code access to the Mental Health Checklist has resulted in over 95 hits from the travel medicine community since PHoT Chair Maureen MacConnell's PMHNP-BC and Dr. Yeshashwork Kibour's PhD presentation in Basel, Switzerland, in May 2023.

This outpouring of interest from the ISTM community has spurred PHoT's steadfast commitment to validating the Mental Health Screening Tool and creating opportunities for thought partnership in the practical application of mental health screening.

PHoT welcomes both academic and organizational partnerships to validate the Mental Health Checklist.

Future efforts will also be directed toward broadening learning opportunities for travel mental health for the ISTM Conference of 2025, adding mental health services into the ISTM Clinic Directory to better assist travel medicine practitioners interested in collaborating with travel mental health specialists, and making further revisions to the PHoT working library of mental health in travel articles of note.

Maureen MacConnell, *Chair*
Psychological Health of Travelers



COMMITTEES



ISTM EXAM COMMITTEE

A short update on the CTH related events in 2024.

- The online exam end of January was taken by 184 candidates. At the time of writing, the results are still pending.
- We are sorry to record that registrations did not meet financial viability criteria for an in-person exam in Toronto, Canada, planned for 12th April, despite being held the day prior to a conference for pharmacists. All those who wished to do so, transferred to an on-line exam held on 12th April, for which 41 candidates were registered.
- On the 6 and 7th of September the committee will meet for a review of new questions (still to be written) and of flagged questions from the last exams. As usual we expect it to be an intense and busy 2 days of work, but a joy also to see the committee members again.
- On the 17th September an in person exam will take place in Kathmandu Nepal, just before the APTHS congress
- We plan a revision of the Body of Knowledge, possibly end of 2024 or beginning of 2025.

Dr Pierre Landry, *Chair*
ISTM Exam Committee



PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE (PEC)

There are exciting updates in this newsletter, and the launch of our podcast series. The webinars continue to be popular, with our session on pilgrimages drawing over 350 registrants. We're aiming to offer a diversity of topics, so members can expect webinars on tick-borne diseases, chikungunya, rabies, and a special nurse-led session on yellow fever coming in 2024.

I'm grateful for the continued support we have received from ISTM Leadership, the Secretariat, our sponsors, and the active engagement of our experts and ISTM membership.

Yen-Giang Bui, *Chair*
Professional Education Committee



THE PUBLICATIONS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (POC)

It's well known that we Brits like to talk about the weather but usually with good reason. Here we are in a new year and in the United Kingdom the rain has been relentless for weeks. For us with four major river networks nearby, local flooding has been extensive, resulting in towns and villages cut off and homes flooded. Sadly, lives were lost. Why is that of interest to the ISTM community? Apart from the effect on homes and families, when travel and transport is disrupted, everything, including tourism grinds to a halt. We are seeing more extreme weather events globally where the effect is magnified in countries heavily dependent on tourism and less able to cope with such major events.

The new ISTM Executive Board has hit the ground running. In his end of year report in Travel Medicine News (TMN) the President, Professor Gerard Flaherty, gave an account of his vision for the Society emphasising that it would not be "business as usual". See [TMN Dec 2023](#). Work is already underway on reviewing many of the existing ISTM documents and the Publications Oversight Committee (POC) stands ready to contribute when invited. The committee continues to review documents for the new website launched in December. This process is ongoing as the Digital Communications Committee (DCC) continue their work on updating the content so please be patient. Preparation is also underway for CISTM19 in New Orleans 2025. As



it develops, TMN will carry news of this event and others related to Travel Medicine.

The Executive Officers, committees, professional and special interest groups are invited to submit an update on their activities and future plans for each edition of TMN to keep members abreast of progress. The ISTM has a diverse membership, populating these bodies. Representation and/or attendance at the numerous upcoming travel medicine events is an excellent way to share the work of the Society. Find a calendar of events here: [Travel Medicine Conferences 2024/2025/2026 \(conferenceindex.org\)](https://www.conferenceindex.org). The ISTM has continued involvement in the Northern European Conference on Travel Medicine (NECTM) with NECTM9 scheduled for Copenhagen Denmark, 22-24 May 2024. The exciting scientific programme includes speaker Professor Flaherty. Everyone is welcome in this beautiful city. [NECTM9 \(mkon.nu\)](https://www.mkon.nu)

The Journal of Travel Medicine (JTM) continues to thrive. Editor-in-Chief, Annelies Wilder Smith, together with her supporting editors and editorial board, review and select excellent manuscripts for publication, as

demonstrated by the *JTM* impact factor. The world of travel medicine has no shortage of topics to address so check details on the website. Thank you to Annelies and her team.

Travel Medicine News (TMN) is compiled by the Editor in Chief (EiC) Nancy Pietroski and assistant Editor Luis Furuya Kanamori who do a great job in communicating Society news to ISTM members. TMN can also be useful to share “local” news with the wider community. Information is also shared through discussions on the TravelMed Discussion Board (efficiently managed by Nancy), with the possibility of an interesting topic being selected for review by an ISTM expert. The POC feels that this resource is underutilised, and we encourage members to access and engage more with the publication. We can’t do it without you. Nancy and Luis spend a great deal of their time making TMN readable and engaging but if we don’t know what’s happening in your area of practice or country or which members have been honoured then we can’t share it. A PDF printable version is posted online three times a year. We understand that contributors are busy people, but the POC welcomes suggestions on

how we can improve TMN and the Discussion Board. If you attended a travel medicine conference, why not consider writing a wee report and sharing it with the rest of us? It needn’t be long or only about the scientific programme, other experiences matter too, including the rain.

The POC members continue to liaise with the wider Society and my thanks go to all of them for their support, not only to me but also to you the members. You can find us on the website so please consider joining us. Publications Oversight Committee — International Society of Travel Medicine ([istm.org](https://www.istm.org))

Have a good Summer and wherever your travels take you, don’t forget your wellies!

Sandra Grieve, *Chair*
Publications Oversight Committee



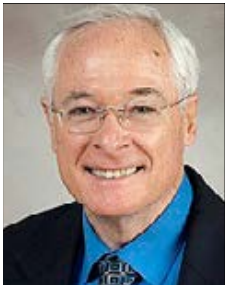
SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS COMMITTEE

The SRC reminds all qualified ISTM members to apply for fellow status. The criteria are listed on the website. Most notably, it is important for any applicant to document how she or he has served ISTM. After all, this is an ISTM award.

The SRC is currently engaged in defining with more granularity how we should generate awards and what limitation should be placed on the process. Reviewing the process has been prompted in part by the untimely death of our president Immediate Past President Peter Leggat. While we wish to honor him and will do so, we wish not to set precedents that might be a burden (financial or otherwise) on ISTM in the future.

Respectfully submitted.

Charlie Ericsson



LIAISON COMMITTEE

Dear ISTM Members,

The ISTM Liaison Committee (LiCom) is in charge of assuring a good relationship with various organizations worldwide.

Membership in the committee is by invitation of individuals with particularly good connections; every single member must be confirmed by the Executive Board. As there have been some alterations since the CISTM18, we publish here an updated list:

Liaison

Chair: Robert Steffen, Switzerland — WHO Liaison

Co-Chair: Phyllis Kozarsky, United States of America — US CDC Liaison

Members

Gerard Flaherty, Ireland — Northern European Conference of Travel Medicine (NECTM) Liaison

Jenny Visser, New Zealand — Asia-Pacific Travel Health Society (APTHS) Liaison

Colleen Lau, Australia — Liaison to various travel medicine organizations in China

Miguel Cabada, United States of America and Peru — South America Liaison, particularly with Sociedad Latinoamericana de Medicina del Viajero (SLAMVI)

Salim Parker, South Africa — South African Society of Travel Medicine (SASTM) and Pan African Travel Medicine Liaison (PATMF)

Lin Chen, United States of America — Industry Liaison

Elizabeth Barnett, United States of America — US ACIP Liaison

If any member has queries or suggestions, please contact:

robert.steffen@uzh.ch

Looking forward to meeting you all in New Orleans.

Robert Steffen



ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON IMMUNIZATION PRACTICES (ACIP)

Meetings of the US Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) have returned to the pre-COVID schedule of three meetings per year. The recent meeting, held February 28-29, featured a vote on the Pfizer live virus chikungunya vaccine, with the following recommendations approved:

Recommendations for use of chikungunya vaccine among travelers:

ACIP recommends chikungunya vaccine for persons aged ≥ 18 years traveling to a country or territory where there is a chikungunya outbreak.

In addition, chikungunya vaccine may be considered for the following persons traveling to a country or territory without an outbreak but with evidence of chikungunya virus transmission among humans within the last 5 years:

- Persons aged >65 years, particularly those with underlying medical conditions, who are likely to have at least moderate exposure* to mosquitoes, OR
- Persons staying for a cumulative period of 6 months or more

*Moderate exposure could include travelers who might have at least 2 weeks (cumulative) of exposure to mosquitoes in indoor or outdoor settings

Use of chikungunya vaccine for pregnant or breastfeeding travelers was also discussed with the following information presented.

Pregnancy: Data are insufficient to determine whether there are safety risks of vaccine during pregnancy because pregnant women were excluded from the clinical trials.

Pregnancy is a precaution for vaccination with the live attenuated chikungunya vaccine. In general, vaccination should be deferred until after delivery. However, when the risk of infection is high and exposure cannot be avoided (e.g., with travel that cannot be postponed to an area with a known outbreak) a health care provider should discuss with a pregnant person the potential risks of chikungunya virus infection and the potential benefits and risks of vaccination so that vaccination can be considered.

Breast feeding: No data are available about whether chikungunya vaccine virus is excreted in breast milk, or whether antibodies to vaccine virus are present in breast milk. In the absence of data, breastfeeding is a precaution for vaccination. When the risk of infection is high (e.g., during an outbreak) and exposure cannot be avoided, a health care provider should discuss with a breastfeeding individual the developmental and health benefits of breastfeeding for the infant, the risks of chikungunya virus infection, and the potential benefits and risks of vaccination, and offer the vaccine to the breastfeeding person. At the current time, the data are insufficient to make a recommendation to defer breastfeeding for any period after vaccination.

Susan Hills, long-time ISTM member and flavivirus vaccine expert, expertly led the Chikungunya Vaccine Working Group. Detailed recommendations for use of chikungunya vaccine will be published soon in the MMWR.

Other recent ACIP votes of relevance to travelers include:

Availability of meningococcal ABCWY vaccine (Pfizer) for use when both Meningococcal ACWY and Meningococcal B vaccines are indicated.

Recommendation for a 2-dose series of Mpox vaccine (JYNNEOS) for those 18 years of age and older at risk for mpox.

Other topics of discussion (without specific votes) of relevance to travel have included:

Polio vaccines: additional vaccination of adults and immunocompromised individuals; whether fractional doses would meet US polio vaccination requirements; consideration of criteria under which novel oral polio virus type 2 (nOPV2) might be used.

Dengue vaccine: The Takeda vaccine (TAK-003) was discussed in the February and June 2023 meetings but further discussion was suspended following withdrawal of the application for approval to the FDA to gather additional data.

ACIP meetings are open for the public to view on zoom with agendas listed on the ACIP website (<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/index.html>) in advance of the meetings. The next meeting is scheduled for June 26-28, 2024.

Elizabeth Barnett, US ACIP Liaison



Bridging China and the World: Advancing International Collaboration in Travel Medicine

Yan Zhu^{1,2}, Jun Fang³, Luis Furuya Kanamori², Colleen Lau²

¹ Zhuhai International Travel Healthcare Center of China Customs, China

² The University of Queensland, Australia

³ International Travel Health Association, China

China International Travel Health Association (CITHA; <http://www.itha.org.cn/>) is a non-profit organization committed to advancing the

development of international travel health in China. CITHA has successfully organised and run >10 national travel health workshops, including training 21 Chinese travel medicine practitioners who received the ISTM Certification of Travel Health (CTH®).

Dr Yan Zhu is a medical doctor and quarantine officer in China Customs. Dr Zhu is the recipient of a China Scholarship Council Fellowship to conduct travel medicine research at the University of Queensland (UQ) under the supervision of Prof Colleen Lau and Dr Luis Furuya Kanamori. Dr Zhu has been instrumental at establishing links between UQ and CITHA.

On January 30th, 2024, CITHA hosted an online seminar for travel medicine practitioners across China. The seminar was presented by the UQ team, Prof Colleen Lau (China Liaison Officer of ISTM) and Dr Luis Furuya Kanamori (Chair of the ISTM Research Awards Committee) and attracted >110 travel medicine physicians and nurses from 18 provinces in China.

During the seminar, Prof Lau provided an overview of international travel medicine societies (e.g., ISTM, The Asia Pacific Travel Health Society [APTHS], The Australasian College of Tropical Medicine [ACTM]) and encouraged Chinese travel medicine practitioners to actively engage in international travel medicine conferences (e.g., CISTM19, 14th Asia Pacific Travel Health Conference [APTHC], 7th Southern Cross Australasian Travel and Tropical Medicine Conference [SCTMC]), as well as in academic and training activities (e.g., CTH® exam, and ISTM Travel Medicine Review and Update Course). Dr Furuya Kanamori presented on the fruitful collaboration between UQ and the Travel Medicine Alliance (TMA). He talked about the processes to effectively convert clinical questions into research projects in a primary care setting and disseminate research findings through peer-reviewed publications.

This seminar marked the first nationwide travel medicine activity held in China

since 2019. CITHA looks forward to organizing a series of seminars on travel medicine and plans to invite more international travel medicine experts to present in future seminars, thereby promoting the development of travel medicine in China.

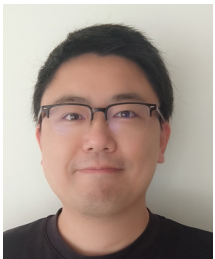
CITHA has committed resources for young Chinese travel medicine clinicians/researchers to facilitate their participation in international activities, and share China's latest developments in travel medicine. CITHA plans to organise the first-ever participation of Chinese pharmaceutical companies at CISTM19 to showcase Chinese products to the international community, such as hepatitis E vaccines, multiplex PCR reagents for multiple tropical diseases, and Chinese travel medical kits. CITHA also looks forward to introducing high-quality international products into China through its newly established travel medicine customer service network to provide product support to international travelers.



Colleen Lau



Luis Furuya Kanamori



Yan Zhu



Jun Fang

DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

The DPC is happy to report that we have received a number of generous educational or research grants from organizations and more have been promised for ISTM's upcoming programs. We are grateful to our supporters including Bavarian Nordic, GeoSentinel Foundation, International Association for Medical Assistance to Travelers (IAMAT), Pfizer, Sanofi, Takeda, and Valneva. The DPC members continue to pursue funding and sponsorship for 2024 programs, and to develop strategies for long-term partnerships.

We appreciate ISTM members' suggestions, so please drop us a line if you have contact information for potential partners who are interested in and support the Mission of ISTM.

- Lin H. Chen (USA) – *Chair*
- Lisa Danzig (USA) – *Co-Chair*
- Eric Caumes (France)
- Jan Fehr (Switzerland) – *ex officio*
- Jeff Goad (USA)
- Karin Leder (Australia)
- Francesca Norman (Spain)
- Robert Steffen (Switzerland)
- Jaclyn Simon – *ex officio*
- Whitney Alexander – *ex officio*
- Mike Jones – *ex officio*

Respectfully submitted,

Lin H. Chen





Please see report in the next issue of Travel Medicine News.

Yours sincerely,

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

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