



20th ISPAD Science School for Physicians Report

May 2 to May 6, 2021, virtual by Dr Chizo Agwu (Convener)

The 20th ISPAD Science School for physicians was unique as it was the first one to be virtual rather than in-person. After getting over the disappointment that we could not hold it at the historic Shakespearean market town of Stratford-Upon-Avon in UK, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the LOC and I sought to create the ambience of a virtual community whilst maintaining a high scientific content.

There were 20 fellows and 4 Jenious mentors from all across the globe (Australia, New Zealand, USA, UK, Tanzania, Congo, Canada, Brazil, Colombia, Germany, Denmark, Poland, Bulgaria, Serbia, India, Egypt, Turkey, and Italy). The quality of research proposals was high and ranged from basic science to clinical studies and qualitative studies. The JDRF research fellowship was won by Dr Emilia Kowalczyk from Poland. The case presentations were all varied and really interesting, with the best case presentation won by Dr Yasmine Mohamed Ashraf Saad Galal Mohamed Abdelmeguid from Egypt. The winning case presentation and runners-up are going to be adapted into the e-learning vignettes for our ISPAD-ESPE e learning program.

The plenary topics ranged from the latest updates in various aspects of pediatric diabetes to topics covering various aspects of research methodology. The workshops in Shakespearean themed breakout rooms focussed on working with the fellows to improve both their research proposals and case presentations, as well as learning a structured approach to critically appraising a journal paper. The faculty and mentors worked hard to maintain the enthusiasm and friendliness that science schools are known for. We introduced the 'AMA' (Ask me anything) sessions which was an opportunity for the fellows to interact informally with the faculty and speakers. In addition, there were networking sessions which included popular team games such as charades, pub quizzes, speed dating and cranium. These proved to be very popular and competitive and helped bond the groups and teams.

While face-to-face science school remains the gold standard, this science school

proved that it is still possible to have fun while learning in the virtual space. The feedback from the participants was very positive; one of the Jenious members wrote; 'Participating in the ISPAD Science School for Physicians as a mentor was not only a huge honour for me but also an exciting and amazing experience. Apart from great lectures, the virtual social events were excellent and we were all interacting constantly. By the last day of the School I completely lost the 'virtual' feeling and felt like the School was face-to-face, with everyone in my house :) I do hope to see everyone's smiling faces again soon!''.

My thanks go to the faculty including Dr May Ng, Dr Neil Wright, Dr Lars Krogvold, Prof Tim Barrett, K.I.T. Group, and ISPAD Executive past and present, my secretary Julie Oliver, all the speakers, mentors and sponsors who all contributed in making Science School 2021 a big success.

Eli Lilly and Novo Nordisk have provided a sponsorship grant towards the costs for the technical platform, planning and costs associated with holding this meeting virtually.

ISPAD also gratefully acknowledges the support of JDRF towards the ISPAD-JDRF Research Fellowship program. One fellowship was awarded to the best research project from the ISPAD Science School for Physicians.

