

Dear SIOP Asia Members,

Greetings from SIOP Asia, as we welcome Vaccination programmes against SARS-CoV2 virus & hope for better news of the COVID-19 pandemic during this year. The normality of masking, web-conferences and safe cancer care & support for our patients and families is well-accepted. Childhood cancer care continues, balancing the risks of infection with giving the best possible care while overcoming barriers due to COVID19 restrictions.

The SIOP Asia AGM 2020 held on December 23rd 2020 in a virtual format, had a good attendance and fruitful discussions. Most important among them was the plan to expand the SIOP Asia board to have regional & other specific /working group representation. The SIOP Asia meeting scheduled for this year at Guangzhou, China has been postponed to 2022; the dates & tentative programme to be announced shortly.

The twice rescheduled SIOP Asia 2020 meeting is about to happen as ‘version 21’ from 19-21 March 2021, being broadcast from Mumbai in a virtual format, with over 500 registrants thus far. Dr Gaurav Narula & Dr Girish Chinnaswamy, the lead organisers, have put together an exciting program which may be of interest to colleagues beyond Asian borders as well. Registrations are open till 18th March 2021, there is Nursing track which is free of cost & CCI-Asia too will participate. Website: www.siopasia2020.com and please do follow the meeting on Twitter @SiopAsia2020

SIOP Asia was invited to participate at the Rare Cancers ESMO Asia stakeholders web meeting in December 2020; it aims to promote the cause under the pillars of Education, Research, Epidemiology & Advocacy. Among the planned activities are included, consensus list of rare cancers, registry development (IARC/GICR), resources directory, management guidelines & virtual tumor board.

SIOP Asia & its members contributed to 2 SIOP-St Jude collaborative studies on COVID-19, which are now published (<https://doi.org/10.1002/pbc.28962>)

The WHO-GICC (Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer) has included in its focus countries, SriLanka, Nepal, Uzbekistan in addition to Myanmar & Phillippines. Several SIOP Asia members contributed to the WHO-GICC technical package through SIOP & SIOP-PODC. The model of the WHO-GICC is also being applied for improving outcomes in non-focus countries such as India

(<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.phoj.2020.06.005>), WHO-SEARO (New Delhi) initiative to tackle common challenges in childhood cancer care in South East Asia. The Eastern

Mediterranean Region Office (EMRO) held an excellent stakeholders meeting in February, under the aegis of WHO-GICC & EMRO (Cairo) where SIOP Asia participated. Pediatric oncologists from countries in the region along with representatives of their respective Ministries of Health, had fruitful discussions over 2 days, identifying their needs & are now in the process of planning & funding project proposals for the same.

The Asian Pediatric Hematology Oncology group (APHOG) continues its process of development through an interim steering committee, which has bi-monthly online meetings, to organise and fund collaborative projects across Asia, under the leadership of Dr Akira Nakagawara, Dr Godfrey Chan, Dr Alice Yu & the SIOP Asia board, present and past. It aims to conduct clinical trials and also support the SIOP/WHO-GICC initiative in LMICs in Asia by enabling programs for capacity-building in clinical research. The Committee will expand with an advisory board this May 2021, consisting of country/regional representatives & leads of Pediatric Oncology groups in Asia.

World Cancer Day & ICCD campaign- #ThroughOurHands was celebrated across all Asian countries with great enthusiasm. You can still participate till March 31 2021 at www.iccd.care

The Global Mapping of Childhood Cancer Care Resources is being planned for Asia in this year, following the projects in Africa & Latin America, under the aegis of SIOP POINTE & Sanofi Espoir foundation. Five LMICs in Asia may be chosen for the same, initially. Do look out for our spring newsletter in April 2020, contributions are welcome.

Plans are afoot for expansion of SIOP Asia Board to enhance regional and focus representation; volunteers are invited for the same. We also urge you to come forward with ideas and proposals for activities in your region.

Members of national societies across Asian countries are encouraged to share contacts of pediatric oncologists so that many more can be in the fold. We do suggest they to join and enjoy the benefits of SIOP membership, including LMICs which have a discounted rate. You can now follow us on Twitter @AsiaSiop . If you have any meeting announcements, important publications or achievements from your departments or country, please use the SIOP Asia Twitter site to disseminate the same. You can communicate with me or at rdphoc@gmail.com

Do continue to stay safe!

Rashmi Dalvi

Continental President SIOP Asia (2018-2021)

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