

The World Glaucoma Association during the COVID-19 Pandemic

S. Fabian Lerner, M.D.^{1,2}; Shan Lin, M.D.^{1,3}; Kaweh Mansouri, M.D., M.P.H.^{1,4,5}

1- World Glaucoma Association

2- Facultad de Ciencias Médicas, Universidad Favaloro. Buenos Aires, Argentina.

3- Glaucoma Center of San Francisco. San Francisco, CA.

4-Glaucoma Research Center, Montchoisi Clinic, Swiss Vision Network, Lausanne, Switzerland.

5- Department of Ophthalmology, University of Colorado School of Medicine, Denver, CO, USA

S. Fabian Lerner, M.D.

Marcelo T. De Alvear 2010 – 2^a

Ciudad de Buenos Aires (1122)

Argentina

Phone and Fax: 5411-4961-9258

E-mail: glaucomas@yahoo.com.ar

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Dear Members of the World Glaucoma Association and the Journal of Glaucoma readership: We hope all of you, your families, and your staff are staying healthy and safe during this COVID-19 pandemic. The past few months have truly been a very challenging and stressful period for all the world. The leadership of the World Glaucoma Association has been closely monitoring the spread of the virus and its impact on our members. The WGA administrative team led by Irene Koomans (Executive General Manager) remain working full-time to serve our membership.

We are dedicated to providing support to our members through updates on resources available to protect our patients and practices, and through educational materials for the management of glaucoma and prevention of vision loss. Members can access these sources of information via the WGA#One website (www.wga.one) and our social media channels on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Recently we created a video for WGA members composed of messages from our WGA leadership—distributed via our social media channels and on our website—giving recommendations addressing issues ranging from patient care to self-care during these difficult times. This effort was coordinated by Dr. Ziad Khoueir (Associate Advisory Board of the WGA) and Dr. Pradeep Ramulu (Chair, Education Committee of the WGA). Many of these new recommended practices to prevent COVID-19 transmission are described in detail within a recent article in the Journal of Glaucoma (Shabto et al. J Glaucoma. 2020 Apr 22. doi: 10.1097/IJG.0000000000001540. [Epub ahead of print]). It is clear that our Ophthalmology and glaucoma practices are changing in order to provide eye care in a safe environment, both for the patient as well as for the medical and administrative staff. Many of these changes are outlined in an editorial by Jeffrey Liebmann in the Journal of Glaucoma (J Glaucoma. 2020 Apr 14. doi: 10.1097/IJG.0000000000001519. [Epub ahead of print]).

In addition, we have continued to provide new educational resources for our members including the latest video presentations of the Journal of Glaucoma Paper of the Month. The March 2020 edition featured Dr. Kaweh Mansouri who reported and discussed the results of his recent publication on the impact of cataract surgery combined with XEN gel stent implantation on corneal endothelial cell density (2 year results) (J Glaucoma. 2020 Mar;29(3):155-160. doi: 10.1097/IJG.0000000000001430.). Members also have access to the hundreds of recorded talks from 64 sessions at the recent World Glaucoma Congress 2019 meeting in Melbourne. These sessions include diagnostic and therapeutic symposia and courses; basic science symposia; industry-focused breakfast symposia; and member society symposia from all major continents. Additionally, presentations from prior WGC symposia can be accessed from the WGA#One website.

With the possibility of some downtime related to clinic and surgery restrictions, we welcome you to brush up on your glaucoma knowledge with our Basic Course in Glaucoma, created by world renowned experts. These courses are available to take in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Chinese. Current modules (available in English) include Ocular Hypertension (Kay Lam and Ivan Goldberg), OCT in Glaucoma (Gus de Moraes, Harsha Rao, and Don Hood), Tips to Maximize Adherence (Parul Ichhpujani), How to Approach the Failed Bleb (Christin Henein, Yann Bouremel, and Peng Khaw) and Managing complications of post-surgical hypotony (Ricardo Abe and Vital Costa).

To keep up with the very latest publications in glaucoma during the COVID-19 epidemic, members have access to the Journal of Glaucoma (official publication for the WGA) as well as the International Glaucoma Review online. Furthermore, publication of the outlines for the WGA Consensus meetings are accessible at the WGA#One website. These Consensus

documents represent the current recommended practices developed by expert review and discussion of the most recent peer-reviewed evidence. The latest Consensus meeting took place in conjunction with the WGC-2019 in Melbourne and the focus was on Glaucoma Surgery. Topics included laser trabeculoplasty, minimally invasive glaucoma surgeries (MIGS), filtering surgery complications, and cyclodestructive procedures, among others. Check out the summary consensus points at the WGA website.

The next WGC meeting in 2021 was originally scheduled for March 24-27 to take place in Kyoto, Japan. However, given the predictions from infectious disease and epidemiology experts, it is very likely that COVID-19 will persist through the summer and re-emerge in another wave of infections in the winter of 2020-2021. Taking into consideration our desire and responsibility to provide education to our members and to also safeguard their health, the WGA Board of Governors has voted to postpone the meeting until the latter half of 2021. We will be providing additional specifics in the near future.

It is reasonable to expect clearer guidance from government and health agencies about travel and safety measures to prevent transmission, well before the meeting takes place. We hope that you will have the opportunity to join us for WGC 2021 to get the most up-to-date information on glaucoma care for your patients, and to catch up with your friends and colleagues around the world. The Program Planning Committee, led by Drs. Arthur Sit and Tina Wong, have already made great strides in creating a wonderful program encompassing the latest developments in the diagnostics, management, and basic science of glaucoma care. There will also be special programs such as the popular Rapid Fire sessions to allow you to test your knowledge of glaucoma.

We wish to thank you all for your dedicated care of your patients and your support of the World Glaucoma Association and the Journal of Glaucoma. We sincerely appreciate it. Please take care and stay safe and healthy!

S. Fabian Lerner, MD

President, World Glaucoma Association

Shan Lin, MD

Executive Vice President, World Glaucoma Association

Kaweh Mansouri, MD

Associate Executive Vice President, World Glaucoma Association