

Dear friends,

Greetings!

I do hope that all of you are well and finalizing your plans to participate in the Annual Meeting at Dublin. Expecting to get some updates on a couple of important issues, I've deliberately delayed the communication intended to be sent on 30th April as per our usual practice.

VII HTAi Annual Meeting, Dublin

I am pleased to note that there were over 50 applications for HTAi Travel Grants from people in developing countries, to participate in the 2010 Annual Meeting. I understand that this is an unprecedented number and hope that it reflects growing interest and attention to the issues concerning developing countries. I also hope that all DC ISG members who applied have secured grants.

The DC ISG was offered a slot to hold a Special Networking Session on Sunday 5th June 2010, evening; as the Local Organizing Committee could not accommodate the panel session/workshop proposal I submitted. The WHO and WHO collaborating centres are also holding a meeting on Sunday, to explore challenges in developing countries. Therefore, it is proposed to have a joint session among the DC ISG, WHO and WHO collaborating centres. This will be a full day workshop on Sunday 5th June 2010 from 0900 to 1730. I therefore request you all to please make it convenient to participate.

Unfortunately, there has been a delay in approval of the final programme for this joint meeting, in terms of speakers, and hence it has not appeared in the preliminary programme of the Annual Meeting. This is being speedily rectified and more details should be available soon. I am attaching the planned programme, though it may change slightly subsequently.

DC ISG members who are presenting panel sessions, and oral/poster presentations at the Annual Meeting may kindly update all members so we can try and be present when developing country issues are taken up.

DC ISG Annual Meeting

In my February 28 email, I circulated a tentative agenda for the Annual face-to-face meeting of DC ISG members, requesting inputs/suggestions. Since I did not receive any, the following may be taken as the agenda for the meeting. This will most likely be held during the lunch break on Tuesday 8th June 2010.

- § Welcome and introductions: 5 minutes
- § Report of actions/activities of preceding year: 5 minutes
- § Discussion on above: 10 minutes
- § Update of status w.r.t actions in progress vis-à-vis the Action Plan: 5 minutes

- § Discussion on above: 10 minutes
- § Report of regional activities: 5 minutes
- § Discussion: 10 minutes
- § Change of leadership of the ISG: Discussion and election (if required)– 5 minutes
- § Wind-up: 2 minutes

Once again, I request you to please send in your suggestions for discussion, and items to be added to the agenda.

HTAi Board decisions impacting ISGs.

During the Board Teleconference on 14th April 2010, administrative decisions impacting our ISG are:

HTAi Board will have a Steering Group comprising three Board members, to look at/into issues related to governance of Interest Sub-groups. This will be chaired by the Vice-President of HTAi. Dr. Reiner Banken will chair the committee until June 2010 when Dr. Clifford Goodman takes charge as Vice-President. Meanwhile, the HTAi Secretariat is looking at ways to stream-line the governance of all interest sub-groups.

International collaborations

The status of the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between HTAi and WHO, which is expected to boost HTA and related activities in developing countries, was further delayed and expected to be signed towards the end of April 2010. I expect that it has been signed now, and hope to give you updates on the actions consequent to it.

Thank you all for kindly taking the time and trouble to read the document prepared as a briefing paper for WHO to consider. I believe these comments were considered by the authors in detail. However, it is not immediately clear whether the document will be modified or submitted in its original form. More updates will follow.

WHO is hosting the First Global Forum on Medical Devices at Bangkok from September 9-11, 2010. We have the opportunity to propose speakers to present various issues related to medical devices in developing countries, from the perspectives of development, indigenisation, regulation, management and assessment. Please suggest potential speakers from developing and developed countries for this Meeting.

Regional activities

Update from Dr. Jeremy Lim:

Singapore will be hosting a regional HTA meeting together with NICE from 17-20 Aug 2010. Dr Pwee Keng Ho has been the prime mover on the Singapore side and the intent is for Asian faculty together

with faculty from NICE to conduct 2-4 days of workshops and seminars. The main meeting runs from 19-20 Aug with the preceding 2 days for pre-conf workshops. The HTA meeting will be nested together with our regular Public Health and Occupational Medicine conference which will be accepting abstracts for poster and oral presentations. The registration fee is being deliberately kept modest (S\$400 or about USD250) for the main meeting and S\$180 per day for the pre-conf workshops. We'll provide further details as soon as possible.

Reaching out to Africa colleagues

Following the failure of the first two attempts (by email and letter) to establish linkages with colleagues working in Africa, a third attempt to establish contacts with health-care professionals through a fresh set of emails in April 2010 has received only 1 response. I am not sure how to proceed with this challenge and look forward to suggestions.

With best regards,

Joseph L. Mathew

Chair, HTAi DC ISG

6 May 2010.