

IHN Newsletter December 2020

IHN General Assembly

The annual IHN **General Assembly** took place on the **4th of December 2020 at 13.30 CET**. Given the COVID 19 pandemic this meeting was held virtually. The meeting was organized in conjunction with the ISBT Haemovigilance Working Party meeting, which took place after the General Assembly. The virtual GA was attended by 68 participants. The IHN Board thanks the ISBT for the collaboration and hosting of the annual meeting.

Introduction two new IHN Board members



Dr Betina Sørensen, she is a medical doctor and has a specialist education in transfusion medicine. She is working as a senior consultation in a blood bank and transfusion centre in Denmark. She is a member of the Danish national hemovigilance WP and has been a member since 2006. Is also the chair of Danish Society for Clinical Immunology, a member of the Transfusion Board at the Danish Competent Authority and the chair of the GTS expert group writing the "Guide to the preparation, use and quality assurance of blood components" under the EDQM.

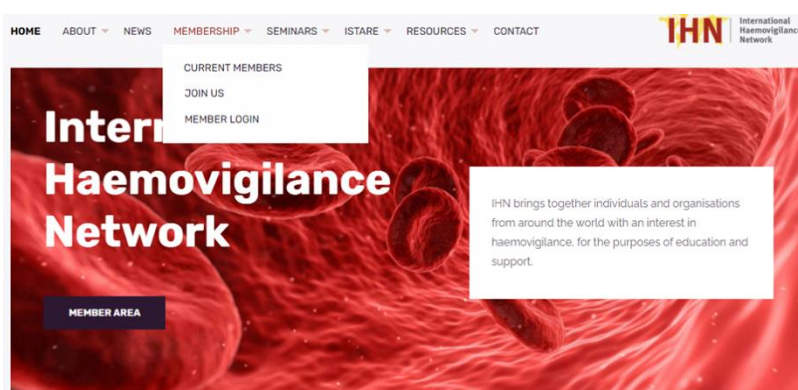


Dr Shruthi Narayan, she is a haematologist by background and is the Medical Director of SHOT, UK's haemovigilance organisation since Sept 2018. Dr Narayan also has a responsibility as a Consultant Donor Medicine at NHS Blood and Transplant and oversees donor haemovigilance, provides clinical leadership to clinical teams and supports educational activities. She graduated from Bangalore Medical College in India and trained as a Paediatrician at the esteemed Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research. She then completed her haematology specialty training in Manchester, UK and also holds a Master's degree in Leadership and Service Improvement. Apart from her core work, she is actively involved in organising and delivering transfusion teaching for various healthcare professionals. She is passionate about promoting transfusion safety, as well as initiating and sustaining improvements in healthcare.

Martin Schipperus stepped down in September as the president of the Board, Arlinke Bokhorst, currently vice president and treasurer, has taken over the role as president and stays on as treasurer till July 2021.

NEW : Member Area to share documents and knowledge

All IHN Official Contact Persons (OCP's) received an email with their own user name and a link to set the password. If you have not received an email, please contact the IHN Secretariat, secretariat@ihn-org.com or login with your email address to reset your password. At this moment the Member Area offers you access to official correspondence, like the General assembly meeting documents. It will also provide access to interesting scientific literature concerning haemovigilance, vigilance reports of other countries and contact details of the IHN OCP's.



IHN Membership fee 2020

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many of the planned IHN activities like the IHS in Oslo and the support via co-badging of conferences in Greece, Milano and Bergen (Norway) were cancelled. Because of the limited activities due to the restrictions related to the Corona pandemic, the Board and General Assembly decided to give a reduction of 50% on the membership fees for 2020.



International Haemovigilance Seminar 2020

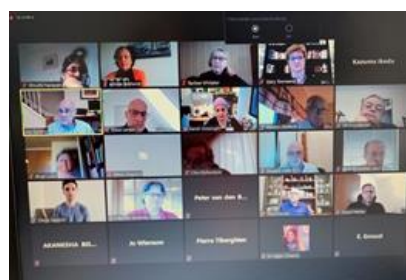
As you have seen, the IHN Haemovigilance Seminar scheduled for September 2020 in Oslo, Norway was cancelled due to the pandemic. An in-person seminar will be scheduled and announced when international travel is open and safe again. We all look forward to seeing you again when we are able.

SAVE THE DATE : 18-March 2021

Virtual International Haemovigilance education program

In the interim, we have scheduled a virtual IHN education program to give us all a taste of what we missed in Oslo. Unfortunately, we can't share 'fiskesuppe or krumkake or warm gløgg' with you, but we can share the intended talks from our opening session, with a few modifications to reflect 2020 events. These excellent speakers will present on **18 March 2021 at 14:00 CET**.

The draft [programme](#) will feature three presentations followed by short interactive sessions with the speakers. Information about registration will be coming soon.



Co-badged events postponed

Another casualty of the pandemic has been our co-badged transfusion medicine, medical, and haemovigilance meetings around the world. Postponed have been meetings with ECDC, Haemovigilance Greece, SIMTI (Società Italiana di Medicina Transfusionale e Immunoematologia), and THOR (The Hemostasis and Oxygenation Research Network). At these co-badged meetings, IHN contributes to the programme through expert speakers and sessions on haemovigilance. We look forward to collaborating with these organizations in the future.

However, we had a co-badged meeting in September 2020 in China. The former IHN president, Erica Wood, has been invited by the Chinese Haemovigilance Network to speak at their blood safety meeting, scheduled for May 2020. Due to COVID-19, the meeting was delayed but it was subsequently rescheduled and held very successfully and well attended in September in person in China and with international speakers via zoom.



If you are interested in IHN support for a co-badged (virtual) meeting in the near future or an in-person meeting in the longer term, please contact the [IHN Secretariat](#) and we will be happy to work with you.

IHN data collection tool (ISTARE)

The survey of IHN members in 2019 reconfirmed a mandate to IHN to collect data. A group of nine nominated experts agreed to join a Task Force to discuss the vision for this work in a series of conference calls. Progress has been made although there has been some delay owing to the members' active roles in organisations which are under extra COVID-19 pressures. A first report will be given at the AGM.

Transfusion-Associated Graft versus Host Disease: thanks to IHN members for assistance

Members of the IHN will remember a survey on cases of transfusion-associated graft versus host disease. This was conducted by TRIP (The Netherlands) as part of the revision of the national transfusion guidelines, relating to indications for use of irradiated blood components. In countries where universal pre-storage leukodepletion is applied, very few cases have been reported – a total of six cases emerged. The results are being compiled in a manuscript in which all those who contributed information will be acknowledged.



International collaboration on respiratory complications of blood transfusion

Revised definitions for TACO and for TRALI were published in 2019 by two separate groups, in which the IHN and ISBT haemovigilance working party were represented. As previously announced by our former president Erica Wood, an international validation exercise should be undertaken with a view to testing and optimising the new definitions in hemovigilance practice, before they are formally adopted.

As a first step, a subgroup of the international TRALI definition working group led by Alexander Vlaar has convened a panel in which several IHN members are participating, to develop an internationally harmonised reporting form for respiratory complications of blood transfusion. It will be accompanied by guidance and is intended to facilitate collection of data needed to apply the revised definitions and interpret clinical measurements for the diagnosis of TRALI, TACO and other respiratory complications. Work is in progress, although there has been some delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Send in your haemovigilance reports

Last but not least, we kindly ask all IHN members to provide us with your annual reports on haemovigilance data. These reports will be shared on the closed IHN Membership area to exchange outcomes and to learn from one another. Reports do not have to be translated and can be send in in any language. You can send you report via email to secretariat@ihn-org.com.



We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Arlinke Bokhorst, MD M&G
president IHN