

# e-WGN

## WORLD GASTROENTEROLOGY NEWS

Official e-newsletter of the World Gastroenterology Organisation

[www.worldgastroenterology.org](http://www.worldgastroenterology.org)



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JUNE 2024

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Anne-Louise B. Oliphant, MPP

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## The World Gastroenterology Organisation Climate Change Committee: Meeting the Challenge of Environmental Change



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### Objectives

The purpose of this report is to raise awareness in the global digestive health community of the implications of environmental change on digestive health, to outline the steps which are being taken by the World Gastroenterology Organisation (WGO) and to suggest some actions which you can take.

### Background

The atmosphere is the thin layer of gas which surrounds the earth. It is a narrow band and when flying at 10,000 meters almost all of it is between you and the ground. The atmosphere has been warming steadily since the onset of industrialization. The gases released by extraction and combustion of fossil fuels, and those released from other processes, such as manufacturing, agriculture, and healthcare, have warmed the atmosphere by holding back heat, which would normally be radiated into space. Currently, global

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### INTERESTED IN WRITING FOR *e-WGN*? SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLE TODAY!

WGO is accepting article submissions for upcoming issues of *e-WGN*. Articles reach a global audience and are disseminated through WGO's mailing list and social media platforms.

#### Article Instructions

To find more information on article and author instructions, visit our *e-WGN* submission portal! This portal contains all necessary instructions to help you complete your *e-WGN* contribution and allows you to submit all information in one place.

There are many ways to contribute to our newsletter! Expert Point of View, meeting promotions and summaries, testimonials and more are all welcome inside of *e-WGN*! Explore our submission portal at:

### e-WGN Submission Portal

Please note that the Co-Editors of *e-WGN* may make edits and changes to your article.

For more information, please email [info@worldgastroenterology.org](mailto:info@worldgastroenterology.org).



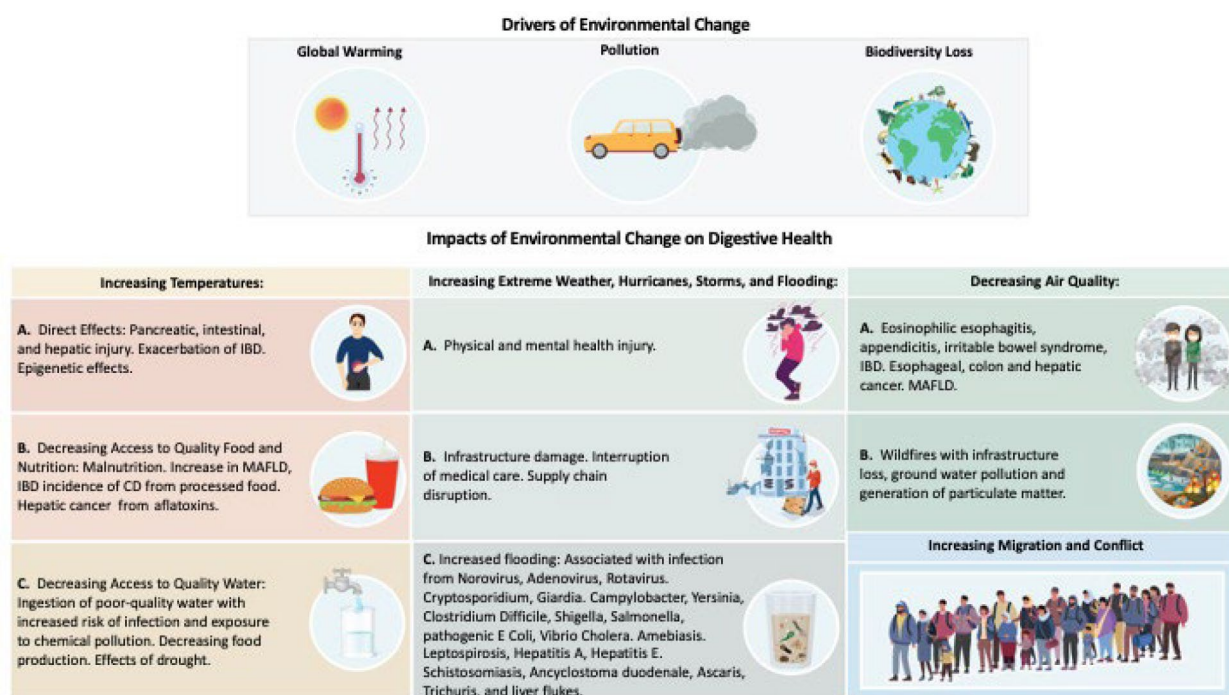


Figure 1. The effects of the three main drivers of environmental change on digestive health. Global warming, pollution and biodiversity loss are driving increasing temperatures, increasing extreme weather, and decreasing air quality. These in turn are affecting digestive health and disease. References for each of the conditions listed can be found in a recent narrative review.<sup>6</sup>

mean surface temperature is over 1°C above pre-industrial measurements.<sup>1,2</sup>

A 1° change in temperature may not seem like much, but it represents a huge change in the amount of energy retained in the atmosphere and oceans. It is more than sufficient to lead to global changes in regional temperatures, weather patterns, and precipitation. It is enough to raise the level of the oceans thereby threatening island states and coastal communities.

Environmental change is not confined to changes in global temperature. The burning of fossil fuels, agriculture, and industrial processes release large amounts of pollutants. In addition, biodiversity, the variety of all the living creatures and plants on the planet, is in decline under the twin threats of climate change and pollution. Wider biodiversity is important in preventing disease, ensuring access to clean water, and ensuring the growth of agricultural crops.<sup>2,3</sup>

Lower income countries are particularly vulnerable to environmental change because they are often located in the regions, which will be most severely affected.<sup>4</sup> In addition, lower income countries are less able to withstand the damage posed by infrastructure loss due to extreme weather events and the consequences arising from decreased access to water and crops.

### Effects of Environmental Change on Health

The health effects of environmental change have primarily been linked with respiratory and cardiovascular disease, but digestive health is also affected.<sup>5</sup> On a societal level, changes in temperature, rainfall, and the frequency and severity of storms are already affecting access to the fundamentals of life - water, nutrition, and shelter. On an individual level virtually every part of the digestive system can be affected

by environmental change. This topic has recently been reviewed in detail.<sup>6</sup>

For each of the conditions listed in Figure 1 there is plausible, albeit not definitive, evidence of a connection between environmental change and digestive health. Air pollution is emerging as a particular concern. Particulate matter (PM) refers to a wide variety of microscopic particles which are suspended in the air. These vary in composition and size. They can be inhaled and cross into the blood circulation, or they can be ingested and reach the gastrointestinal tract. PM has been linked to a variety of digestive diseases, including esophageal cancer.<sup>7</sup> Plastic pollution is now ubiquitous and can be found in stool samples and in the intestinal wall.<sup>8</sup> It is not yet clear what the effects may be, but they may have a role in intestinal disease.<sup>9</sup>

## Effects of Healthcare on the Environment

While environmental change is affecting health, the converse is also true; healthcare delivery is affecting the environment. Healthcare is responsible for 5% or more of greenhouse gas emissions in some countries.<sup>10</sup> Much attention has been focused on endoscopy since it is a high-volume procedure and associated with the generation of a considerable amount of emissions and waste.<sup>11-13</sup> The carbon footprint and the amount of emissions associated with endoscopy are becoming clear. Travel to and from the endoscopy suite by patients and staff and the energy required to run the endoscopy suite are both major contributing factors.<sup>14</sup> Waste and the carbon emissions associated with the use of disposables are also important. Several national peer societies and endoscopy groups have issued guidance on how to reduce the environmental impact of endoscopy.<sup>15-20</sup>

## Physician Engagement

Even though environmental change represents a major public health threat, physicians have been slow to engage. There are many reasons why this needs to change.<sup>21</sup> There is the issue of intergenerational justice. It is not fair nor just to live beyond our means now and let future generations deal with the problems we have created. As physicians, we have an ethical duty to not harm patients. We know that pollution, global warming, and biodiversity loss associated with healthcare are all harming patients. Therefore, it follows that we must do as much as we can to reduce this. It makes financial sense, and it is simply good management to practice sustainable healthcare.<sup>22</sup> Finally, it is in our self-interest. If we do not bring this problem under control, then it will have very severe implications for future generations of our societies and our individual families.



Figure 2: The mission of the WGO Climate Change Committee. At the center of the committee's activities is sustainability. Movement towards that objective is supported by the four pillars of raising awareness, advocacy, research, and education.

WGO recently conducted a survey of global gastroenterology leadership.<sup>23</sup> Several obstacles to physician engagement were identified including financial blocks, psychological factors, and systematic issues such as a lack of education. Many of these can be overcome through a combination of education, raising awareness, and systems change.

## Global Response

The actions of environmental leaders across the world has led to carbon emissions falling in some countries. However, and more importantly, net overall emissions continue to rise globally and so global warming continues to threaten us all in the long term and especially people living in low and middle income countries where their existence is threatened in the short to medium term. The global gastroenterology community has also begun to mobilize with education of digestive health practitioners and raising awareness becoming clearer priorities.<sup>25</sup> WGO organized a series of webinars on the topic in 2023 and

published summarized versions of the key takeaways.<sup>26</sup> This course was a comprehensive overview of the problem and could serve as a curriculum for individuals and societies who wish to learn more.

## Mission of the WGO Committee

Recently, WGO has established the Climate Change Committee with a wide global representation. The mission of the committee is sustainability at the center and has four outside pillars - education, research, advocacy, and raising awareness (Figure 2).

## Education

In alignment with our commitment to education and heightened awareness, WGO will continue its successful webinar series, addressing pivotal topics and providing various educational resources. These resources include slide decks and personal stories from gastroenterologists worldwide that showcase sustainable practices in their professional and personal lives.

- **Webinar Series:** We plan to host a seasonal webinar series. The first session titled "Navigating



Sustainable Endoscopy Practices,” was launched to coincide with the celebration of World Earth Day on April 22, 2024. This initiative is intended to appeal to a diverse audience, including physicians—particularly gastroenterologists—GI fellows, medical students, and nursing staff. Each 60-minute webinar will feature two experts leading talks followed by a Q&A session, ensuring a comprehensive discourse on pressing matters.

- **Global Outreach:** We encourage all GI societies to establish their own climate committees and integrate climate change sessions into their national congresses, fostering a unified approach towards sustainability within the field.

**Awareness**

Social media has become an integral part of our society and our daily life, being used by billions of people.<sup>27</sup> Considering the previously described difficulties in encouraging greater action by physicians regarding the adoption of sustainable practices, WGO considers that social media may be a significant tool to help raise awareness not only among physicians but also among the general population on this topic. The possible impact is expected to be more significant among younger generations, which are precisely the ones that are in a good position to act and further develop efforts to avoid further consequences of environmental change.

- We plan to focus mainly on Instagram, currently the most used social media platform, with a defined plan:
  - o Critical review and sharing of relevant articles on the topic
  - o Sharing tips and tricks for greener gastroenterology/endoscopy practice.
  - o Interviews with experts on topics

- o Sharing real life stories around the world that had an impact on sustainability

**Research**

There is a great deal of research activity on environmental change and digestive health. It involves learning about new disciplines such as including life-cycle analysis and engineering, which are not traditionally part of the medical curriculum. WGO research activities to date have been primarily concerned with understanding the needs of the global digestive health community but the plan is to engage in original data procurement.

**Advocacy**

Physicians are in an excellent position to advocate for people who do not have an effective voice of their own. The WGO climate committee’s advocacy efforts will be based on raising awareness, educating digestive health providers, and conducting targeted research.<sup>27</sup>

**Moving to Action**

Healthcare providers can act at different levels, from micro (family and friend networks) to meso (community and regional scale), and macro (national and global policy). Physicians are role models in society and are trusted to act in the best interests of their communities. The scale of

engagement clearly influences the impact of the intervention, and the scale is also determined by the position of the healthcare provider. An individual physician, for example, might engage only on a micro scale and that will have an impact within the family unit. That may seem small, but small actions can be very meaningful.<sup>28</sup> Children and teenagers are more vulnerable to the stress associated with the relentless barrage of bad news and images related to climate change.<sup>29, 30</sup> Even if we can’t bring about a global change, acting on a personal level will send a message to family and friends that this issue matters and that we are making a sincere effort.

As professionals in the field of endoscopy and health systems, we can make a significant impact by implementing even small changes in our practices.<sup>31</sup> These changes can trigger a larger-scale shift in the system, creating a ripple effect that may inspire others to act. Those who possess greater influence in the digestive health community can even bring about global change, altering the culture and promoting action on a national and international level.

**Five Actions You Can Take Now**

Figure 3 shows potential actions, which can be taken in personal and professional life to have an immediate impact on reducing carbon footprint.






	Educate yourself and others.
	Travel less.
	Change diet.
	Save energy.
	Put sustainability on the endoscopy agenda.

Figure 3. Five actions which can be instituted quickly and will have an immediate impact.

There are many others which can be taken, but we have chosen five representative actions that are feasible and impactful.<sup>32</sup>

The carbon footprint of an individual, the total carbon dioxide emissions for which we are responsible, is made up of all the components of living including food, clothing, shelter, travel, and consumables. The average per capita carbon footprint varies enormously by country.<sup>33</sup> The global average is about 4.7 tons(t) of carbon dioxide per person per year, in low-income countries it is 0.3 t while in North America it is 10.5t.

If you want to take the first steps, here is what you can do.

### 1. Educate Yourself and Others

Gaining and sharing knowledge on this issue is the first step towards generating solutions. WGO has prepared a series of webinars on the subject and published the contents. This is a comprehensive review of the subject and a more than sufficient foundation. They can be accessed here. (<https://www.worldgastroenterology.org/education-and-training/webinars/wgo-climate-course-for-global-gastroenterology>)

### 2. Reduce Travel

The emissions associated with travelling by car or plane are amongst the most environmentally harmful actions most people take. Travel by car or plane emits roughly 170g of CO<sub>2</sub>e per kilometer, although emissions do vary by car type and flight distance.<sup>34</sup> It is not often feasible for people to change their daily travel patterns and get away from cars, but it is often possible to reduce the amount of air travel. You could lobby your national peer to allow hybrid meetings, instead of in person meetings, thus reducing air travel.<sup>35</sup> The Canadian Association of Gastroenterology reduced travel related emissions

to some of its annual meetings by over 40% simply by changing the geographic location.<sup>36</sup> In the United States, car and airline travel accounted for nearly half of the annual emissions of an academic gastroenterologist, so this is an area where environmental wins can be obtained.

### 3. Change Diet

The carbon footprint of different foods varies considerably. Beef production generates nearly 60 kg of greenhouse gases (GHG) per kg of meat. Peas and nuts, as an example, generate less than 1 kg per of GHG per kg of food.<sup>38</sup> In addition, the clearing of forest to produce pastureland for cattle decreases biodiversity, and the runoff manure associated with cattle farming is a potent source of water pollution. The Lancet - EAT commission has published a diet which is good for both human and planetary health.<sup>39</sup>

### 4. Save Energy

Home energy is a significant contributor to household carbon footprint. There are many steps which can be taken to reduce this, including reducing heating and cooling, improving insulation, switching to LED lights, and changing clothes washing cycles.<sup>40</sup> Endoscopy uses considerable amounts of energy for lighting, heating and ventilation, processors, and computers. Estimates vary between studies but is around 2.7 kWh per endoscopy.<sup>12</sup> The energy usage of endoscopy units can be reduced by changing lighting, making sure the equipment is turned off when not in use, and changing the temperature and air conditioning settings. These actions can become part of the sustainability plan for the unit.

### 5. Add Sustainability to Endoscopy Management

Once sustainability is on the agenda, environmental considerations may be factored into decisions on care provision, energy savings within the institution, temperature and air conditioning setbacks, and procurement. Telemedicine has been shown to be acceptable to patients, associated with good healthcare, and capable of producing significant reduction in emissions.<sup>41</sup> In one report from Ontario, Canada over 3 billion km in travel was saved over the course of a 22-month period.<sup>42</sup> Pre-procedure consultation and post procedure followed up by video or phone would have a significant impact on the reduction of endoscopy unit emissions.

### Summary

Environmental change is now recognized as a contributing factor to the incidence and exacerbation of digestive disease. Paradoxically delivery of digestive healthcare is contributing to the problem. There are many actions which individuals can take. Moving the global digestive health community to a more sustainable practice will be facilitated by research, education, raising awareness and advocacy. Considerable progress has already been made. WGO, by working with its global network of member organizations, is committed to helping the digestive health community meet the challenge.

### References

Readers may access the full list of references at the link: <https://www.worldgastroenterology.org/publications/e-wgn/e-wgn-expert-point-of-view-articles-collection/the-world-gastroenterology-organisation-climate-change-committee-meeting-the-challenge-of-environmental-change>



## Message from the Editors



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Dear WGO community,

Welcome to our June 2024 issue of *e-WGN*. Please allow us to take you on a quick journey through the articles of this issue!

Environmental change is now recognized as a contributing factor to the incidence and exacerbation of digestive disease. Towards a greener gastroenterology/endoscopy practice, WGO has established the Climate Change Committee with a wide global representation. In the Expert Point of View article entitled “Meeting the Challenge of Environmental Change,” Dr. Desmond Leddin (Canada), Dr. Anahita Sadeghi (Iran) and Dr. Rui Jorge Guedes Morais (Portugal) clarified that the center of the committee’s activities is sustainability. Movement towards that objective is supported by the four pillars of raising awareness, advocacy, research, and education.

Dr. Hanna Aberra (Ethiopia) shares with us her inspiring experience as a female gastroenterologist on work-life balance. She highlighted the challenges and sacrifices physicians in general, and the female physicians in

particular, have to make throughout their career development journey!

A wonderful article about the inspiring role of the Train the Trainers (TTT) Committee is introduced by Dr. Wojciech Marlicz (Poland) who highlighted the concept of bridging continents in gastroenterology through training and networking. He provided insights about how his collaboration with WGO has changed his practice not only on the professional level, but also on the personal level. He explains how this has helped him as an active member of the Polish Society of Gastroenterology (PSG) to become deeply involved in the evolution and modernization of gastroenterological practices in Poland. He described his phenomenal experience with TTT workshops, both as an attendee or faculty, with mind-opening events, mixing learning (team building, teaching, communication, leadership, critical appraisal, conflict resolution) together with fun (cultural evenings and networking dinners) making the whole experience unforgettable! If you are interested in

attending any of the upcoming TTT workshops, make sure to visit our WGO website for more information.

During March every year the ACG hosts innovative activities aiming to inspire and support its members in their efforts to increase visibility of CRC prevention. The College’s key message is “45 is the new 50” for CRC screening in average risk individuals. Dr. Jonathan A. Leighton (USA) and Anne-Louise B. Oliphant (USA) highlighted this year’s celebrations. The activities surrounded advocacy, music, physical activity, patient education, and an invitation to “Dress in Blue Day.” You can learn more about ACG’s activities and their annual March tradition, the “Ride or Stride For 45” virtual challenge, and how it is possible to bridge science and music by going through the article in the WGO news section. Thank you ACG for the inspiration!

WGO and the Moroccan Society of Digestive Diseases (SMMAD) are pleased to invite you to GASTRO 2024 which will be held 7-9 November 2024 in Marrakech, Morocco. We are committed to providing a memorable experience mixing a premier scientific program with the warmth and gracious hospitality that Marrakech can offer!. Looking forward to meeting you in Marrakech!

The WGO Porto Alegre Hepatology Training Center hosted the Hepatocellular Carcinoma 2023 Advanced Course on 2-3 August 2023. Dr. Mário Reis Álvares-da-Silva (Brazil) highlighted that the faculty included hepatologists, oncologists, digestive surgeons, geneticists, biologists and radiologists contributing to the multidisciplinary nature of the discussion.



The sessions addressed controversial points and future research projects that are believed to advance management strategies for HCC.

“On December 9, 2023, the XI Latvian Gastroenterology Congress with international participation took place, marking a significant event in the history of Latvian medicine” reported Dr. Aleksejs Derovs (Latvia). The congress hosted both national and international speakers and attendees who shared cutting edge knowledge about the latest developments in Latvian and global gastroenterology, which through 20 years of the congress existence has significantly contributed to the improvement of patient care in the Latvia.

We would like to congratulate Dr. Dilek Oğuz as the new director of the Ankara Training Center. Dr. Dilek Oğuz is the immediate past president of the Turkish Society of Gastroenterology. We welcome her aboard the Training Center family and we are sure she will excel in her duties as she has done in every position prior. Also, we extend our gratitude to Dr. A. Sedat Boyacıoğlu for all the years of service as the Director of the Ankara Training Center leading up to Febru-

ary 2024, and we wish him all the best in his future.

The rapid evolution and progress in the field of gastroenterology is absolutely breathtaking. Finding difficulty in keeping up with latest news, publications and WGO activities? WGO is pleased to offer you the solution through *News You Can Use* with briefs delivered biweekly. To make it even easier, the highlight of each brief is now *What's Hot in the Literature*. This section features trending journal articles with concise summaries and commentary from our Editorial Board members. You are cordially invited to contribute article summaries and to join our mailing list to receive future briefs by visiting the WGO website and signing up.

WGO has chosen this year's World Digestive Health Day (WDHD) theme to be *Your Digestive Health: Make it a Priority!* WDHD is celebrated every year on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May with associated events, activities and initiatives continuing throughout and beyond the date. WGO member societies, WGO members and the public are encouraged to engage with the awareness campaign online through social media channels. The

WDHD website remains a year-round resource for information pertaining to the 2024 WDHD campaign as well as past campaigns. We invite you to utilize these resources to help improve care in your local community.

Interested in obesity management? WGO is pleased to announce the executive summary of the updated Obesity Guideline is now available online in Mandarin translation. The guidelines were developed as joint efforts between WGO and the International Federation for the Surgery of Obesity and Metabolic Disorders (IFSO).

WGO is always glad to share and endorse scientific events and conferences globally. You can find the WGO Calendar of Events for upcoming months. We will be pleased to meet you in person at the WGO booth.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *e-WGN* issue, and we await your articles for the next issue in September.

Dr. Mahesh K Goenka, India  
Dr. Nancy Fanous, Egypt



## Explore the World Of Gastroenterology in Marrakech

**SAVE THE DATE**

**GASTRO 2024**  
**MARRAKECH**  
WGO/SMMAD JOINT MEETING

**07<sup>th</sup> - 09<sup>th</sup> November 2024**  
Marrakech - Morocco

On behalf of the World Gastroenterology Organisation (WGO) and the Moroccan Society of Digestive Diseases (SMMAD), we are pleased to collectively invite you to GASTRO 2024! This meeting will be held 7-9 November 2024 in Marrakech, Morocco.

GASTRO 2024 in Marrakech will provide an opportunity for medical professionals in the fields of gastroenterology, hepatology, endoscopy, and related disciplines to come together and learn about the latest in research and advancements in this rapidly advancing field.

Top experts of highly respected international and regional faculty are featured throughout our premier scientific program. There are many opportunities to earn CME credits while learning through an array of lectures, clinical cases, and interactive hands-on sessions. There are many things to look forward to inside of our scientific program! Comprehensive sessions, hands-on training workshops, clinical case-based presentations and creative peer-reviewed oral and poster sessions will all be available to our attendees!

Join us for informative and inspiring sessions on:

- Inflammatory Foods in MASLD
- Inflammatory Bowel Disease Updates
- Endoscopic Bariatric Sleeve Gastroplasty vs. Medical Treatments
- The Delta Dilemma: Challenges in the Management in HDV
- Mastery of Steroids Use in IBD
- Multifaceted Approaches to Education in Gastroenterology
- Liver MAFLD
- Environmental Changes and Digestive Health
- Meeting the Need for Women's Training in Gastroenterology: What is Still Missing?

We are committed to providing a memorable experience for all in attendance filled with the warmth and gracious hospitality that Marrakech has to offer. Registration is now open and we invite everyone to participate and collaborate with medical professionals from around the globe.

We look forward to meeting you at GASTRO 2024!

## WDHD 2024 – Your Digestive Health: Make It A Priority

Each year, the World Gastroenterology Organisation (WGO) celebrates World Digestive Health Day (WDHD) by initiating a worldwide public health campaign in order to increase awareness of prevention, prevalence, diagnosis, management, and treatment of digestive diseases or disorders worldwide. This year’s campaign *Your Digestive Health: Make It A Priority* culminated on Wednesday, 29 May 2024.

Prioritizing digestive health is paramount for fostering overall well-being and quality of life. The digestive system serves as the gateway to nourishment, absorbing vital nutrients essential for sustaining bodily functions and promoting optimal health. By making digestive health a priority, individuals empower themselves to proactively manage their well-being, mitigating the risk of gastrointestinal disorders and associated complications. A balanced and nutritious diet, coupled with lifestyle choices that support digestive wellness, not only enhances physical health but also contributes to mental and emotional equilibrium.

Furthermore, prioritizing digestive health fosters a proactive approach to healthcare, enabling early detection

5 simple yet effective strategies individuals can incorporate into their daily routines to prioritize digestive health:

-  Eat a Balanced Diet
-  Stay Hydrated
-  Practice Mindful Eating
-  Regular Exercise
-  Manage Stress

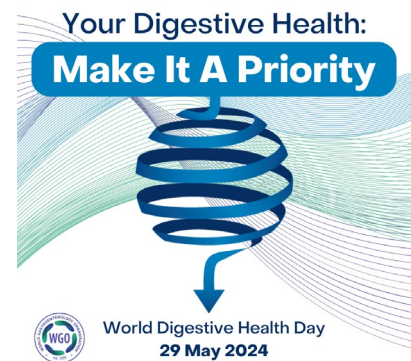
and intervention in the case of potential issues, thus promoting longevity and vitality. Ultimately, by recognizing the pivotal role of the digestive system in overall health, individuals can embark on a journey towards holistic wellness, ensuring that they can fully engage in and enjoy all aspects of life to the fullest extent.

In addition to efforts organized locally by WGO member societies, WGO members and the general public were encouraged to engage with the awareness campaign online through social media by using the hashtags #WDHD2024 and #YourDigestiveHealth. You are invited to see more activities from WDHD 2024 by viewing these hashtags on Facebook, X, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

As an additional method to raise awareness of digestive health, WGO

members were asked to take a Selfie Card photo, amplifying short messages related to digestive health. Healthcare professionals and the public shared their photos with WGO, with submissions received from all parts of the world. WGO is delighted to feature some of these photos in this issue of e-WGN as well as on WGO’s social media channels.

Activities of WDHD 2024 extend beyond the singular day of 29 May. The WDHD website ([wdhd.worldgastroenterology.org](http://wdhd.worldgastroenterology.org)) remains as a year-round resource for information pertaining to the 2024 WDHD campaign as well as past WDHD campaigns. We invite you to utilize these resources to help improve care in your local community.





## Hepatocellular Carcinoma at the WGO Porto Alegre Hepatology Training Center in 2023



### Mário Reis Álvares-da-Silva, MD

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Porto Alegre, Brazil



Some of the faculty and participants gather together for a group photo during the course.

The WGO Porto Alegre Hepatology Training Center Hepatocellular Carcinoma 2023 Advanced Course held 2-3 of August at the Gastroenterology Unit of the Hospital de Clínicas de Porto Alegre (HCPA) brought together a total of 66 assistants, including faculty and students. Held at the Rio Grande do Sul Medical Foundation (FundMed) at HCPA, the faculty included hepatologists, oncologists, digestive surgeons, geneticists, biologists, and radiologists contributing to the multidisciplinary nature of the discussion.

Sponsored by WGO and Astra-Zeneca, the course began with Project

ECHO's Liver Diseases Brazil online session, discussing two hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) cases presented by Prof. Rosangela Teixeira, from the Federal University of Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, and Dr. Marcio Dias de Almeida, from Albert Einstein Hospital, São Paulo. The cases were discussed by teachers present in Porto Alegre. Prof. Ezequiel Ridruejo, from the Center for Medical Education and Clinical Research (CEMIC), Buenos Aires, and Prof. Claudia Oliveira, from the University of São Paulo, accompanied by the active participation of the trainees, and ECHO members, including Dr. Liliana Mendes, WGO

Brasília Training Center Director. Afterwards, the course continued with the discussion of HCC cases at the HCPA Gastroenterology Outpatient Clinic, with the presence of the course coordinator, along with members of WGO Porto Alegre Training Center staff. Also in attendance were two distinguished invitees, Prof. Angelo Alves de Mattos and Prof. Themis Reverbel da Silveira from Porto Alegre.

Questions related to the outpatient management of patients were discussed followed by a panel on liver pathology that discussed controversial points regarding the application of liver biopsy in cases of hepatocellular carcinoma. The day's activities ended with a research session dedicated to the tumor, in which Profs. Laura Alvarez, from Universidad de Buenos Aires, and Carolina Uribe-Cruz, from Universidad Católica de las Misiones, Posadas, Argentina, joined remotely. The highlight was the discussion of international collaborative research on animals bringing together the institutions. This online session was also attended by students from the Experimental Laboratory in Hepatology and Gastroenterology (LEHG) at HCPA/UFRGS, a unit that is part of the WGO Porto Alegre Training Center.

In the following day, three conferences opened the agenda. These conferences discussed the future of hepatocellular carcinoma from genetic aspects to practical aspects, with the presentation of the results of the Himalaya study by Prof. Ridruejo. This was followed by a systemic treatment session for patients classified as having hepatocellular carcinoma B and C, which brought together hepatologists, a transplant surgeon, and an interven-

tional radiologist with extensive clinical experience. The last two sessions were dedicated to patient access to treatment, both in Brazil and Argentina. Also, the latest developments in tumor surveillance in patients with cirrhosis, which brought together radiologists and a transplant surgeon.

To conclude, during the lunch served in the FundMed lounge, two cases presented in the latest edition of the Joint Meeting Liver, another event promoted by the WGO Porto Alegre Training Center, were discussed. Later, Prof. Ridruejo visited the LEHG facilities, where he was able to see the equipment available for research, as well as the vivarium of the HCPA Animal Experimentation Unit (UEA). Prof. Ridruejo also visited the UFRGS Faculty of Medicine and the Postgraduate Science Program in Gastroenterology and Hepatology, with a brief meeting with the director of the Faculty of Medicine, Prof. Lucia Kliemann. The meeting, in addition to the clinical aspects, served to consolidate the international partnership between professors Ridruejo and Alvarez's laboratory and the WGO Porto Alegre Training Center research initiatives.



Attendees listening to one of many educational sessions.



Moderators led focused and important discussions over the duration of the course.



## WGO's Ankara Training Center Welcomes New Director



Professor Dilek Oğuz, Director of the WGO Ankara Training Center

In March 2024, the Turkish Society of Gastroenterology (TSG) made the decision to promote Professor Dilek Oğuz as the new director of the Ankara Training Center. Professor Dilek Oğuz is the immediate past president of TSG. She was extremely successful and active within her society during the entirety of her presidency.

Prof. Luis Carlos Sabbagh of Colombia and Chair of WGO's Training Centers Committee has welcomed Professor Dilek Oğuz into the Training Center family. Professor Oğuz seeks to gain a deeper understanding of their training processes and will use a clear and structured approach to execute required training and additional initiatives created by the Center. The Training Center is used to facilitate, educate, shape, and tone the participant's skills. All participants further develop their skills in clarifying the needs of the patients and gaining the necessary tools and information to make those assessments. Most importantly, these Centers construct effective training sessions that impact the trainee's learning, engagement, experience, and interest in gastroenterology. Skill development is an important aspect of every training program as it helps the trainees to leverage their skillset further into their career.

Professor Oğuz extends her thank you to all who have trusted her for the Director position at the Ankara Training Center. We are sure she will excel in her duties as she has done in every position prior.

Dr. Luis Carlos Sabbagh wants to thank Professor A. Sedat Boyacıoğlu for all the years of service as the Director of Ankara Training Center leading up to February 2024. We wish Professor Boyacıoğlu all the best in his new adventure, and we hope to see him be continuously involved with WGO.



### DONATE TODAY

Contributions to WGO support and expand the educational, training, research, and awareness programs and initiatives of WGO by strengthening the reach of WGO to areas in the world that benefit directly from the education offered through programs such as Training Centers, Train the Trainers, World Digestive Health Day, Global Guidelines, and international meetings such as the World Congress.

[DONATE HERE](#)

## Staying Connected and Informed with *News You Can Use*

Digestive healthcare is an ever-evolving field, with new research and findings being released often. There are many well-respected journals throughout the world publishing vital articles to our field. Yet, with a high volume of information, it can be difficult to keep abreast the latest developments. Therefore, finding a manageable way to stay connected is key, and WGO is pleased to offer our members a solution through *News You Can Use*.

*News You Can Use* started in the spring of 2023 as a way to streamline the flow of information for WGO members. Each brief featured top digestive healthcare news, updates on WGO programs, and upcoming activities of WGO member societies throughout the world. Briefs delivered bi-weekly give subscribers quick and easy to read updates to connect them to the global GI community.

At the beginning of this year, we decided to revamp our approach. The highlight of each brief became our

**What's Hot in the Literature** section. This section featured curated trending journal articles with concise summaries and commentary from our Editorial Board members. These brief reads (100-250 words) aim to kickstart your week with global gastroenterology highlights, allowing you to explore further into these hot topics at your convenience.

We believe this refreshed approach has been valuable to subscribers, enabling a more connected and informed experience. In addition, we continue to highlight WGO programs and upcoming events in subsequent sections of each brief. This revamped approach has provided a better experience for WGO members, and we look to continue these efforts in the future.

With that, WGO members are invited to contribute to article summaries for future briefs of *News You Can Use*. This is intended as a simple volunteer opportunity to contribute to WGO while also reaching a global

audience. We are accepting submissions on all GI-related topics, and we look forward to seeing what you identify as what's hot in the literature. [Submission guidelines and criteria](#) are accessible on WGO's website.






If you are not already receiving *News You Can Use* in your email inbox every other Monday, WGO invites you to join our mailing list to receive future briefs in addition to other WGO news and announcement. To sign up for WGO's mailing list, please visit the [WGO website](#).

In addition, if you have missed past article summaries, an online collection is accessible on WGO's website under the [Publications section](#).

We hope you are staying informed and connected with WGO and the global gastroenterology community through *News You Can Use*. Future briefs will continue the great progress made with this initiative, and we look forward to what is to come. Happy reading!

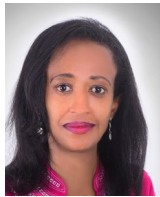
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*News You Can Use* is possible thanks to the efforts of its Editorial Board, chaired by Prof. Eamonn Quigley (USA). The Editorial Board is responsible for curating the content found within the What's Hot in the Literature section as well as further developing these briefs to best serve the global gastroenterology community. Thank you for your efforts and contributions to WGO!

## Advancing Endoscopic Training for Women



### Hanna Aberra, MD, PhD

Associate Professor of IM at UR  
Consultant Internist, Gastroenterologist and Hepatologist  
GI Unit Head and Fellowship Program Director  
King Faisal Hospital  
Kigali, Rwanda

I was born and raised in Ethiopia, in the town of Holeta, Genet, which is situated 30 km to the west of the capital city, Addis Ababa. My academic journey began with an undergraduate degree in medicine from Gondar College of Medical Sciences (GCMS), followed by an internal medicine residency at Addis Ababa University (AAU). In 2015, I embarked on a PhD program specializing in Tropical and Infectious Diseases at AAU, completing it successfully in 2020. Concurrently, I pursued a fellowship in gastroenterology & hepatology at St. Paul's Hospital Millennium Medical College (SPHMMC) from 2016 to 2018. Prior to these endeavors, I

served as the Postgraduate Program Director and later as the Chair of the Department of Internal Medicine.

During the first year of my PhD program, which consisted of a series of block courses throughout the year, I was pregnant and delivered just one week after completing all the exams of the first year. Despite the demanding dual commitment of managing two training programs simultaneously, I managed to deliver two poster presentations at the European Association for the Study of Liver Disease (EASL) conferences in Barcelona and Paris.

In Barcelona, the presentation took place just one month after giving birth to my youngest daughter. I

had to entrust her care to my mother in order to attend the conference and present the poster. Additionally, I successfully published three papers in reputable journals during my fellowship. Among my contributions to medical literature are over 16 publications, with a primary focus on Chronic Hepatitis B infection.

Notably, one of my papers, titled “The WHO guidelines for chronic hepatitis B fail to detect half of the patients in need of treatment in Ethiopia,” has garnered significant attention for its groundbreaking study results.

The five-year journey was not without challenges. Family dinners became a rarity, and my husband and children made significant sacrifices. Moreover, I faced the disheartening challenge of caring for my mother, who suffered a stroke in 2018 and remained in the ICU for nearly nine months. Additionally, the timing of my PhD defense coincided with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, introducing unprecedented uncertainty regarding the logistics of defending my thesis. Despite these formidable circumstances, I successfully defended my thesis in June 2020, symbolizing years of dedication and perseverance.

In 2021, I relocated to Rwanda to spearhead the Gastroenterology and Hepatology fellowship program, coinciding with the Rwandan government's efforts to launch various fellowship and residency programs nationwide. By April 2021, I commenced work at King Faisal Hospital, where under the support of the University of Rwanda, I was entrusted to develop the curriculum for the fellowship program. After meticulous scrutiny and rigorous external review, the curriculum garnered approval



Prof. Kulwinder Dua (right) honoring King Faisal Hospital as a WEO Center of Training.



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from the University Senate. In May 2022, a total of 13 new fellowship and residency programs were inaugurated, marking a significant milestone.

Currently, I serve as the Program Director for the GI Fellowship Program under the University of Rwanda and as the GI Unit Head at King Faisal Hospital. In August 2022, the GI fellowship commenced with four fellows, three of whom were females, aligning with Rwanda's commitment to gender equity. This program received substantial support from international faculty, including the GI Rising Team, who established a nonprofit organization dedicated to enhancing GI services in Rwanda.

Another significant collaboration was established with the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW), facilitated by Professor Kulwinder Dua. Through these partnerships, approximately 26 faculty members came to Rwanda and contributed their expertise to the fellowship program. Moreover, both King Faisal Hospital and CHUK were recognized as WEO Centers of Training (WCT) in October 2022 under the leadership of Professor Dua, who chairs the World Endoscopy Organization (WEO) outreach committee.

From all these collaborations, the faculties who actually came to Rwanda once or multiple times, excluding those who came for Rwanda Endoscopy Week (REW), include: Asombang Akwi (USA), Daniel Stein (USA), David Wolfsohn (USA), Dawd Siraj (USA), Dirk J. Van Leeuwen (USA), Donald Duerksen (Canada), Erik Von Rosevinge (USA), Francis Edeani (USA), Horst Douglas (USA), Innocent Dadamessi (France), Jo Vandervoort (Belgium), Kia Saeian (USA), Kulwinder Dua (USA), Lars Abakaan (Norway), Makrauer Frederick (USA), Mark Topazian (Ethiopia), Mary Chamberlin (USA), Minke Bakker (Netherlands), Prabhjot Kaur (USA), Rebecca E. Laird (USA), Sandie



Left to right - Dr. Dyna, Dr. Zainab, Dr. Solange & Dr. Shikama (1st Batch of GI Fellows)

Thomson (South Africa), Stephen P. Laird (USA), Steve P. Benson (USA), Tim Walker (Australia), Timothy B. Gardner (USA), and Veronica Loy (USA).

These international faculties provided lectures, hands-on training, and advising research ideas to the fellows during their visits to Rwanda. In parallel, they conducted teaching sessions for Internal Medicine residents. Moreover, the fellows have been given the access to continuous virtual teaching conferences from institutions such as Dartmouth, Harvard, Medical College of Wisconsin, and South African Sub-Saharan ECHO program.

Additional permanent faculties have been recruited for the fellowship program, including Dr. Berhane Redae, an endoscopic surgeon from Ethiopia, and Dr. Gamal Salah, a gastroenterologist from Sudan. The training takes place across three different hospitals: King Faisal Hospital, University Teaching Hospital of Kigali (CHUK), and Rwanda Military Hospital (RMH).

Currently, we have a total of five fellows spanning two cohorts and are ready to enroll our third batch in September 2024. Throughout their

training, all fellows have exhibited remarkable growth and accomplishments. Notably, our female fellows—Dr. Nyampinga Dyna, Dr. Solange M. Mukanumviye, and Dr. Ingabire Zainab—juggle the demanding fellowship program alongside their roles as married individuals and mothers, demonstrating exceptional resilience in navigating familial and social responsibilities. In the inaugural batch, Dr. Shikama Felicien, affectionately



Dr. Shikama attending Interventional Radiology Procedure (TIPs) at Medical College of Wisconsin.

titled the “King of the Group,” showcased remarkable bravery in balancing the rigors of training with his familial commitments. We are also delighted to welcome Dr. Cedric Kiwtonda, the newest male fellow, who joins us from the second cohort, further enriching our team.

During their second year, the fellows underwent a two-month rotation in the United States at Medical College of Wisconsin facilitated by Professor Dua and focused mainly on Motility/Manometry, Hepatology, IBD, Pancreatobiliary/Advanced Endoscopy, and Inpatient General GI consults. This experience provided them with valuable expertise in areas that are not readily available in resource-limited settings, including the care of pre- and post-liver transplant patients. Additionally, they underwent a one-month rotation in India for basic interventional GI procedures supervised by Dr. Saurabh Mukewar at the Midas Institute of Gastroenterology.

They are all conducting research projects alongside their training, which is part of the requirement for completion of the fellowship program. Additionally, two of the female fellows have undertaken one more additional research undertaking. They receive guidance on their research projects from one or more international faculties. Moreover, they have

received research mentorship from the Pan-African Organization for Health Education and Research (POHER) through Dr. Akwi Asombang.

As a GI team, we have joined the international multicenter study entitled Chronic Liver Disease Evolution and Registry for Event and Decompensation (CLEARED): Global Study of Liver Disease Outcomes in Inpatients, and two of the fellows are part of this international collaborative study. Both Dr. Zainab and Dr. Solange are currently working on writing case reports based on their experiences during their training period aiming to publish. Besides, Dr. Dyna was successful in publishing her prospective research project, which she initiated before the fellowship program, under the title “Causes and Outcomes of Upper Gastrointestinal Bleeding in a Referral Hospital in Rwanda,” on Rwanda Medical Journal (RMJ) recently. The fellows have been provided with opportunities to attend international conferences to enable them to acquire up-to-date knowledge, enhance their clinical research skills, and facilitate networking with other international faculties and trainees overseas.

Despite the demanding nature of gastroenterology, which is a procedural-predominant field requiring longer working hours on average and emergency services, all the fellows have

shouldered the demands exceptionally well. Particularly, the female fellows, though faced with heart-wrenching questions from their children such as “Mommy, will you be coming home today by 7pm before we go to sleep?” Also, having to leave them during external rotations, as well as bearing pregnancy during the training, these women have demonstrated remarkable resilience. They have remained on track for the various demands of the program, including research. Despite the disproportionate responsibility for raising a family and carrying social burdens, they have balanced their commitments in an exceptional fashion.

As their final year examination approaches in September 2024, these fellows are poised to become Rwanda’s first trained gastroenterologists. Upon graduation, they will be expected to assume the role of future instructors, paving the way for the next generation of gastroenterologists in Rwanda. As female instructors, they will play a crucial role in encouraging more female physicians to join the fellowship program. Their presence will serve as a beacon of inspiration for aspiring female gastroenterologists in a country that exemplifies gender equity in many aspects.





## A Trail of Influence: Bridging Continents in Gastroenterology through Local and Global Collaborations with WGO



**Wojciech Marlicz, MD, PhD, FACP, FRCPE**

Department of Gastroenterology  
Pomeranian Medical University  
Szczecin, Poland

### Building Bridges in Gastroenterology

This perspective provides a personal reflection on my collaboration with the World Gastroenterology Organisation (WGO) over the last 14 years. It emphasizes significant milestones in my own professional career development, starting with the invitation to Prof. Eamonn Quigley, President of WGO in 2010, to participate in the XIV National Congress of the Polish Society of Gastroenterology in Szczecin, Poland. Throughout the years, the partnership has been instrumental in advancing my gastroenterological career path, seeding up new ideas, and fostering initiatives on local and global grounds.

Throughout the years, other members of WGO have had a profound influence on my personal and professional development. To name a few, James Toouli and Geoffrey Metz from Australia, Damon Bizos from South Africa, and David Bjorkman, Carol Burke and Christina Surawicz from the USA have all provided unique perspectives and wisdom that have guided my professional growth. Naima Lahbabi-Amrani from Morocco and Cihan Yurdaydin from Türkiye have shared invaluable insights into gastroenterology practices that vary across different cultures. Over the

years, I have formed friendships and built professional relationships with other distinguished WGO members. Guilherme Macedo from Portugal, Kelly Burak from Canada, Govind Makharia, Prachi Patil, Mathew Phillip and Mahesh Goenka from India, Amy Oxentenko, Luis Lara, Vivek Kaul and Aasma Shaukat from the USA, Georgiana Gilca-Blanariu from Romania, Ganiyat Oyeleke from Nigeria, and Mashiko Setshedi from South Africa have all been influential in shaping my approach and understanding of gastroenterology. Each of them, among other distinctive members of the global gastroenterology community, has offered expertise and perspective that has enriched my knowledge and skills in the field. Their collective influence has been crucial in my journey through the complex world of gastroenterology. Interacting with the WGO Executive Secretariat has always been a greatly supportive experience.

The last 14-years of collaboration with WGO represents my profound journey that not only spans time but also bridges the gaps between local and global views on gastroenterology practice. Since then, as an active member of the Polish Society of Gastroenterology (PSG), I have been deeply involved in the evolution and

modernization of gastroenterological practices in Poland, a legacy dating back to the pioneering work of physicians like Jan Mikulicz-Radecki and Ludwik Rydygier.

### Few Words about the Polish Society of Gastroenterology

Polish gastroenterology has a rich heritage, marked by significant early contributions to the field. Figures like Jan Mikulicz-Radecki, who, together with Leiter in 1988, developed the first gastroscope, and Ludwik Rydygier, who performed pioneering gastric surgeries, have cemented Poland's status in medical history. These innovations were not only significant in their time, but also laid the groundwork for contemporary practices in gastroenterology.

The Polish Gastroenterological Society (PGS) was established in 1909, only a few years after the American Gastroenterological Association (AGA) and The Japanese Gastroenterology Society (JGS), and was the first society of its kind in Europe, predating many of its Western counterparts. This early establishment underlines the proactive approach of Polish medical professionals towards gastroenterological disorders and their treatment. The society has played a crucial role in integrating Polish

gastroenterology within the broader international medical community, which facilitated collaborations such as the one with the WGO.

### Educational Impact and Capacity Building

The collaboration with WGO has significantly impacted my medical education and capacity building in my career development. This happened through 1) the participation in WGO's training programs, which have enhanced my standards of care, bringing it in line with international standards; 2) joint efforts in public health campaigns, especially World Digestive Health Days, focusing on digestive health has leveraged WGO's global network to enhance the impact of these initiatives in Poland; 3) through WGO's Train the Trainers programs, we, as Polish gastroenterologists, have been trained both in Poland and internationally. We have then shared this knowledge with our peers and juniors, effectively multiplying the benefits of our initial training; 4) regular meetings, conferences, and workshops, often featuring international experts, have become a cor-

nerstone of continuous professional development for gastroenterologists in Poland and around the globe.

My personal engagement in WGO and global gastroenterology has been marked by several key events and initiatives. First, the World Digestive Health Day (WDHD) celebrations in Szczecin (Poland) over the years have been notable, focusing on themes from gut microbiota, inflammatory bowel diseases, diet and gut health to early diagnosis and treatment of gastrointestinal cancers, reflecting the latest research and fostering public awareness. The integration of the Polish Society of Gastroenterology into the WGO's global campaigns has not only amplified our local initiatives but also enriched the global gastroenterological community. Several past World Digestive Health Days (WDHDs) held in Szczecin, Poland deserve mention:

WDHD 2014 - The theme revolved around the importance of gut microbiota for overall health. The event brought together experts to discuss the impact of microbiota on diseases like celiac disease and provided insights into dietary management

and the importance of maintaining microbial balance.

WDHD 2016 - This event focused on the relationship between diet and the gut, emphasizing the critical role of nutrition in managing diseases such as obesity, food allergies, and other chronic gastrointestinal disorders. It showcased the latest research on how diet critically influences gut microbiota and overall digestive health.

WDHD 2017 - The focus of this year was on Inflammatory Bowel Diseases (IBD), underlining the challenges, and hopes associated with managing these conditions. The conference highlighted multidisciplinary approaches to IBD, discussing everything from dietary influences to advanced diagnostic and therapeutic strategies.

WDHD 2019 - The theme for 2019 was "Early Diagnosis and Treatment of GI Cancers." This event aimed to raise awareness about gastrointestinal cancers, which are significant and rising the numbers causes of mortality worldwide. We aimed to highlight the importance of early diagnosis and effective treatment strategies to improve survival



WDHD celebration in Szczecin, Poland in 2017.

rates and patient outcomes. The event brought together experts and healthcare professionals to discuss the latest advancements in the field. Global guidelines, the role of nutrition, microbiota and genetics in GI cancer prevention, and the latest technologies in diagnostic and treatment modalities were discussed. The disparities in access to care in low-resource settings and seeking to address these disparities through educational outreach and global collaboration was also vividly discussed.

Second, over the years, WGO's Train the Trainers (TTT) courses have been mind-opening educational events. Key TTT workshops, which have changed my approach to learning and teaching, require brief reflections.

#### TTT Taipei, Taiwan (April 13-16, 2015)



A group photo taken during the Train the Trainers course in Taipei.

The Train the Trainers (TTT) workshop in Taipei has become a very inspiring, motivating and mind opening educational event for me as a trainee. This intensive four-day course, jointly organized by the WGO and the Gastroenterological Society of Taiwan, consisted of 17 modules designed to enhance the teaching capabilities of educators in gastroenterology and hepatology. I was inspired by interactive lectures, group discussions, and hands-on sessions, fostering a very dynamic environment, with opportunities to exchange ideas and build strong teaching skills. Along with other participants from various coun-

tries, we were engaged deeply with the content while also enjoying social and cultural events.

#### Advanced TTT, Porto, Portugal (June 24-26, 2018)



Participants gather for a group photo while at dinner in Porto.

TTT-WGO Advanced Workshop on Leadership and Management in Porto focused on cultivating leadership qualities among gastroenterologists. I had the privilege of being hosted as a trainee by the Portuguese Society of Gastroenterology, participating in training that emphasized modern leadership, conflict management, and quality assurance within healthcare settings. My engagement in interactive sessions aimed at improving communication skills and problem-solving abilities and was facilitated by global leaders in gastroenterology. We were engaged in group activities, network building and the exchange of thoughts of medical leadership. This enriching experience enhanced our abilities to lead effectively in the dynamically changing medical landscape.

#### TTT Warsaw, Poland (August 3-6, 2022)



The distinguished faculty of TTT Warsaw.

My first experience as faculty member

in the Train the Trainers program in Warsaw, Poland was perceived as a highly specialized training aimed at enhancing teaching skills. The program featured interactive sessions, workshops, and small group activities focused over the range of topics from leadership and communication skills to conflict resolution and critical scientific appraisal. This initiative again offered a unique platform for social and professional networking among peers from around the world, enhancing our global gastroenterology community.

#### TTT Kolkata, India (February 8-10, 2024)



Prof. Marlicz with Prof. Kelly Burak Chair of the Train the Trainers program.

TTT Kolkata, organized by Prof. Mahesh Goenka and the Indian Society of Gastroenterology, was a spectacular four-day event designed to elevate the standards of gastroenterology education and training on a global scale. As a member of the faculty, I was able to participate in sessions highlighting the importance of constructive feedback, leadership, conflict resolution, and critical appraisal of scientific literature. The evening cultural programs and networking dinners created a unique blend of local flavors, enriching the experience for all of us attending this course.

The TTT initiative, first launched in Crete in 2001 and having trained over 1300 professionals since, continues to expand its impact, helping participants to apply learned skills in their home countries and cultivate global connections. As this col-



laboration matures, future directions include expanding research initiatives, increasing the focus on emerging technologies like artificial intelligence in diagnostic gastroenterology, and enhancing patient care through innovative diagnostic and therapeutic modalities. Challenges such as funding, integration of advanced technology, aligning with global standards, and navigating cultural differences in a rapidly evolving field remain.

#### Reflections on My Interactions with the WGO

My 14-year collaboration with the World Gastroenterology Organisation represents a fruitful partnership that has significantly enhanced my practice, education, and my visibility along with the Polish Society of Gastroenterology on the world stage. This collaboration not only reflects the historical depth and innova-

tive spirit of individual and group collaborations, but also underscores the benefits of global cooperation in advancing medical science and patient care. The ongoing commitment to this partnership promises further advancements and continued integration of Polish gastroenterology into the global medical community. Reflecting on these years of collaboration, I am struck by the dynamic and reciprocal relationship between local expertise and global insights. WGO's mission to enhance digestive health worldwide resonates deeply with my own experiences in Poland, where we have embraced and contributed to global guidelines and training initiatives. The intersection of my work with WGO's educational programs, like Train the Trainers, has been particularly transformative, providing a platform to both learn and contribute to global best practices. The synergy between

the Polish Society of Gastroenterology and WGO has catalyzed significant advancements in both education and clinical practices. It has been enriching to see how local traditions and knowledge in Poland can influence and shape global practices and vice versa. The personal connections I've made through the World Gastroenterology Organisation, spanning both continents and cultures, has been invaluable. All these experiences have thoroughly enriched my professional journey and personal growth.

This perspective on our longstanding collaboration serves not only as a recount of past achievements but also as a roadmap for future endeavors. It aims to advance the frontiers of gastroenterology both locally and globally, together with my colleagues and friends from around the world.

**Train the Trainers**  
Porto, Portugal 2024

**7-8 October**  
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT  
ADVANCED COURSE

**REGISTRATION NOW OPEN**

In Partnership with  
the Porto Gastroenterology  
and Hepatology Training Center

Registration Fee \$750 USD  
Registration Deadline 1 August 2024

**New!**

## XI Latvian Gastroenterology Congress with International Participation



### Aleksejs Derovs, MD, PhD, FEBGH

Associate Professor of Gastroenterology, Rīga Stradiņš University  
Member of the Finance, Scientific Programs and Train the Trainers Committees, World Gastroenterology Organisation  
Rīga, Latvia

On December 9, 2023, the XI Latvian Gastroenterology Congress with international participation took place at the ATTA Conventional Center in Riga, Latvia, marking a significant event in the history of Latvian medicine. With a rich history spanning 20 years, the congress is held biennially and stands as the largest congress of its kind in Eastern Europe. Over these two decades, the congress has gradually expanded, attracting participants from around the world, including international attendees and speakers.

From its inception, the congress has aimed to inform Latvian physicians about the latest developments in Latvian and global gastroenterology, featuring opinion leaders from Latvia and other countries. This year, the event welcomed guests from Germany, Italy, Austria, Denmark, Israel, Romania, Ukraine, Poland, and Lithuania. Throughout its existence, the congress has provided a considerable number of Latvian healthcare specialists with the opportunity to deepen their knowledge in medicine, particularly in the field of gastrointestinal diseases. This has significantly contributed to the improvement of patient care in digestive tract diseases, earning high praise from colleagues.

The congress is organized by two Latvian non-profit organizations – the Digestive Disease Society (latv., *Gremošanas Slimību biedrība*) and

the Gastroenterology Support Society (latv., *Gastroenteroloģijas Atbalsta biedrība*). These organizations act in partnership with Rīga Stradiņš University (RSU), the Latvian Academy of Sciences, the Latvian Gastroenterology Association, and other leading national medical associations. It has also received informational support from the Ministry of Health of Latvia and the World Gastroenterology Organisation. The Congress Scientific Committee included opinion leaders from different countries, totalling 16, including representatives from the USA.

Despite Latvia having only around 50 certified gastroenterologists, this event is gaining increasing popularity among professionals from other medical specialties. This is evident from the

growth in the number of participants. The first congress in 2003 gathered around 400 participants, but over the past decade, it has consistently attracted around 1,000 healthcare specialists. This time, the official number of participants was more than 1,100 individuals. The congress is not only popular among doctors but has also become a favorite among nurses, pharmacists, residents, students, and other healthcare professionals interested in the field of medicine. This congress was opened by the Latvian Minister of Health Dr. Hosams Abu Meri, RSU Rector Prof. Aigars Pētersons, and Prof. Martina Müller-Schilling, representing the United European Gastroenterology.

The congress featured a robust scientific program, encompassing state-of-the-art lectures, scientific presentations, and sectional sessions. Many sections were moderated by an international panel of experts. In parallel with the plenary session, several specialized satellite symposia took place in the second hall, eight in total. Young GI specialists were also given



A full room of attentive participants during the plenary session.



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the opportunity to organize their satellite symposia during the congress.

The congress plenary session was initiated by Prof. Juris Pokrotnieks (Latvia) with a state-of-the-art lecture titled “Towards a Human-AI Hybrid,” developed in collaboration with Prof. Jurgis Šķilters (Latvia). The lecture addressed current advances and issues of AI in medicine. Another presentation highlighting current trends in surgery was delivered by Associate Prof. Igors Ivanovs (Latvia). It also worthwhile to mention two lectures that showed current perspectives, “New Guidelines on Oesophageal Manometry” by Prof. Dan Dumitrascu (Romania) and “Identification of Malabsorption Syndrome in Outpatients” by Associate Prof. Heinz Hammer (Austria). In addition to the “traditional” GI topics, this year’s focus encompassed various themes, with special emphasis on the following:

- **Gastrointestinal Oncological Diseases:** Within this realm, Prof. Luigi Ricciardiello (Italy) provided commentary on a work published by the United European Gastroenterology, addressing the burden of gastrointestinal oncological diseases and the healthcare system in the European Union. Prof. Sandra Lejniece (Latvia) followed with a presentation highlighting the progress of the Latvian Cancer Center accreditation process, aligned with OEI (Organisation of European Cancer Institutes) standards.
- **Gut-Brain Axis Challenges in Gastroenterology:** This topic was explored through a “hard talk” discussion involving gastroenterologists and psychiatrists.
- **Autoimmunity in Clinical Practice:** This theme included presentations by Assistant Prof. Anda Kadiša (Latvia) titled “Beyond the Usual” and Dr. Jeļena Derova (Latvia), where they discussed different complex clinical cases.



The international delegates gather together for a group photo to commemorate a successful congress.



Attendees filled the small hall for presentations and professional networking.

- **Inflammatory Bowel Diseases (IBD):** With a particular focus on unmet needs in pregnancy, presented by Dr. Mette Julsgaard (Denmark), and infertility in patients with IBD, presented by Associate Prof. Aleksejs Derovs (Latvia). Also included in this theme was a lecture by Prof. Rami Eliakim (Israel) titled “Capsule Endoscopy in Established Crohn’s disease: a Panenteric Approach.”
- **Rare Diseases:** One of the satellite symposia was officially supported by the European Reference Network for Rare Liver Diseases (ERN RARE-LIVER), held under the patronage of the European Commission. In this symposium, Prof. Indra Zeltiņa (Latvia), Prof. Piotr Socha (Poland), and Dr. Inita Kaže (Latvia) discussed diverse topics related to rare liver diseases, including Wilson’s disease, autoimmune hepatitis, and hepatobiliary diseases in childhood. The expert panel included Associate Prof. Aleksejs Derovs (Latvia) and Dr. Valdis Ģibietis (Latvia), representing the Latvian Gastroenterologists Association and the Latvian Association of Rare Disease Specialists.
- **Microbiota Challenges:** This topic was explored from a variety of perspectives and featured presentations by gynecologist Prof. Dace Rezeberga (Latvia) and

gastroenterologists Prof. Peter C. Konturek (Germany) and Prof. Vaidotas Urbonas (Lithuania).

- **Rational Use of Antibiotics in Gastroenterology and Antimicrobial Resistance:** This included the presentation of local clinical guidelines in collaboration with infectologists and family physicians, along with other compelling topics relevant to Latvian medicine.

It is worth mentioning that a large exhibition comprised of numerous local and international companies actively operated throughout the day. These companies played a vital role in assisting and informing delegates about the latest technological and pharmacological advances.

Our event surpassed expectations and proved to be a tremendous success! We extend our sincere thanks to everyone who played a part in the success of this Congress. The collaboration with numerous professional healthcare organizations, coupled with the valuable contributions from esteemed lecturers and international guests, played a crucial role in ensuring the event’s resounding success. The support received from various individuals and organizations was instrumental in the planning and execution of this remarkable cooperative project.



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# ACG Heralds Colorectal Cancer Prevention during March: With the Spotlight on Screening, ACG Rallied Its Members for Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month



**Jonathan A. Leighton, MD, FACC**

2023-2024 President, American College of Gastroenterology  
Mayo Clinic in Arizona  
Scottsdale, Arizona, USA



**Anne-Louise B. Oliphant, MPP**

Vice President, Communications  
American College of Gastroenterology  
North Bethesda, Maryland, USA

The American College of Gastroenterology (ACG) is a longstanding champion of March Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, an observance that puts the spotlight on prevention and brings attention to the importance of quality screening for colorectal cancer (CRC). ACG’s goal is to inspire, uplift, and celebrate our members in their efforts to increase visibility of CRC prevention while providing them with educational resources, tools, messaging, and graphics to support their efforts with patients and in their communities.

Building upon recommendations in the College’s 2021 CRC screening guidelines by Shaukat, *et al.*, the College’s key message is “45 is the new 50” when it comes to starting colorectal cancer screening for average risk adults.

For 2024, the College’s CRC Month celebration featured advocacy, music, physical activity, patient education, and kicked off with an invitation to the larger GI community to show their true colors by wear-

ing blue – the signature hue of CRC awareness – for “Dress in Blue Day” on Friday, March 4, 2024.

**Joining Forces with Patient Advocates in Washington, DC**

On Tuesday, March 12, 2024 in Washington, DC at the National Mall, I was honored to represent ACG at the United in Blue rally, an installation organized by the advocacy group Fight Colorectal Cancer. ACG is proud to be part of a coalition of organizations standing with CRC patients, survivors, and caregivers who gathered to visit with legislators and bring attention to colorectal cancer, the trends in young-onset disease, and to demand that the U.S. Congress prioritize CRC research

and screening. A dramatic installation of 27,400 blue flags near the U.S. Capitol was a powerful visual representation of those younger than 50 who will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer in 2030 unless we do more to educate, screen, and raise awareness.

**Ride Or Stride For 45 Challenge**

An ACG annual tradition in March is the “Ride or Stride For 45” virtual challenge. The College invited the entire GI community to bike, hike, run, walk or row 45 miles in March (or 45 minutes per day during the month) to show support and enthusiasm for preventing colorectal cancer beginning at age 45 for all average risk adults. The experience is celebrated primarily via social media, but the initiative has also inspired in-person gatherings to walk or run among several GI fellowship training programs.



ACG President Jonathan A. Leighton visiting Washington D.C.

ACG RIDE OR STRIDE FOR 45

BIKE RUN WALK

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF GASTROENTEROLOGY



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Benjamin H. Levy, ACG Public Relations Committee of the ACG

**Tune It Up Concert for Colorectal Cancer Awareness**

An evening of musical inspiration marked the end of CRC Month when Dr. Benjamin Levy of the ACG Public Relations Committee organized a virtual concert featuring artists from a wide array of musical genres who donated their time and musical talents. ACG’s Tune It Up Virtual Concert to Raise Awareness of Colorectal Cancer included performers such as Lisa Loeb, Rufus Wainwright, violinist Hilary Hahn, the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, the Knights Chamber Orchestra, and many more! You can

listen to a recording of this impressive program at [gi.org/concert](http://gi.org/concert).

**Bridging Medicine & Music**

Bridging Medicine & Music was a colorectal cancer education program and concert organized by ACG Governor for Northern California Dr. Ronald K. Hsu, MD, FACG. This program featured international celebrity electric violinist Mark Wood performing in-person at Davis Senior High School in Davis, California on March 22. The ACG was a promotional partner for this event and many ACG leaders contributed to a video with key messages about CRC prevention.

**Coveted SCOPY Awards Recognize Excellence**

The College takes tremendous pride in the GI community’s commitment to CRC prevention. Each year our SCOPY Award recognizes our members for creative, innovative, and high impact community education initiatives. SCOPY is an acronym for ACG’s Service Award for Colorectal Cancer Outreach, Prevention & Year-Round Excellence. You can explore winning projects and learn more at [gi.org/SCOPY](http://gi.org/SCOPY).

**A Spirit of Celebration Belies ACG’s Seriousness of Purpose**

ACG takes a celebratory stance and embraces positive, healthy, and hopeful messages during March, but the emphasis on dressing in blue and events with giant inflatable colons belies a seriousness of purpose when it comes to CRC prevention and detection. Too many families are impacted by CRC and there are troubling trends in diagnoses among younger Americans. The elevated focus on screening during March reflects ACG’s ongoing sense of purpose and commitment when it comes detection and prevention of colorectal neoplasia.

Gastroenterologists must be both consistent and persistent in their ef-



Student musicians, Dr. Ronald Hsu, and electric violinist Mark Wood performed in a concert, Bridging Medicine and Music.

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forts to educate the public about CRC prevention, clarify the age to begin screenings, help overcome reluctance, and dispel myths and misconceptions – not just in March but throughout the entire year.



### ACG CRC Community Education Toolkit

ACG offers an array of patient education handouts and resources for community education events and social media through its CRC Community Education Toolkit which can be accessed at [bit.ly/ACG-CRC-toolkit](https://bit.ly/ACG-CRC-toolkit). ACG also has an informative infographic about CRC translated into ten languages which can be downloaded at [bit.ly/CRC-Infographic-Translations](https://bit.ly/CRC-Infographic-Translations).



In honor of March CRC Month, the ACG Board of Trustees shows its dedication to colorectal cancer screening for average-risk individuals starting at age 45. Back Left to Right: Dr. Aasma Shaukat, Dr. Jill Gaidos, Dr. Renee Williams, Dr. Irving Pike, Dr. Jean-Paul Achkar, Dr. Brooks Cash, Dr. Patrick Young, Dr. Seth Gross, Dr. Samir Shah, Dr. Millie Long, Dr. David Hass, Dr. Neil Stollman, Dr. Jasmohan Bajaj. Front Left to Right: Dr. Costas Kefalas, Dr. William Chey, Dr. Jonathan Leighton, Dr. Amy Oxentenko, Dr. Nicholas Shaheen, Dr. Neena Abraham.

**WGO 2023 Annual Report NOW AVAILABLE!**



## Advancing Global Collaborations to Implement Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Cancer Prevention and Care in Africa



**Matthew A. Cooley, MS, MLS(ASCP)CM**

Mayo Clinic Gastroenterology and Hepatology  
Rochester, Minnesota, USA



**Hailemichael Desalegn Mekonnen, MD, PhD**

Professor of Medicine, St. Paul's Hospital Millennium Medical  
College  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The Africa HepatoPancreatoBiliary Cancer Consortium's (AHPBCCs) 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Scientific Conference will be held in partnership with the Kenya Society of Haematology and Oncology, from 21-24 August 2024, in Mombasa, Kenya.

Hepatopancreatobiliary (HPB) cancers are a group of rapidly fatal malignancies of the liver, biliary tract, and the pancreas with poorly understood etiology and biology. These cancers are often diagnosed at a late stage, after the primary tumor has spread to adjacent or distant organs, precluding curative therapy. There are higher incidences of these cancers in Africa than in the Americas, Asia or Europe and are more likely to be diagnosed at younger ages and have higher rates of mortality than many other racial/ethnic groups worldwide.

The Africa HepatoPancreatoBiliary Cancer Consortium (AHPBCC) was formed in November 2020, with the overarching goal of harnessing resources and expertise across the African continent and worldwide to in-

vestigate the influences of lifestyle, the environment, viral and host biological factors on the development of HPB cancers to inform strategies for cancer risk prevention, early detection, and improved survival.

We set out to organize a series of scientific workshops and training activities focused on HPB cancers to augment our existing collaborations in Africa and encourage multidisciplinary investigations across the cancer continuum—from risk and prevention to cancer incipience and progression to treatment and survivorship. The AHPBCC has successfully established a global network of HPB cancer clinicians and researchers eager to address clinical care and HPB cancer health disparities on the African continent. The AHPBCC successfully hosted its inaugural scientific conference, “Transforming HepatoPancreatoBiliary Cancer Research and Care in the Omics Era,” in Cairo, Egypt, in 2022. It hosted 162 attendees from 25 countries and featured over 42 hours of educational

content, workshops and discussions. The second annual conference in 2023 was held in Accra, Ghana and included nearly 250 attendees from 23 countries participating in nearly 40 hours of conference programming and workshops.

The AHPBCC will hold its third annual conference in partnership with the Kenya Society of Haematology and Oncology (KESHO) from August 21-24, 2024, in Mombasa, Kenya, to expand the knowledge of the epidemiology, etiology, pathobiology and prognosis of liver, biliary tract and pancreatic cancers by fostering collaborations between researchers and clinicians in different countries, providing a framework for the efficient conduct and publication of original pooled analyses, providing a forum and framework for discussions, development and pursuit of new research avenues, and by supporting the development of early career investigators.







**AHPBCC**  
Africa HepatoPancreatoBiliary Cancer Consortium

2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
TOGETHER WITH

**KESHO**  
Kenya Society of Haematology & Oncology

ADVANCING GLOBAL  
COLLABORATIONS TO IMPLEMENT  
HEPATOPANCREATOBILIARY  
CANCER PREVENTION AND CARE  
IN AFRICA

**MOMBASA, KENYA**  
AUGUST 21-24TH, 2024

**WED AUG 21**  
**PRECONFERENCE WORKSHOPS:**

- Grant Writing
- HPB Cancer Pathology
- Advanced Endoscopy
- Surgical Skills
- Patient Advocacy in Africa
- Ultrasound and Fibroscan Techniques
- Conducting Basic and Translational Research in Africa

**THURS AUG 22 - SAT AUG 24**  
**MAIN CONFERENCE SESSIONS:**

- Developing and Supporting the Next Generation of Cancer Research in Africa
- Early Career Investigator Research Updates
- Clinical Care for HPB Cancers in Africa
- HPB Cancer Research: Basic and Translational Science in Africa
- Looking Forward: Next Steps in HPB Cancer Research and Clinical Care in Africa



## Mandarin Translation of Updated Obesity Guidelines Available



WGO is pleased to announce the executive summary of the updated Obesity Guideline is now available online in Mandarin under the title 肥胖. The guideline can be viewed and downloaded at <https://www.worldgastroenterology.org/guidelines/obesity>.

Roughly 1.5 billion people worldwide live with obesity. This disease can exert appreciable adverse effects on virtually all aspects of a person's life – physical, psychological, and socioeconomic. Empirically linked to several-year reductions in both quality-adjusted-life-years and lifespan, it confers increased risks for a

host of life-altering and potentially life-threatening comorbidities including diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and at least 13 forms of cancer. Yet, only a small minority of patients seek formal treatment, and few achieve meaningful sustained weight loss or the amelioration of obesity-associated comorbidity. One major reason for this is woefully inadequate knowledge among the public and primary healthcare providers regarding various treatment options that have been proven effective.

WGO worked in partnership on this publication with the International Federation for the Surgery of Obesity and Metabolic Disorders (IFSO). This joint effort provides clinicians with a tool when dealing with those who struggle with obesity. The guideline was led by Drs. Scott Shikora (USA),

Reem Sharaiha (USA), Kevin P. White (Canada), Guilherme Macedo (Portugal), James Toouli (Australia) and Lilian Kow (Australia). Profs. Macedo and Toouli are both past presidents of WGO. Prof. Macedo is our immediate past president, having served from 2021-2023, and Prof. Toouli served as president from 2013-2015.

In addition to the summary, the “Methodology and results of a joint IFSO-WGO Delphi Survey of 94 intercontinental, interdisciplinary experts in obesity management” paper is also available in Mandarin on WGO's website. The translated article is entitled as 肥胖.

All of WGO's 27 Global Guidelines and Cascades are also available in Mandarin translations.

# NOW AVAILABLE IN MANDARIN:

## WGO'S GLOBAL GUIDELINE ON OBESITY

國際肥胖與代謝疾病外科聯合會和世界胃腸病學組編

### 肥胖

2023



審核小組

Scott Shikora (美國)  
Reem Z. Sharaiha (美國)  
Kevin P. White (加拿大)  
Guilherme Macedo (葡萄牙)  
James Toouli (澳洲)  
Lilian Kow (澳洲)

## Calendar of Events

### WGO RELATED EVENTS

#### GASTRO 2024

**When:** November 7-9, 2024

**Location:** Marrakech

**Country:** Morocco

**Organizer:** WGO and Société Marocaine Des Maladies de L'Appareil Digestif (SMMAD)

**Website:** <https://www.wgosm-mad2024.com/>

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### 83rd Congress of the Spanish Society of Digestive Pathology

**When:** June 13, 2024 - June 15, 2024

**Location:** Valencia

**Country:** Spain

**Organizer:** Sociedad Española de Patología Digestiva

**Website:** <https://congresosepd.com/>

#### BSG Live 2024

**When:** June 17, 2024 - June 20, 2024

**Location:** ICC

**Address:** Birmingham, United Kingdom

**Organizer:** British Society of Gastroenterology

**Website:** <https://live.bsg.org.uk/>

#### Semana Digestive 2024

**When:** June 20, 2024 - June 24, 2024

**Location:** Vilamoura

**Country:** Portugal

**Organizer:** Sociedade Portuguesa de Gastroenterologia

**Website:** <https://www.spg.pt/>

#### 7th Annual Conference: Gut Health Across Borders

**When:** July 5, 2024

**Location:** Grand Nile Hotel

**Address:** Cairo, Egypt

**Organizer:** Egyptian Association for Research and Training in Hepatogastroenterology (EARTH)

**Website:** <https://www.earth-eg.org/>

#### 2nd International Conference of Nepalese Society of Gastroenterologists

**When:** August 23, 2024 - August 24, 2024

**Location:** Kathmandu

**Country:** Nepal

**Organizer:** Nepalese Society of Gastroenterologists

**Email:** [gastrosocietynepal@gmail.com](mailto:gastrosocietynepal@gmail.com)

#### IFSO World Congress 2024

**When:** September 3, 2024 - September 6, 2024

**Location:** Melbourne

**Country:** Australia

**Organizer:** International Federation for the Surgery of Obesity and Metabolic Disorders (IFSO)

**Website:** <https://ifso2024.org/>

#### XII Congreso Nacional de Gastroenterología y Endoscopia Digestiva

**When:** September 5, 2024 - September 7, 2024

**Location:** Ciudad de Panama

**Country:** Panama

**Organizer:** Panamanian Association of Gastroenterology and Digestive Endoscopy (APGED)

**Website:** <https://projectsswebsitewyfunnels.aplicacionespymes.com/>

#### ALEH Congress 2024

**When:** September 9, 2024 - September 11, 2024

**Location:** Santiago

**Country:** Chile

**Organizer:** Asociación Latinoamericana para el Estudio del Hígado (ALEH)

**Website:** <https://congresoaleh.com/>

#### Annual Meeting SGG-SGVC-SASL-SVEP 2024

**When:** September 12, 2024 - September 13, 2024

**Location:** Interlaken

**Country:** Switzerland

**Organizer:** Swiss Society of Gastroenterology

**Website:** <https://sggsg.ch/>

#### Congreso Argentino de Gastroenterología 2024

**When:** September 12, 2024 - September 14, 2024

**Location:** Cordoba

**Country:** Argentina

**Organizer:** Federacion Argentina de Gastroenterologia

**Website:** <https://congresogastroendo.org/site/>

#### Australian Gastroenterology Week 2024 (AGW2024)

**When:** September 14, 2024 - September 16, 2024

**Location:** Adelaide

**Country:** Australia

**Organizer:** Gastroenterological Society of Australia

**Website:** <https://agw.gesa.org.au/>

**EUS ENDO International Live Course 2024****When:** September 19, 2024 - September 21, 2024**Location:** Parc Chanut**Country:** France**Organizer:** Dr. Marc Giovannini**Website:** <https://eus-endo.org/>**20th ISDE World Congress for Esophageal Diseases****When:** September 22, 2024 - September 24, 2024**Location:** Edinburgh**Country:** Scotland**Organizer:** The International Society for Diseases of the Esophagus (ISDE)**Website:** <https://isde-congress.net/>**XVI Congreso Paraguayo de Gastroenterología y Endoscopia Digestiva****When:** September 25, 2024 - September 27, 2024**Location:** Asuncion**Country:** Paraguay**Organizer:** Sociedad Paraguaya de Gastroenterología**Website:** <https://www.spge.org.py>**UEG Week 2024****When:** October 12, 2024 - October 15, 2024**Location:** Messe Wien**Address:** Vienna, Austria**Organizer:** UEG**Website:** <https://ueg.eu/week->**ACG 2024 Annual Scientific Meeting & Postgraduate Course****When:** October 25, 2024 - October 30, 2024**Location:** Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**Country:** United States**Organizer:** ACG**Website:** [www.gi.org/](http://www.gi.org/)**JDDW 2024 - Japan Digestive Disease Week 2024****When:** October 31, 2024 - November 3, 2024**Location:** Kobe, Japan**Organizer:** Organization of JDDW**Website:** <http://www.jddw.jp/english/index.html>**The Liver Meeting 2024****When:** November 15, 2024 - November 19, 2024**Location:** San Diego, California**Country:** United States**Organizer:** AASLD**Website:** <https://www.aasld.org/the-liver-meeting>**Semana Nacional de Gastroenterología 2024****When:** November 15, 2024 - November 19, 2024**Location:** Merida, Yucutan**Country:** Mexico**Organizer:** Asociación Mexicana de Gastroenterología**Website:** <https://www.gastro.org.mx/eventos/2024/semana-nacional-de-gastroenterologia>**Asia Pacific Digestive Disease Week 2024****When:** November 21, 2024 - November 24, 2024**Location:** Bali**Country:** Indonesia**Organizer:** Asian Pacific Association of Gastroenterology (APAGE)**Website:** <https://www.apdwcongress.org/>**SBAD 2024****When:** November 21, 2024 - November 24, 2024**Location:** Salvador, Bahia**Country:** Brazil**Organizer:** Federação Brasileira de Gastroenterologia**Website:** [www.sbad.com.br](http://www.sbad.com.br)**NZSG-NZgNC Annual Scientific Meeting 2024****When:** November 27, 2024 - November 29, 2024**Location:** Claudelands, Hamilton**Country:** New Zealand**Organizer:** New Zealand Society of Gastroenterology**Website:** <https://nzsg.org.nz>**44th Panhellenic Congress****When:** November 28, 2024 - December 1, 2024**Location:** Athens**Country:** Greece**Organizer:** Hellenic Society of Gastroenterology**Website:** [www.hsg.gr](http://www.hsg.gr)**ISGCON 2024****When:** December 4, 2024 - December 7, 2024**Location:** Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh**Country:** India**Organizer:** Indian Society of Gastroenterology**Website:** [www.isg.org.in](http://www.isg.org.in)**Saudi Digestive Disease Forum 2024****When:** December 14, 2024 - December 16, 2024**Location:** Jeddah**Country:** Saudi Arabia**Organizer:** Saudi Gastroenterology Association**Website:** [www.saudigastro.net](http://www.saudigastro.net)**Joint CDDW™-CLM Conference 2025****When:** February 25, 2025 - March 2, 2025**Location:** Quebec City, Quebec**Country:** Canada**Organizer:** Canadian Association of Gastroenterology and Canadian Association for the Study of the Liver**Website:** <https://cddw-clm.ca/>



**APASL 2025**

**When:** March 26, 2025 - March 30, 2025

**Location:** China National Convention Center

**Address:** Beijing, China

**Organizer:** Asian Pacific Association for the Study of the Liver

**Website:** <http://www.apasl2025beijing.com/>



**WGO Member Societies  
Submit Your Event**

Are you a WGO Member Society wanting to share your event with WGO readers? Visit <https://www.worldgastroenterology.org/forms/submit-event.php> to submit your event for publication in WGO's website conference calendar as well as the quarterly *e-WGN* calendar of events!

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<b>Anahita Sadeghi</b> Chair	<b>Desmond Leddin</b> Co-Chair	<b>Rabia De Latour</b> Speaker	<b>Lars Aabakken</b> Speaker	<b>Reda Elwakil</b> Panelist	<b>Amna Subhan Butt</b> Panelist

## [www.biocodexmicrobiotainstitute.com/pro](http://www.biocodexmicrobiotainstitute.com/pro): an international hub of knowledge dedicated to microbiota!

Biocodex Microbiota Institute is an international scientific institution that aims to foster health through spreading knowledge about the human microbiota. To do so, the Institute addresses both healthcare professionals and the general public to raise their awareness about the central role of this still little-known organ of the body.

**It is designed to provide you with reliable, updated, and adapted content. It is also designed to reflect the dynamism and innovation of the human microbiota.**



Available in 7 languages (English, French, Spanish, Russian, Polish, Turkish, and Portuguese), this online international hub provides Healthcare Professional with the latest scientific news and data about microbiota including the Institute's exclusive content such as Microbiota magazine, thematic folders, continuing medical education (CME) courses and interviews with experts. Check them out!

<p><b>Accrediting training on microbiota</b></p> <p>Research on microbiota is advancing! Benefit from accrediting courses to learn about microbiota.</p> <p>► Access accrediting courses</p>	<p><b>Infographics to share with your patients</b></p> <p>Download original graphic material to explain to your patients the role of the microbiota in their daily health.</p> <p>► Discover all the Biocodex infographics</p>	<p><b>An expert magazine "Microbiota"</b></p> <p>Read our Microbiota magazine with exclusive content written by leading microbiota experts.</p> <p>► Read the Microbiota Mag</p>
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Navigate through this hub of knowledge: [www.biocodexmicrobiotainstitute.com/pro](http://www.biocodexmicrobiotainstitute.com/pro)