



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF TRAVEL MEDICINE
Promoting Healthy Travel Worldwide

TRAVEL MEDICINE News

December 2023



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Prof. Gerard Flaherty, MD, PhD
ISTM President

Dear ISTM members,

We continue to mourn the loss of our beloved friend and colleague, Professor Peter Adrian Leggat, the first ISTM President to die in office. Traveling to Brisbane, where Peter grew up, and spending time with his family and many friends from Australia and New Zealand, was important as a mark of respect on behalf of our members. The beautiful eulogy delivered by Major General Professor John Pearn of Queensland Children's Hospital, one of Peter's former teachers, captured the essence of an extraordinary intellect, a man devoted to service and learning across so many domains, a gentleman who "never had a bad word to say about anyone". We learned that Peter loved gadgets and how poignant a moment it was for his family when his faithful house-cleaning robot, still doing its duty, was finally switched off. I thank Peter's family and friends for their hospitality, for allowing Mike Jones and I to share in their grief and to reflect, not just on this huge loss, but also on the many happy memories of our times with Peter. Our recent signing of a memorandum of understanding with the Faculty of Travel Medicine of the Australasian College of Tropical

Medicine, represented by its Dean, Dr. Jennifer Sisson, and College President, Professor Colleen Lau, was a bittersweet moment for us all, but we were comforted in knowing that Peter was instrumental in bringing us together and that he would share our optimism about the future of this exciting partnership.

On a personal level, I miss Peter as a friend and confidant. He was always great company, and his sense of humor was both subtle and intelligent. I loved how he would respond to a message with his immortal words, "Copy that!" He cared deeply about ISTM, and I was greatly privileged to witness up close his loyal and professional service as both Secretary-Treasurer and President. Peter was a natural born leader and mentor. He not only brought people together; he always strove to bring out the best in people. He was also so respectful and gentle toward others. As I said in my native Gaelic at Peter's wake in Brisbane, beautifully conducted by his close friend and colleague, Professor Richard Franklin, "*ní bheidh a leithéid arís ann*" (*his likes will never be seen again*). Peter's longtime friend, Marc Shaw, kindly agreed to write an obituary at the invitation of *Journal of Travel Medicine* Editor-in-Chief, Annelies Wilder-Smith, and I commend Marc's heartfelt reflections to you all.

Our Executive Board (EB) has been very busy during the first quarter of its two-year term. In all, the Board has discussed and voted on some 50 separate motions covering all aspects of ISTM operations. Salim Parker has settled in well to his role as a co-opted voting officer on the Board. Anne McCarthy is doing a fine job as chair of a working group (with Christina Coyle, Hilmir Asgeirsson, Mike Jones, and LaVelle Johnson) tasked with revising the ISTM bylaws and policies and procedures documents. The group

has also finalized a code of conduct for ISTM staff and volunteers which we are happy to share with our members in this newsletter. They are currently consulting Leadership Council with a proposed revision to our Society's vision and mission statements and we are also contemplating a separate values statement. I thank our hardworking Secretariat, led by Interim Executive Director, Whitney Alexander, for all your support during the first quarter of this EB term. The performance review system which I will introduce in early 2024 will, I hope, allow every ISTM employee to achieve his/her potential and will also enable the Society to recognize and reward excellence and a commitment to the highest standards.

There are seven voting officers on the Executive Board. We are discussing the merits of expanding the Board to include an additional two officers. I will provide an update when our deliberations have concluded, and a vote has been taken on the matter. We are also making progress towards establishing a new ISTM professional group but more on that after the Board has voted on the motion at its December meeting. I am grateful to Christina Coyle for leading the charge in creating a Clinical Tropical Medicine Interest Group. Already she has assembled a distinguished cast of founding members, and we look forward to approving this group and its Council members and charter soon. On behalf of the Executive Board, I send warm congratulations to our dear colleague and friend, Professor Eli Schwartz, who was recently recognized as a Distinguished International Fellow of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene at its annual meeting in Chicago. We are delighted that Eli will play a leading role in our nascent Interest Group.

Our website launch in early December was a great success, and I would like to salute the hard work of our Website Task Force, led by Rebecca Acosta, Digital Communications Committee (DCC), chaired by Sarah McGuinness, and our Secretariat in working closely with our platform and design partners to achieve this milestone. Our fresh new website will be a one-stop shop for all ISTM-related information and we hope you will be pleased with its new appearance, functionality, and layout. Our new website subcommittee, part of the DCC, will work with the Secretariat in ensuring that our website remains current and relevant to our members' needs and those of the general public. I salute the work of previous Executive Boards in bringing us to this happy position.

Our search for a successor to Mike Jones as Secretary-Treasurer (S-T) is afoot and you will have seen the emailed calls to our general membership for expressions of interest. This is a demanding but very fulfilling role that puts the officer at the heart of ISTM operations. It carries an honorarium and some overseas travel requirements. Ideally, the ST-elect would benefit from at least a year shadowing the incumbent in this position, but the S-T search committee that I chair will take its time to identify the most suitable candidate(s) for the role. Please email me at President@ISTM.org if you would like to discuss your interest in the position.

Rebecca Acosta chairs our Executive Director search committee which is working on refining the competencies framework for the post and identifying suitable commercial search firms to assist it in its task of identifying high caliber external candidates. Our current Secretariat will be encouraged to put themselves forward for consideration as internal candidates once we have reached the application stage. We are delighted that our Finance Controller, Jaclyn Simon, a trained chartered public accountant, has agreed to dedicate more of her professional time as an employee of ISTM. Included in her additional duties will be support of the Development and Planning Committee (DPC),



chaired by Lin Chen. We are placing a greater focus on sponsorship activities ahead of CISTM19 as part of our efforts to avoid the financial difficulties arising from the otherwise highly successful CISTM18 in Basel. Properly managed, sponsorship income should cover most if not all the costs of staging a medical conference and that is certainly our ambition for New Orleans. I am grateful to Mike Jones for his forensic analysis in this newsletter and to several of our committees of the factors which contributed to the poor financial outcome at CISTM18. As Chair of the CISTM19 Oversight Committee, I will be scrutinizing all aspects of the management of our next conference. I have waived my entitlement as President to use business class travel for intercontinental flights. The year 2024 will see two international trips (CISTM19 SPC/LOC meetings/ Leadership Council meeting site visits, and Executive Board meeting) combined into a single trip, with considerable savings realized by booking flights much earlier than

usual and not leaving the city of New Orleans. I am grateful to Sheena Vollmer, our events and meetings specialist, for her assistance in getting the best possible value for money for ISTM. I have appointed Sheena and Jaclyn as ex-officio members of the Oversight Committee. I am grateful to Mike Jones for making every effort to recoup some of the hefty losses realized at CISTM18. Mike was involved in our decision to engage the Hilton Riverside Hotel in New Orleans as our conference venue for CISTM19 and already the cost savings yielded have justified that selection.

The *Journal of Travel Medicine* (JTM) has had another very successful year under the skilful editorial leadership of Annelies Wilder-Smith. Its impact factor of 25.7 ranks it 4th of 96 journals in the Infectious Diseases category, 9th of 167 journals in the Medicine, General and Internal category, and 5th of 207 in the Public, Environmental and Occupational Health category (Source: 2022 Clarivate Journal Citation Reports).

I join Annelies in thanking all the authors, reviewers, Associate and Section Editors who collectively help to make our journal such an astounding success.

Our Professional Education Committee (PEC), ably led by Yen Bui, has been busy organizing and delivering our webinar program. Our recent webinar on arbovirus infections, moderated by Annelies Wilder-Smith, was a great success. I am grateful to Valneva for their unrestricted support of this educational event. I am also very thankful to the DPC for securing sponsorship for our webinar program and our very popular Travel Medicine Review and Update Course, which will take place 23-24 February 2024. Sheila Mackell and her course faculty are busy preparing for this flagship educational event in our annual calendar. Thank you to those who have agreed to teach on the course and/or moderate the discussions. I have had early discussions with PEC about the possibility of developing a second TMRUC at a more foundational level to meet the learning needs of our wider membership. Our online, proctored Certificate in Travel Health (CTH) examination is being offered in January/February 2024, and places are filling up fast. Our Examination Committee, with Pierre Landry at its helm, continue to do stellar work in preparing examination questions which assess the ISTM Body of Knowledge. Look out for announcements of later examination sittings in 2024. Requests for corporeal examinations will be considered on a case-by-case basis and where the candidate demand for an in-person CTH exam would predict a financial surplus for ISTM.

I greatly enjoyed attending the Annual Site Directors meeting of GeoSentinel in Munzingen, Germany just prior to CISTM18. The Network continues to make impressive strides towards expanding its research activity. A collaboration on artificial intelligence with mathematical data scientists in Eindhoven, The Netherlands, is an example of the innovative approaches being taken. In a challenging external funding environment, the partnership

between ISTM and GeoSentinel has never been more important. I thank the GeoSentinel leadership team and all its site directors for their commitment to the Network's research and surveillance activities. Thank you to the GeoSentinel Foundation for its valued support throughout the past year. I also extend special thanks to Kristina Angelo for her outstanding service to GeoSentinel. Kristina has achieved promotion within CDC and I wish her every success in her new role. I am delighted that she will continue to serve ISTM as an Associate Editor with JTM and as an Associate Chair on the SPC for CISTM19.

ISTM will support several key regional travel medicine conferences in 2024. I have been invited to deliver a keynote address on the health benefits of travel at the NECTM9 conference to be held in the charming Danish city of Copenhagen, 22-24 May 2024 (<https://mkon.nu/nectm9>). ISTM is funding four North America-based speakers who will present at the 6th SLAMVI Latin American Congress in Travel Medicine in Rio de Janeiro, 7-9 August 2024 (<https://www.infectorio.com.br/>). ISTM, SLAMVI and SIERJ (the Rio Society for Infectious Diseases) have recently signed an MOU formalizing this support and the conference's designation as the 8th Regional Conference of the ISTM. ISTM will also have a strong presence at the 14th Asia-Pacific Travel Health Society conference in Kathmandu, Nepal, 18-21 September 2024 (<https://www.apthc2024.org/>). In addition, the Australasian College of Tropical Medicine, of which I was recently proud to become a Fellow, will host the 7th Annual Southern Cross Travel Medicine Conference in Brisbane, 27-29 September 2024. I am very heartened to see such high-quality educational opportunities available to ISTM members around the world. While we wait with eager anticipation for CISTM19 in the wonderful city of New Orleans, Louisiana, 11-15 May 2025, there will be much to be gained by attending and presenting research at as many of these regional meetings as possible.

Please support them as much as you can and spread the word about the dates and venues.

Finally, I would like to thank you our members and dedicated volunteers for your steadfast support of ISTM through challenging times. With our modern new website and our new Membership Committee led by Jenny Visser, I am confident that we will be better able to serve your needs in 2024 and beyond. Having promised you in Basel that it would not be "business as usual" during my presidential term, I fully intend to deliver on my goals to achieve **unity** within ISTM around its core mission, promoting excellence and professionalism in all of its activities; to build a strong global ISTM **community** dedicated to the dissemination of knowledge of the health benefits and risks of international travel; to use every **opportunity** to grow as an academic and clinical discipline and to collaborate with entities outside travel medicine. May I take this opportunity to wish you and your families every peace, love and joy this Holiday Season.

Prof. Gerard Flaherty, MD, PhD
ISTM President

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Nancy Pietroski,
Editor-in-Chief, Travel Medicine News

EDITOR'S *note*

Travel Medicine News Year in Review 2023

Buying Toothpaste: Take a Little Time to Focus on the Little Things

They say trouble comes in threes, but unfortunately, it's more like in multiples of three. Let's get it over with – the big bad news first. This year, Mother Nature, in her restlessness, delivered the usual tempest of floods, typhoons, hurricanes, cyclones, landslides, earthquakes, wildfires, and the fiery fury of extreme heat and erupting volcanoes. Humans demonstrated their fury in the form of horrific, deadly, and expensive wars, protests, mandatory states of emergencies, rendering the global village very restless. The usual infectious suspects wreaked havoc on human health –

on travelers, yes, but predictably on people simply going about their business in their home countries: dengue, measles, malaria, polio, cholera, diphtheria.... And there were the not-so-usual suspects, some of them concerningly becoming more suspect: schisto, chagas, strongy, RVF, CCHF, nipah, WNV, MVEV, lassa, norovirus, leptospirosis, Zika, and to add insult to injury – contaminated deadly alcohol. Closer to our hearts, ISTM lost three persons dear to the community – Peter Leggat, Don Cook, and Dawn Keough (see in Memoriam).

OK, how about some big good news? The COVID-19 and Mpox Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) have been officially declared over (although these bugs still seem to be hanging around). There are new vaccines for anthrax, chikungunya, COVID-19, dengue, malaria, meningococcal disease, mpox, and RSV. Next year, one less antigen will be needed for the flu vaccine. A single dose regimen of rabies PrEP may be coming. CISTM18 in Basel was a smashing success. The new ISTM website is here and it is beautiful. JTM once again was awarded a high impact factor, and the

TravelMed Listserv once again is full of intriguing questions and edifying answers.

I think this issue of TMN is one of the most informative in years. Please take the time to carefully read the thorough message from our President Gerard Flaherty, who paints a colorful picture of the state of ISTM now and where we are moving. Read all of the valuable contributions from our hard-working Board members, committee and professional group chairs, project leads, etc., i.e., the big stuff for ISTM members. But also take the time to appreciate some of the little stuff, and why we do what we do; I came across this article that celebrates one of the [happy little pleasures of travel](#). (I have kept this teeny tiny bottle of moisturizer from Bhutan for years) – which these days can get lost in the big unhappy stuff going on in the world. Happy Holidays, Happy New Year, and Peace to all!



Nancy Pietroski
Editor-in-Chief, Travel Medicine News

SECRETARY TREASURER'S *report*

Mike Jones
Secretary-Treasurer



It is with great sadness that I write this report following the tragic death of our Immediate Past President Prof Peter Leggat. Peter mentored me as ST before he became President Elect in 2019 and I knew him as a kind, gracious, and quiet diplomat. He combined these characteristics with a wealth of experience in both the Australian Armed Forces and at James Cook University in Queensland. He was my great colleague and good friend. I treasure his affirming email in June of this year after he finished his term as President, only a couple of months before his final short illness and death, and I am grateful to the Finance Committee (FC) for encouraging me to join Gerard, representing ISTM at his funeral where we were able to meet Pan, his wife, and Bruce, his father. We also lament the passing of Dawn Keough who faithfully served ISTM over many years as our website coordinator. She died in mid-October, and we extend our condolences to her family.

Switzerland is a beautiful, and well governed country, held in special affection by ISTM which was born there at the first ever international conference on travel medicine in Zurich in 1988. It is however an expensive country. Elizabeth and I have loved skiing there for 25 years, but we moderate costs by shopping in Germany or France en route to our timeshare, bring our own skis, carry homemade refreshments onto the slopes, and avoid eating in restaurants. The financial costs associated with CISTMs held in Switzerland were first apparent when

we attended CISTM5 in Geneva in 1997. Elizabeth promptly moved from the conference hotel when we saw the price of breakfast and returned to our timeshare!

In December 2019 the Oversight Committee visited three European CISTM venues and of the three, Basel was the clear front-runner. After COVID-19 hit in 2020, two venues were excluded by the EB, and Prof Christoph Hatz and his colleagues offered a wonderful LOC program and personal introduction to the Congress Centre and a Professional Conference Organizer (PCO). The first Scientific Program Committee in February 2022 allowed us to visit the Congress Centre and meet the PCO executives. Each contract was in two parts, a flat initial fee, and a subsequent variable fee to be presented after the conference. The flat fees were in excess of budget by a considerable margin and were scrutinized by the Finance Committee (FC). Our estimate of the variable fee element was based on past CISTM's and we hoped that a great attendance would enable us to sustain a small positive margin. I returned to Basel in July 2022 to review hotels and the FC changed our HQ hotel to the Hyperion which offered more moderate costs.

Final invoices from both the PCO and Congress Centre for the variable fee component were very substantially greater than we had predicted and I was personally gutted. They delivered a great conference experience, in contrast to Washington DC, where the venue provider seriously underperformed. A substantial reduction in fees moderated the ISTM loss from USD \$300,000 to \$115,000.

Our final loss on the Basel conference will be greater than the final settlement for CISTM16 and marginally less than the deficit realized from the Rome Migration Conference in 2018. We are currently appealing the AV costs which were very substantially beyond our expectation. I immediately offered my resignation to the President and EB, and at an EB meeting which I requested and did not attend on 1st November, the EB expressed full confidence in me in the role of ST.

We will do better with CISTM19 in New Orleans. Jaclyn Simon, our Accountant and Finance Controller, Sheena Volmer, our Events Coordinator, and I have all independently concluded that we need a simple cost tracker versus budget spreadsheet to be referenced and updated with each cost decision. For CISTM16 in Washington and other conferences, tracking was monitored by the Executive Director.

- The oversight committee chaired by the President will change from keeping a traditional general weather eye on costs to active planning, and meeting regularly.
- We will not use a PCO but will incur some costs from the New Orleans Tourist Board.
- We will moderate other costs wherever possible. The next EB will take place in New Orleans in March on the back of the Scientific Program Committee meeting and will reduce EB travel costs.

Some rays of positive financial news pierce the clouds. Firstly, I have negotiated a two-year extension for the CTH remote proctoring contract

signed in late 2020 which included a penalty for unused examination slots. We are grateful to ProctorU for listening to our appeal for clemency. Secondly, it is highly likely that ISTM will receive a further substantial grant from US Government COVID funds to support employee retention. This will constitute the final of three grants since 2021 and our auditors expect this to be credited by mid-2024.

When I took over as ST in May 2019, I identified a loss of \$500,000 on three successive conferences over the previous three years. I was determined that this would not happen again and am desperately disappointed that CISTM18 demonstrated how difficult it is to achieve income generating F2F conferences. We are fortunate to be facing this challenge with adequate reserves buoyed by a financially successful virtual CISTM in 2021. I am confident that with stringent cost

tracking in place, a USA location and a very competitive venue price negotiated by Sheena, we will achieve this in 2025.

Mike Jones
Secretary-Treasurer

2024 ISTM VIRTUAL TRAVEL MEDICINE REVIEW & UPDATE COURSE

The 2024 ISTM virtual Travel Medicine Review and Update course will be held February 23rd and 24th. The organizing committee and I invite you to look at our dynamic and interactive agenda, available on the ISTM webpage. Topics for this year include updates on vaccination, malaria, chemoprophylaxis, and travelers' diarrhea, along with sessions on dermatology, rabies, and many other topics of interest to the travel medicine practitioner. There will be ample time to interact with faculty on the virtual platform.

We invite interested members and nonmembers to sign up for notification of the opening of registration.

We look forward to a rewarding educational experience for all and look forward to seeing you.

Sincerely,
Sheila Mackell, MD
Course Director



News

FROM THE SECRETARIAT

I am writing to you now as I fly over the clouds somewhere between Memphis, Tennessee and New York, New York on my way to my home in South Carolina.

2023 has been a difficult, often turbulent, challenging and demanding year, requiring our team, both leadership and staff to harness courage, faith, hope and love. I would like to take this opportunity to applaud each one of them. They have persevered, rolled up their sleeves, hustled and are the reason why ISTM is able to achieve great things.

The end of Jodi Metzgar's contract at the end of 2022 posed an exceedingly difficult transition. With the support of Peter Leggat, and the whole Executive Board, the Secretariat team engaged the services of Transformational Coach, Jennifer McKenna. I thank Jennifer who helped me understand my purpose, and develop my leadership skills. Her support has been invaluable.

The Secretariat also owes its achievements this year to ISTM Acting Deputy Director and Membership Coordinator LaVelle, Finance Controller Jaclyn, Accounting Manager Elena, Program Coordinator Kim, Events Co-ordinator Sheena, Website and Graphic Artist Dawn Keough, and graphics designer Brian McGowan. We also acknowledge our Informational Technology team, Steve, Rob and Jim for their exceptional support and calm demeanor. Thanks too to our GeoSentinel OPI support team: Program Manager Aisha, Data Controller Hannah, and Consultant Steph. None of this would have been possible without the guidance and trust of our tremendous and hard-working, dedicated volunteer leaders, without whom we would not have accomplished nearly so much. David Hamer, his chairs and SPC team along with Christoph Hatz and his local organizing team and community,

worked extraordinarily hard to deliver a phenomenal conference and it showed. So much care and attention was poured into the orchestration of CISTM18.

Accomplishments this year include a successful and engaging CISTM18 in Basel, Switzerland, a new learning platform for our Travel Medicine Review and Update Course – (registration opens soon!), and a brand-new website and association management software which have been in the works for over three years.

We particularly honor the great contributors who sadly passed away this year. Peter Leggat, had a servant's heart, leaves a gentle legacy to our society which I hope will never fade. I treasure his calm guidance and leadership. ISTM also lost Dawn Keough who served our society since before I joined. She worked at Shoreland as a day job, but worked behind the scenes with us on our newsletter, website and graphics. She was a beautiful, grounded, easy going and encouraging soul whom I will especially miss, and it is bittersweet to continue without both Dawn and Peter.

In November, Secretary-Treasurer Mike Jones traveled from Edinburgh, Scotland to visit Secretariat Staff. His primary concern was discussing the deficit from CISTM18, and checking in with each staff member to listen to their concerns, reflections and understand their current work. We met to work on a best practices list – including lessons learned, in preparation for CISTM19. Meetings were also held with both our accountant and investment broker. It was a stacked but successful week. In planning and preparing for Mike's visit, it occurred to me that his term as Secretary Treasurer closes in mid 2025. I honor his exemplary efforts since accepting this challenging post. I think many underestimate the courage,



patience, momentum and effort that he invests and his commitment has far exceeded the responsibilities for which he signed up when he accepted this post in early 2018.

Whitney Alexander
ISTM Interim Executive Director

A Note From President-Elect **ANNE MCCARTHY**



Well, it has been about six months since I started my term as ISTM President-Elect, and what a busy time it has been. During this time, we had the unexpected and very sad passing of our immediate past president, Peter Leggat, whose longstanding contributions to the society will be greatly missed.

I would like to thank all of you who generously give so much time and energy to the society. The strength of the society rests on our members and volunteers. It is a very exciting time in travel medicine as the world readjusts to the new normal of the COVID era.

We are already gathering excitement about CISTM19 in NOLA, which promises to be another great experience for members/attendees. I have been charged with our twentieth anniversary CISTM in 2027, and planning is already getting underway. We are hopeful that this historic CISTM20 will be in an historic location.

There has been so much work in the past 6 months by the Bylaws and Policies and Procedures Working Group. I would like to thank the very hard work of Hilmir Ásgeirsson, Christina Coyle, Mike Jones, and LaVelle Johnson. Our assignment also includes modernizing the ISTM mission/vision statements. We are almost through the update of the Societies bylaws – and changes to this document will be sent out for approval by our membership.

The executive board approved a Code of Conduct for ISTM leaders on 24 October 2023, presented below. This policy will be signed annually by all ISTM leaders. It sets out the expectations for respectful and constructive interactions between ISTM leaders and with the Secretariat. Although ISTM members do not have to sign the code of conduct, it is hoped that the spirit of this policy will be adopted in interactions between all ISTM members.

Wishing you all a happy healthy holiday season, and a prosperous and peaceful new year.

Anne McCarthy
President-Elect

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ISTM OFFICERS AND LEADERS

ISTM expects the highest standards of conduct from its Officers and Executive Board members.

ISTM is an international association with a globally diverse membership which spans many countries. Different nationalities bring diverse cultural standards and expectations to their membership of the organization.

ISTM Structure

ISTM was formed in 1991 to promote high levels of education, qualification, and the practice of travel medicine. To that end, a biennial international conference, travel medicine update and review courses and examinations became mainstream components of its activity. The biennial international conference applies particular funding and staffing stresses to the organization, with a year of preparation followed by the more intense activity of the conference year.

In 1995, GeoSentinel was founded as a joint enterprise with CDC Atlanta as a global network of surveillance centers, in which ISTM members also became Site Directors. It was jointly funded by ISTM and a US Health and Human Services grant (HHS). In 2022, an active research arm was added to GeoSentinel activity, also funded by an HHS grant. GeoSentinel is administered by the Office of the Principal Investigator (OPI) and is assigned staff members by the ISTM Secretariat for administrative support. ISTM Secretariat staff members also assign working time in varying proportions to GeoSentinel activity, but remain primarily answerable to the Executive Director (ED) and Secretary Treasurer (ST) of ISTM.

Relationships between the Executive Board and GeoSentinel OPI

The Principal Investigator and Surveillance and Research Officers of GeoSentinel are appointed by the ISTM Executive Board.

All changes in the GeoSentinel work allocation of Secretariat staff desired by the OPI are first discussed with, and approved by the ED and ST before they are enacted.

The Secretariat

This staff unit is the direct responsibility of the ISTM Executive Director and Deputy Director. Staff members have specialist areas of expertise. ISTM Policies and Procedures set out the "Whistleblower policy". All staff members may raise concerns by direct access to the Executive Board which will normally take place after discussion with the ST unless the ST is the subject of potential complaint, in which case the Secretariat may have direct access to the President.

The Secretariat has a work pattern which includes a constant flow of email enquiries initiated in different time zones due to the international nature of the society. A two-year cycle of work results in high work demands leading up to the biennial CISTM meeting.

Leaders are defined as elected members of the Executive Board, elected Officers of the Society (the President, Past President, and President-Elect), appointed Officers of the Society (the Secretary-Treasurer and Executive Director), Chairs of ISTM Committees and Chairs of Professional/Interest Groups as well as members of the Office of the Principal Investigator of GeoSentinel, Site Directors and Co-Directors of GeoSentinel.

Effective leaders should cultivate self-awareness, i.e., develop a personal understanding of how their style of interaction impacts on colleagues and subordinates. Effective leaders are willing to delegate important tasks and decision making and seek to enhance their interpersonal skills, and will develop a collaborative, respectful management style. Effective leaders are expected to always be respectful in their communications including verbal and written (e.g., email). They will give constructive, effective feedback, delivered with cultural sensitivity, affirmation in a safe way (not publicly) and will work to strengthen the self-awareness of their colleagues.

ISTM Leaders therefore are expected to manifest the following qualities:

Respect

Leaders will respect the equality represented within ethnic and gender diversity, and the varying cultural and faith backgrounds. Leaders are expected to be respectful in their understanding of the challenges facing staff and to treat the Secretariat in a professional manner.

Courtesy

Leaders will be professional, understanding, and courteous in all their dealings with their fellow leaders and staff members.

Self-control

Leaders will restrain themselves from open expression of anger and frustration. Harassment and bullying behavior will not be tolerated.

Honesty

Effective leaders are expected to be honest in all dealings with their colleagues.

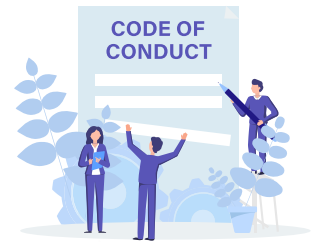
Empathy

Empathy means the ability to feel what it is like to be in the shoes of another individual, particularly when a colleague or staff member is dealing with stressors in their personal life. It takes practice to achieve empathetic skills but is essential for good working relationships. Journeying towards greater empathy is essential for effective leaders.

Handling Miscommunications and Perceived Errors

Where perceived errors or miscommunications occur, the leader should identify the problem with the individual and assist the staff member or fellow leader to seek constructive solutions. If a behavior is recurrent or there is no improvement and line management intervention is required, then notification of the ED, ST, or Chair of the EB should occur privately. The appropriate steps deemed by ISTM leadership will be taken to address the issues raised. Note, public humiliation

(verbally or by email) of a staff member or other members of ISTM will not be tolerated and will be addressed by the Executive Board.



Signed statement:

Date:

I have read the above statement and will strive to demonstrate the qualities mentioned above in my relationships with my ISTM colleagues and ISTM staff members.



GeoSentinel

GeoSentinel continues to gain momentum on all fronts. First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to make a few announcements. Our program manager, Aisha Rizwan, has been on maternity leave for the past couple of months and we congratulate her on the new addition to our extended family! Hannah Emetulu has been pulling double duty during Aisha's absence, for which we are hugely appreciative. As network projects continue to proliferate, we have hired a new part time administrator, Steph Berntson. She has been managing the geosentinel@geosentinel.org email during Aisha's leave, and will continue to help us manage our meetings and general communications. As many of you know, we were saddened to learn that Dawn Keough passed away recently, and Steph is also taking over her work on the development of our much delayed website, which we hope to finally have fully operational by the end of the year. I also have the bittersweet responsibility to announce the departure of Kristina Angelo as our CDC project officer, effective later this year. Bitter because Kristina, as most of you know, has been a driving force behind the success of the network for the last 7+ years. Anyone who has

been involved with any GeoSentinel project knows how her enthusiasm, efficiency, and deep understanding of the network, all of which has made her such a priceless contributor to our many successes. But as a great friend to many of us, we are happy to see her accept a promotion within the CDC she richly deserves. Her replacement has not yet been named.

It has been a great pleasure to see many of our members take the lead on a variety of new projects, some for the first time, and the evolution of new collaborations. I am very happy to be able to say that our publication record has become too lengthy to list here! The network has produced a dozen new publications in the past year, with 9 more either submitted or in advanced stages of preparation and clearance. Especially gratifying has been the fact that each manuscript is led by a separate individual, and often it is their first as a network member. These will all be highlighted shortly on our website. Keep a lookout for new publications on dengue, (including our climatologic analysis), chikungunya, Chagas, schistosomiasis, intestinal protozoa, and a series on antimicrobial resistance.

Our major research projects – SUMMIT (molecular epidemiology of malaria with a focus on artemisinin resistance), PRESEVERE (etiology of fever and severe imported disease) and NEURAL (neurocognitive sequelae of malaria) – are making strong progress, with increasing numbers of sites getting IRB approval, and enrollment having started for all three. We have just recently approved funding for an additional project led by Jesse Waggoner from Atlanta looking at a novel technique for storing and shipping stabilized RNA samples, which should greatly improve the ease and cost of several of our projects, ongoing and anticipated. Our first Delphi project, profiting from the extensive expertise among network members and other collaborators in schistosomiasis, is nearing completion and represents the first of its kind for us. Finally, our collaborators in Eindhoven are making highly encouraging progress in using machine learning to revolutionize our sentinel surveillance mission.

This year has not been without financial challenges. The Travelers' Health Branch of the CDC, through which our Cooperative Agreement funding flows, has seen significant

budget cuts this year, with a major impact on our operating budget. However, I am happy to say that thanks to GeoSentinel Foundation under the inspired leadership of Brad Connor, we expect to continue to be able to fund all of our ongoing projects. Our annual meeting will go forward as planned in Copenhagen, 25-26 May 2024, immediately following NECTM9 at the same venue. Our financial situation has meant that travel subsidies will be limited this year, although we are optimistic that

unrestricted educational grants from industry will allow us to defray some attendees' costs.

On a final note, we want to acknowledge that GeoSentinel has not only grown, but has changed a great deal over nearly 30 years. Some of our old members are wondering what this means for them, and some of our new members find the size of the network and the projects daunting. As a first step towards ensuring that we in the OPI are able to hear and

respond to members' needs, we have organized an advisory committee to help us plan the agenda and structure of our next meeting, to ensure that everyone derives the greatest benefit possible, and feels included in our growing worldwide family.

Michael Libman, for
the GeoSentinel
Office of the PI



GeoSentinel Publications

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Posen HJ, Wong W, Farrar DS, Campigotto A, Chan T, Barker KR, Hagmann SHF, Ryan ET, LaRocque RC, Earl AM, Worby CJ, Castelli F, Fumadó VP, Britton PN, Libman M, Hamer DH, Morris SK. Travel-associated extensively drug-resistant typhoid fever: a case series to inform management in non-endemic regions. *J Travel Med.* 2023 Feb 18;30(1):taac086. doi: [10.1093/jtm/taac086](https://doi.org/10.1093/jtm/taac086). PMID: 35904457.



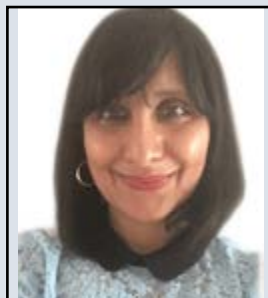
Rebecca Acosta,
Chair



Sarah McGuinness,
Leadership Council



Sarah Kohl,
Leadership Council



Dipti Patel,
Leadership Council



ISTM Website **TASK FORCE**

NEW ISTM Website is Launched!

After many years in the works, the Website Task Force is thrilled that the new ISTM website launched on December 8th. We invite all members to visit the new website (at the same address: www.istm.org) and to navigate through our fully renewed virtual ISTM home.

The website has a completely updated design including the new ISTM logo and color branding. The website's navigation and function have been greatly enhanced. In addition, the members only section was upgraded to improve the ease of access and use for exclusive member functions. In the coming months, more content will be added. In addition, committees and groups are encouraged to further develop their sections with additional content for members and visitors to the site. Part of the next phase will be to expand the new Traveler Resource section with curated and original materials to support the promotion of healthy, safe, and responsible travel.

This project has been a collaborative effort by many dedicated and hard-working members of our society including my fellow Website Task Force Members: Dipti Patel, Sarah Kohl, Sarah McGuinness, Jakrapun Pupaibool; the

Secretariat team (especially Whitney Alexander, LaVelle Johnson, and Kim Gray); and our partners at American Eagle and MemberSuite. We are also grateful for the vision and ongoing support of successive Executive Boards, including that of our Immediate Past President Peter Leggat. Peter recognized the importance of a re-imagined virtual home for the ISTM as the society moves into its fourth decade. We are saddened that Peter cannot celebrate the launch with us. We hope the revitalized website helps to honor his legacy and that of the society while becoming a dynamic new home for the ISTM in the years ahead.

The Website Task Force will be formally signing off from this project and handing over the ongoing maintenance and enhancement of the website. The Digital Communications Committee, and the new sub-committee to help oversee the website, along with the Secretariat team, will be taking over from here. They will be helping to ensure that the website continues to be an inviting, informative, organized, and functional home base as the society grows and expands.

With deep gratitude to all of those who helped with this enormous task,

Submitted by the Website Task Force:
Rebecca Acosta (*Chair*), Sarah Kohl,
Sarah McGuinness and Dipti Patel.

Professional Groups

NURSING



Left to Right: Lisa Scotland and Claire Wong



Left to Right: Catherine Keil, Claire Wong, and Lisa Scotland

Travel Medicine News – End of Year Review 2023

The end of year review is always a reflection of ISTM nurses' involvement and our celebration in the field of travel medicine and I would like to dedicate this synopsis in honor of Professor Peter Leggat. Both internationally, and nationally in Australia, we have all been shocked and saddened with Peter's passing. For many he was a role model, a teacher and a friend and our thoughts are with his family, friends, and colleagues at this difficult time. He was a great supporter of nurses in travel medicine, encouraging the formation of The Standing Committee for Travel Health Nurses of Australia and New Zealand (THNANZ) which was established in 2020 to represent travel health nurses in Australia and New Zealand. I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to Peter for his hard work and dedication to travel medicine on behalf of the NPG Steering Council and ISTM nurses.

CISTM18 in Basel Switzerland in May, presented a wonderful opportunity for Nursing Professional Group (NPG) members to network and engage with colleagues from all corners of the globe. The NPG Steering Council hosted a pre-congress workshop, titled "Pre-Travel Health Consultation—the New Normal," which was well attended. The NPG networking event (reception) and dinner were also opportunities for nurses to meet and network. During the nurse reception we said thank you to Caroline Nash, the outgoing Chair, for all her contributions and guidance over the last two years. The NPG are delighted that Caroline has agreed to remain

on the Steering Council. During the NPG networking event Claire Wong was presented with The Distinguished Nurse Leadership Award – an exceptional nurse and colleague of the NPG.

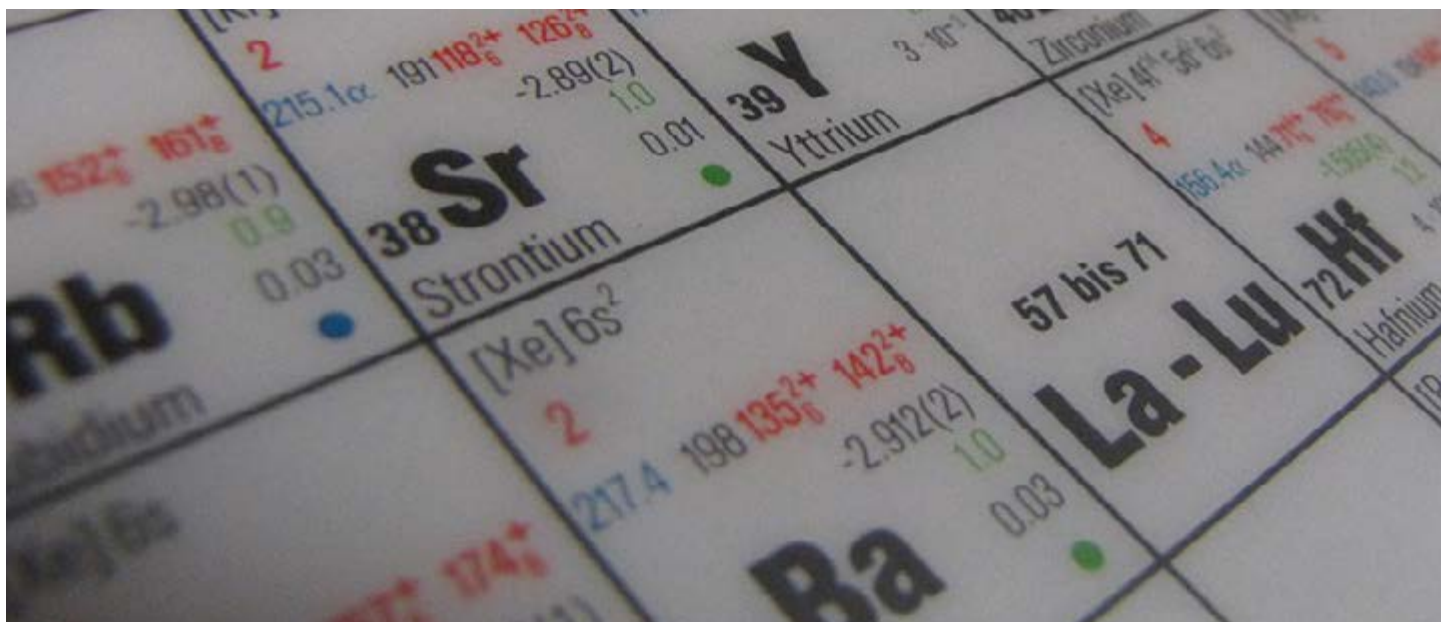
Congratulations also to Lisa Scotland, NPG Steering Council Member, who became the New Zealand Society of Travel Medicine President, the first nurse in this role. Well done, Lisa!

The second half of the year has been busy with regular NPG Steering Council meetings where we are planning and evolving ways to which we can assist with the promotion and education of nurses in travel medicine. We have updated the NPG page on the ISTM website, created an NPG resource library accessed through the ISTM Listserv and are involved in planning education webinars. Jane Chiodini has kindly agreed to work with us to develop an interactive resource list and NPG portal. We will also shortly announce the three new members of the Steering Council who we are delighted to have on the team with their wealth of experience and knowledge.

We have appreciated all the feedback from our members and look forward to working with you to assist and promote nurses within the ISTM and travel medicine.

Catherine Keil
NPG Chair





PHARMACIST

Hello, everyone! My name is Atsushi Sato and I am a community pharmacist from Canada. As a travel medicine practitioner in a small town on the west coast of Canada, I've been following the Pharmacy Professional Group (PPG) since receiving my CTH in 2014. I am deeply honored and thrilled to be writing here as a new council member of PPG. Today, I'd like to share some updates from PPG meeting and also the activities from my home country Japan.

PPG bibliography

A PPG bibliography that is centered on pharmacy practices and travel medicine offers a comprehensive collection of resources suitable for scholarly work, however, it was becoming less current. Dr. Sherilyn Houle (Canada), the new chair elect of PPG, stepped up to take the initiative to update the bibliography. It will soon

be available on ISTM's website and will be regularly refreshed every four months starting in January 2024. I believe this will serve as a valuable resource for both fellow practitioners and researchers.

Student Chapter House

Both ISTM and PPG face a common challenge: a decline in membership. "Student Chapter House" is a project led by Dr. Karl Hess (U.S.A.) aiming to raise awareness of travel medicine among pharmacy students. I'm enthusiastic about joining forces with Dr. Hess to extend our invitation to pharmacists in Asian countries where their engagement in travel medicine is not established as much as in North America.

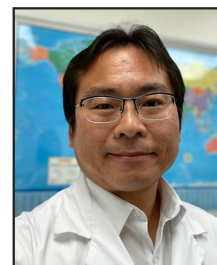
Conference in Japan

Speaking of Asia, a travel medicine conference took place in Tokyo from 24-26 November. The local pharmacist professional group hosted a seminar featuring Deaflympic athlete Ms. Kumi Hayase as a guest speaker. Ms. Hayase is also a practicing pharmacist

who signs when counselling patients with hearing impairment. I gained insights from Ms. Hayase as an athlete traveler as well as a traveler with hearing challenges.

A lot of exciting work is happening behind the scenes and we invite you to stay tuned for PPG updates. Furthermore, please reach out to me or any other PPG members if you have any suggestions or collaborative ideas. I'm excited about expanding the role of pharmacists across the world in the field of travel medicine.

Atsushi Sato
*A new council
person of PPG,
Canada*



Interest Groups

PEDIATRIC

There has been a steady increase in children traveling internationally over time. We provide our members a professional forum for networking to facilitate learning and cooperation between different providers for pediatric travel medicine.

We had several educational activities this year that promoted pediatric travel medicine and resources available through ISTM.

- There was a lively Pediatric Q&A session prior to the CISTM18 in Basel moderated by Drs. Mackell and Starr. Controversies and conundrums were presented and discussed.
- Dr. Prevatt spoke at the The Travel Medicine Review & Update course in February 2023 and covered aspects of pediatric, breastfeeding and pregnant travelers.

Questions are regularly posed to the ISTM Listserv regarding child travelers, and we have an interest group-specific listserv on which discussion can also occur. We invite networking with members of the group electronically, at any of the in-person conferences, and generally are happy to help with challenges of complex pediatric travelers.

We are grateful to Dr. John Christensen, one of the founding Council members who provides a regularly updated bibliography that is sent to members along with signposting to new guidance.

Please consider applying for the steering committee of the Pediatric Interest Group in the coming cycle! Council members meet periodically on Zoom to exchange ideas and the time commitment is not excessive.

The current members of the group are:

- Immediate Past Chair: Sheila Mackell, USA
- John Christensen, USA
- Eyal Leshem, Israel
- Leah Kern, USA
- Sarah Kohl, USA
- Francisco Silva, USA
- Mike Starr, Australia

Respectfully,
Chair:
Natalie Prevatt,
United Kingdom



EXPEDITION AND WILDERNESS MEDICINE

Now that 2023 is approaching its natural end, everyone looks back to see what happened, and so does the ISTM Expedition and Wilderness Medicine Special Interest Group.

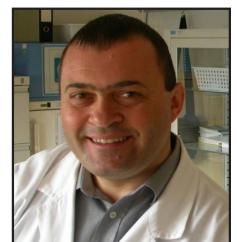
This year saw two major events affecting our Society's life.

First of all, the celebration of the 18th Conference held in Basel in

May. It was a wonderful event, full of colleagues we once again experienced as friends, where our Group was involved with a specific Workshop entitled "Medical Kits for Expedition and Adventure Travel". Howard Backer (USA) and Jenny Visser (New Zealand) led the discussion on issues and contents of medical kits. The concept that "no one size fits all" was strongly reaffirmed also applied to this topic, since it is impossible to anticipate or prepare for every single problem. Howard and Jenny underlined how paramount the art of careful and creative improvisation can be in remote areas, as well.

Second, in September we had to mourn the sudden loss of our immediate past President, Prof Peter Leggat, from Australia. It has been a real shock for everyone of us in the community of ISTM, especially after meeting him in Basel a few months earlier. He had been for three decades a wise and happy mentor for many of us, to start with myself, and I am more than sure that his gentleness, his sense of humour, his inclusive leadership and mostly his humanity will be remembered forever.

Andrea
Rossanese, *Chair*



STUDENT TRAVEL ABROAD

The Student Travel Abroad Interest Group would like to express most sincere condolences to the family, friends, and colleagues of Peter Leggat in the wake of his passing. His contributions to ISTM and to Travel Medicine will always be remembered and appreciated.

As co-chairs of STA, we would like to welcome any ISTM members who are interested in the unique issues around student travel to join our interest group to collaborate on new projects, share resources, and engage in productive discussions. Please reach out to either of us any time if you are interested or would like to learn more.

With warmest regards,

Julie Richards and Catherine Ebelke
Co-Chairs, Student Travel Abroad Interest Group



MILITARY TRAVEL



Thank you for your service, Peter.

You will be deeply missed.

Olivier Aoun, *Chair Military Travel*



RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

The Responsible Travel Group is an enthusiastic and friendly group promoting ethical and sustainable travel medicine practice.

Our aims are to:

- Educate members to help make responsible choices when traveling or advising travelers.
- Promote membership of the ISTM and welcome new members to the Responsible Travel Group.
- Work together with other special interest groups of the ISTM
- Increase awareness of the huge global impact of travel and look at ways to deal with this.

At CISTM18 in Basel in May we ran a successful pre-conference presentation and workshop (incubator) at which Ivory Vogt from Sustainable Tourism International gave an excellent presentation "Highlighting the Climate Change Issue; the Carbon Footprint of Travel", which provoked a lot of interesting discussion.

Climate change is a health emergency, causing catastrophic change for people and nature. It is essential that every individual plays a part by actively making wise choices. We all need to look at ways in which we can reduce our own carbon footprint and encourage responsible travel by using travel companies who offer community-based tourism, treat the local population, staff, including porters and guides well, respect local culture, and who source food locally.

As temperatures rise around the planet, vector-borne diseases are spreading into areas where they were typically absent and are re-emerging in other areas. This contributes to overburdening the already struggling local healthcare systems in the destination country.

By carrying out a thorough pre-travel consultation in our clinics we ensure



that travelers are vaccinated before travel, have antimalarial medication where required, practice bite-avoidance measures and are aware of the risks of disease and accidents.

Sustainable travel is an exchange of enriching and interactive encounters that benefit both a visitor and a host. An example of this would be community-based tourism where visitors stay in local homes, have a glimpse into traditional life and where benefits remain within the local community. Research shows that most travelers are keener than ever to travel sustainably.

The world is a beautiful place. We all need to work together to ensure that all this is still here for future generations to experience. It is up to us all as individuals to make better choices to look after our precious planet.

Please do consider joining our group.

May I take this opportunity to wish all of you a very enjoyable, peaceful festive season and warmest wishes for a very happy and healthy New Year.

Anne Maclean
Chair Responsible Travel Group



TRAVEL FOR WORK

First, I would like to express our great sadness at the sudden loss of Dr. Peter Leggat very recently. It was so sudden and such a shock. For me personally I had seen him at multiple meetings earlier in the year, the last just a couple of weeks prior to his passing. Many of our leadership team are in Australia and have felt his loss very acutely. He was a great mentor to me in the more than 20 years I had known him. Peter was an amazing man and his reach was very clear at his funeral with attendants from many parts of society with which he had been engaged inside or outside of work. Peter was an essential member of both the Australasian College of Tropical Medicine (ACTM) and the ISTM, being the immediate past president of both organizations. He leaves a large legacy and we will miss him incredibly.

We had a meeting of our group at the ISTM meeting in Switzerland earlier in the year. Our leadership team had been very busy prior to this creating some documents with which to move forward. The meeting did not quite go as planned, as it was not on the conference time listings, and there was confusion as to the day of the meeting. I was the only member of the leadership team in attendance and bolstered by a large South African contingent. This issue has been discussed at the ISTM Leadership meeting after the conference in Switzerland with regard to all special interest groups. We made it clear that these groups are very important to ISTM and its members and should be given a place on the conference plan so it is clear to everyone where and when the meeting is being held.

At present, our group has updated its goals, available now on the ISTM website. This will be updated again with the advent of the new

website. We are creating a document considering employer duty of care in relation to the pretravel visit of an individual worker prior to posting overseas on assignment. We have also worked on a document considering requirements in terms of location and length of assignment and recommendations for constituents of the pretravel process including consultation and when medical exams may be considered. We have had feedback at the Leadership meeting that we need to be very generic with our documents and are currently reviewing them, with this in mind, within our leadership group. Once this has been completed, we will distribute them to our members to obtain further feedback.

Dr. Jennifer Sisson
*Chair, Travel for
Work Interest Group*



SAVE THE DATE!

www.nectm9.com



NECTM9

Northern European
Conference on Travel Medicine
Denmark, Copenhagen, May 22nd-24th, 2024



COMMITTEES



CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Travel medicine is a very dynamic, always evolving specialty. ISTM encourages clinicians in our field to make a commitment to provide comprehensive, quality, up-to-date pre and post travel care internationally. Toward that goal, as our members know, ISTM offers an opportunity to earn the Certificate in Travel Health (CTH) by examination. Since 2011, individuals who successfully sat for the CTH exam can retain their credentials through a renewal process that includes retaking the exam or submitting evidence of professional development activities over a ten-year period.

CPD is the ISTM committee responsible for the overall management of CTH renewals. For the past three years, CPD has worked to oversee the structure, communications, and quality of the CTH renewal process. This year our committee has revised our website content and met in Basel to make recommendations to the Executive Board for important changes to the process. Currently CPD is completing its annual fall audit of 10% of CTH renewals (for individuals who sat for the exam ten years ago). Throughout 2023, we also met our goal to respond, with the assistance of the Secretariat, to all CTH renewal inquiries within 24 to 48 hours.

Our agenda for 2024 includes a February committee Zoom meeting to review three years of CPD audits and make further progress with changes we believe will enhance the value of the interdisciplinary CTH professional credential.

I sincerely thank all the CPD members who volunteered their time and energies this past year to promote professional development in our practice and the delivery of quality travel medicine services. In doing so, they work to protect the health and safety of travelers worldwide.

*Gail Rosselot
Continuing
Professional
Develop
Committee Chair*



PUBLICATIONS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The ISTM Congress year is always particularly exciting and busy for the Publications Oversight Committee (POC).

Although CISTM18 in Basel provided a refreshing opportunity to reconnect with friends and colleagues in person, it was also tinged with sadness at the loss of the immediate past-president Peter Leggat a short time later. CISTM18 will form part of Peter's lasting legacy within the Society. He will be remembered fondly by those of us who knew him over many years. His commitment to travel medicine was legendary as was his dry sense of humor which raised many a chuckle. I did tell him that I was sure he had Scottish heritage. We join others in sending our condolences to Peter's family.

Many of us involved in the excellent CISTM18 scientific program used the opportunity to raise the profile of the POC and to encourage members to become involved. Current POC members are listed on the [website](#). They are geographically diverse, offering a view of the different approaches to country travel health guidance. Given its wide remit, the POC is in a unique position in reaching all areas of the society. We value that and continue to support, liaise, and collaborate with other groups and committees when appropriate or invited.



The new website continues to evolve. The POC continued to liaise with the website taskforce and is engaged with the Digital Communications Committee (DCC) in responding to review requests. The DCC is populating the new website and will facilitate committees and groups to refresh and update their content. Use of the ISTM logo on materials is also an important addition. I am continually grateful to my colleagues for acting as POC liaisons and their timely response to incoming requests. We enjoy a robust debate on issues that arise, but I am always heartened by the constructive discussions and swift consensus. The POC expects more involvement as the website and other new work progresses.

The *Journal of Travel Medicine* (JTM) Editor-in-Chief, Annelies Wilder-Smith, her editors and editorial board continue to review and select excellent manuscripts for publication, as demonstrated by the JTM impact factor. During CISTM18, articles related to topics under discussion on the program were released to members and well received. Thank you to all.

As reported in the last TMN, the POC considered nominations for the JTM awards 2023. Winners were declared at the CISTM18 Membership Assembly in Basel. Members are encouraged to submit articles for consideration.

The *Travel Medicine News* (TMN) Editor-in-Chief, (EiC) Nancy Pietroski, and Assistant Editor Luis Furuya Kanamori, continue to compile the content and inform the membership through the magazine notices.

Members are invited to contribute newsworthy items for inclusion. Members may be unaware that Nancy is also EiC of the Wilderness Medicine Society (WMS) *Wilderness Medicine Magazine*. Nancy was honored with the WMS Dian Simpkins Ice Axe Award, "given in recognition of outstanding service to the field of wilderness medicine and/or the Wilderness Medical Society." Congratulations to Nancy. We are encouraged to see increasing use and engagement on the TravelMed Listserv, ably managed and monitored by Nancy. The discussions and varied topics have been both excellent and educational. Members are reminded to adhere to the charter before posting. <https://www.istm.org/travelmedlistserv>

Grateful thanks to my POC colleagues whose knowledge and expertise continues to be a valuable asset to the Society. We look forward to supporting the President, the Executive Board (EB) and members in the year ahead. Thanks also to Whitney, the Secretariat team and the ISTM EB for their support.

Sadly, our wish for a more peaceful world in 2023 has not materialized, if anything, the global situation is even more uncertain. This will undoubtedly affect global travel. For colleagues working in areas of conflict or caught up in countries affected we send our best wishes for a safe and better 2024.

- **Chair: Alexandra Grieve,** United Kingdom
- ***Journal of Travel Medicine* Editor: Annelies Wilder-Smith,** Switzerland

- ***Travel Medicine News* Editor: Nancy Pietroski,** United States of America
- **Charles Ericsson,** United States of America
- **Luis Furuya Kanamori,** Australia
- **Caroline Nash,** Australia
- **Jakrapun Pupaibool,** United States of America
- **Rudy Zimmer,** Canada

Sandra Grieve,
Chair
POC



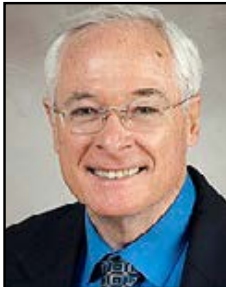
SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS COMMITTEE

For those who are active in ISTM and travel medicine, I encourage you to apply for fellow status.

The requirements are posted on the web. The SRC will review such applications and refer our recommendations to the Board for approval. We will also consider who, if anyone, should be considered for Distinguished Fellow status. We are also responsible for consideration of any new awards and are interested in your suggestions if you feel a new award is needed.

Finally, we are considering what to do to honor the late Peter Leggat and if anyone has a suggestion please forward it to me at Charles.d.ericsson@uth.tmc.edu and I can forward it for discussion by the SRC.

Respectfully
submitted,
Charlie Ericsson



RESEARCH AWARDS COMMITTEE

Research Award 2023 -2024

I would like to start by thanking Mary Wilson and Kyle Petersen for their immense contribution throughout the years at the Research and Award Committee. Mary and Kyle have been instrumental in advancing travel medicine research. They will be greatly missed in the committee meetings, and we wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

We are excited to announce that the 2023-2024 ISTM Research Awards are now open for applications. You can find the application form and the eligibility criteria [here](#). The awards are available in three main categories:

- Projects by investigators in low- and middle-income countries
- Projects by new investigators
- General travel medicine projects

The awards aim to foster and encourage research in travel medicine, especially among young and emerging researchers and researchers from low- and middle-income countries. The deadline for submitting your research proposals is 31 January 2024. We look forward to receiving numerous high-quality research proposals.

Luis
Furuya-Kanamori,
*Chair ISTM
Research and
Award Committee*



EXAM COMMITTEE

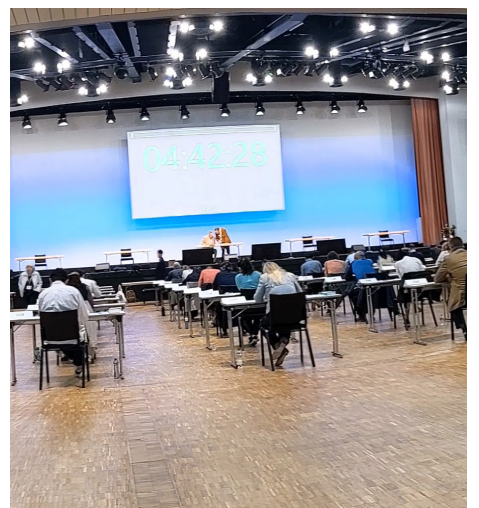
On 21 May 2023 at the CISTM18 in Basel we had our first in-person exam since the previous one in Washington in 2019. It all went smoothly, and 79 candidates took the exam. It was a nice feeling to be able again to see the candidates and the proctors while walking the aisles of the exam hall!

Since then, time was spent discussing contract issues with our partners so that we can continue with both online and in person exam.

The next exam planned will take place online between 30 January and 1 February 2024. Registration is now open.

Exploratory discussions are taking place about an in-person exam in Canada in April 2024 and another one at the APTHS congress in Kathmandu in September 2024.

On a more personal note, we are sad to report the recent death of one of our former members Dr. Mieke Croughs from Belgium. Otherwise, the committee remains the same for the time being, although we are hoping to get some new members in the future.



Next year, as mentioned in the previous newsletter, will give the committee more opportunity to write exam questions and hopefully to meet again for a time of review.

In summary, the general feeling is that TM is resuming and so is the demand for the CTH in many parts of the world. ISTM as a society is committing itself to respond to this demand and the Exam Committee is doing its best to keep a high standard exam ready for both online and in-person administration.

We wish all members of ISTM a very happy Christmas and New Year!

Dr. Pierre Landry
*ISTM Exam
Committee Chair*



DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Digital Communications Committee (DCC), established in 2017, aims to advance the use of digital information and communication technology in research and in engaging with our members, travelers, and other health professionals. In 2023, members of the DCC have played a pivotal role within the Website Task force. Within our committee, we have also been crafting some new Fact Sheets for travelers for the upcoming launch of our website. We are always seeking new members to join our committee. If you're passionate about digital communications and technologies in the travel medicine space, we would love to connect with you!

Please reach out to the ISTM secretariat (istm@istm.org) or sarah.mcguinness@monash.edu to get involved.

Sarah McGuinness
DCC Chair



PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

ISTM's Professional Education Committee remains committed to provide members with high quality educational offerings. We had two very successful webinars since June 2023, and with the Secretariat's help, technical issues have been resolved. We will start planning next year's program soon, and have sent a call out to Interest and Professional Groups for topics and possible collaborations.

PEC new Co-Chair, Scott Smith, with the input of Mary-Louise Scully, Sheila Mackell, PEC Immediate Past Chair Sarah Kohl, and myself, have updated the ISTM educational slide sets, which have been completely revised and now illustrated. Our goal is to assist the user in promoting travel medicine with different modules, so that the material can be delivered by topics. The materials are designed to meet the needs of students, nurses, pharmacists, physicians, and others who are involved in the preparation of travelers for safe international travel. We hope to make them available soon on ISTM's new website.

For practitioners who wish to further their knowledge in dealing with complex cases, Derek Evans continues to offer Challenging Cases, in a slightly different format, with a focus on self-learning.

Sheila MacKell, our new Travel Medicine Review & Update Course Director, has worked tirelessly on 2024's program. We will have a new platform for next year's course which should offer a more seamless experience to our attendees and speakers.

Lastly, I'm very happy to announce that ISTM's podcast series will be launched in 2024. Thanks to Aisha Khatib, Albie De Frey, and President-Elect Anne McCarthy for taking on this exciting project.

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE Continued

I wish you all a very Happy Holiday Season, and thank you for your continued support.

Yen-Giang Bui
Chair, PEC



DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Following the May 2023 CISTM18 in Basel, Switzerland, the Executive Board approved the activation of the Development and Planning Committee (DPC), which is timely to respond to the significant financial loss from CISTM18 in Basel, Switzerland.

The long-standing DPC Charter in ISTM Policies & Procedures has been updated:

The Development and Planning Committee (DPC) is a committee of the Board with the responsibility for developing and facilitating short- and long-term strategic fundraising initiatives through sponsorships and partnerships.

- The DPC is charged with assisting the ISTM in developing an integrated strategy to attract funds for the society and its various initiatives
- The DPC is charged with providing a projection of anticipated funding to the finance committee as an input to the annual budgeting process
- The DPC is charged with connecting potential and committed funders with a designated society point of contact
- The DPC is charged with reporting to the board in biannual meeting (at the discretion of the board) the status of funding efforts at that time

The DPC members have been pursuing educational funding and sponsorship for 2024 programs, and developing strategies for long-term partnerships. From the Secretariat, Jaclyn Simon, CPA, is the designated DPC support and brings her financial insights and administrative expertise.

DPC Members:

Lin H. Chen (USA) – Chair
Lisa Danzig (USA) – Co-Chair
Eric Caumes (France)
Jan Fehr (Switzerland) – ex officio
Jeff Goad (USA)
Karin Leder (Australia)
Francesca Norman (Spain)
Robert Steffen (Switzerland)

As the year 2023 draws to a close, the DPC members join in remembrance of Peter Leggat, ISTM President 2021-2023 and Secretary-Treasurer 2015-2021, who supported ISTM solidly in his quiet and calm manner. We also remember fondly Don Cook, innovator and founder of Shoreland Travax, who contributed greatly to building the discipline of travel medicine and provided robust support for ISTM for decades. Both have left their mark in the field and for ISTM.

On behalf of the ISTM, DPC is grateful for ISTM members' contributions, and welcomes your suggestions/contact information for potential partners who are interested in and support our Mission. In the spirit of holiday giving, we invite you to donate to ISTM!

Lin H. Chen –
*DPC Chair,
ISTM Past
President*



“We are grateful to the organizations that have already provided or pledged generous grants for our programs in 2023 and 2024 including Bavarian Nordic, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, GeoSentinel Foundation, Pfizer, Sanofi, Shoreland, Takeda, and Valneva.”

20 - 22 May 2024 / Fiji

INAUGURAL SOUTHERN CROSS EXPEDITION AND WILDERNESS MEDICINE MEETING

SAVE THE DATE 20 - 22 May 2024

Please join us in Fiji for the Inaugural Southern Cross Expedition and Wilderness Medicine Meeting. The meeting will be held over 3 days from 20th to 22nd May 2024 at Outrigger Fiji Beach Resort.

The program will include:

- Expedition Traveller preparation & vaccinations
- Health personnel roles and preparation for expeditions & remote medicine
- Zoonosis and Animal Health threats in remote locations
- Resilience in Expedition and Wilderness Medicine
- Practical expedition skills stations - preparation, medical kits, water treatment, first aid and management, jungle survival, water safety plus much more
- Preparation for special environments
- Humanitarian aid and disaster relief - preparation and response
- Social and networking opportunities
- And a whole lot more!

More information will be available shortly, or contact ACTM on email: actm@tropmed.org or phone: +61 7 3872 2246

Hosted by The Australasian College of Tropical Medicine Scientific Committee

Prof Marc Shaw, Prof Richard Franklin, Prof Charmaine Tate, Dr Sundeep Dhillon

We also
welcome nursing
and paramedic
professionals
interested in
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medicine



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THE JOURNAL OF TRAVEL MEDICINE CONTINUES TO THRIVE

2023 marked an extraordinary year for the Journal of Travel Medicine, yet another year with accomplishments in many areas as a result of the dedicated work of our authors, reviewers, and the JTM Editorial Board.

In the post-COVID era, it's heartening to witness a resurgence in focus on core travel medicine topics like malaria, travelers' diarrhea, altitude and wilderness medicine, antimicrobial resistance, migration, parasitic and viral diseases. Notably, the Journal has also embraced forward-thinking subjects such as the influence of AI in travel medicine and the implications of climate change.

The Journal of Travel Medicine proudly achieved an impressive Impact Factor of 25.7 this year. This remarkable accomplishment has positioned JTM at the forefront of its field, now ranking 4th among 96 journals in Infectious Diseases, 9th out of 167 in General and Internal Medicine, and 5th in Public, Environmental, and Occupational Health out of 207 journals. These rankings are a testament to our exceptional progress and influence in the scientific community.

Our heartfelt gratitude goes to everyone who contributed outstanding manuscripts, conducted thorough reviews, and provided unwavering support to the Journal. The exceptional volume and quality of manuscripts we received last year

played a pivotal role in elevating our reputation. Special acknowledgment is due to Associate Editors Kristina Angelo, Eyal Leshem, Federico Gobbi, Sarah McGuinness, and Colleen Lau, alongside our Section Editors, Clinical Pearl Editors, and the entire Editorial Board. Additionally, the sustained backing of the Publications Oversight Committee has been invaluable.

Of the eight issues published this year, we devoted one each to pivotal topics like malaria and travelers' diarrhea. Our themed collection, titled "Exotic Diseases in Travel Medicine," was particularly noteworthy. It comprised manuscripts that delved into parasitic diseases, rare viral infections, and uncommon presentations of more familiar infections, offering our readership a comprehensive and intriguing perspective.

Your ongoing support and commitment are the pillars that maintain the relevance and esteem of our Journal in the Travel Medicine community. Thank you all for contributing to a year filled with remarkable achievements and for propelling the Journal of Travel Medicine to new heights of excellence.

Annelise Wilder-Smith



Journal of Travel Medicine Editorial Board

The ISTM would like to thank the tireless work of the JTM Editorial Board for their continued support and commitment to the JTM.

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SPECIAL HONORS

On October 4, 2023, I was decorated at the Cour d'honneur des Invalides in Paris, following my management of 15 war casualties in poor medical settings and low staffing in healthcare personnel, near the Sudanese border, during my deployment in Chad, in August 2022.

The Hôtel des Invalides was commissioned and financed by Louis XIV in 1670, in order to provide hospital accommodation and care for wounded, sick, disabled and elderly soldiers. The Cour d'honneur des Invalides is where major military and presidential ceremonies are usually organized to honor those who have died or distinguished themselves in service, the victims of terrorist acts, and the deceased national figures.

A bientôt! Olivier Aoun



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

As ISTM President, I accepted an invitation from the Italian Society of Travel and Migration Medicine (SIMVIM) to travel in November to Bologna to speak on the topic of “The Future of Travel Medicine – Challenges and Opportunities”. The Italian Society is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year and their impressive and very well organized congress program featured excellent talks from leading lights in travel medicine in Italy, including some well-known ISTM leaders – Andrea Rossanese, Francesco Castelli, and Federico Gobbi. The Italian Society is a vibrant one with over 600 members. I took the opportunity to encourage membership of the ISTM and to promote uptake of our Travel Medicine Review & Update Course, CTH examination, and of course attendance at CISTM19 in New Orleans (May 2025). I was delighted to see the Society President, Dr. Alberto Tomasi,

proudly wearing his CTH lapel badge. Italy is one of my favorite places to visit and as always, the gracious local hospitality and cheerful company made my short trip very pleasant. In my presentation, I reflected on the impact of COVID-19 on travel and travel medicine before discussing how travel medicine might look in the future. The participants were particularly interested in my thoughts on how artificial intelligence could be integrated into travel medicine practice. Our national travel medicine

societies serve a very important role in the exchange of information, clinical guidelines and peer support as well as serving as a platform for deep engagement with the global travel medicine community through ISTM and regional travel medicine societies. To my friends and colleagues in Italy, I say “Grazie mille” and I look forward to welcoming more of you into our ISTM community.

Prof. Gerard Flaherty, MD, PhD
ISTM President



IN MEMORIAM



Loss of Donald C. Cook

Shoreland is mourning the recent passing of Don Cook, its longtime leader. Don had a thirst for opportunity, and it was the genesis of Shoreland – formed to identify an unmet need in a market and capitalize on it. He also had a talent for surrounding himself with quality people and bringing out their best. He was not stingy with praise, and he shared his pride for the people working to achieve his vision. Don cared deeply about the wellbeing of everyone connected to Shoreland (although perversely expressed on occasion with a threat to fire someone if they didn't take better care of themselves since they were so valuable to the company). He always made sure to tell employees that putting family first was the most important thing.

One long-time employee noted that Don could be very inspiring, also frustrating, and funny as hell when he wanted to be – no matter how many dignitaries were in the room. They could also see first-hand at countless conferences and meetings how many of the leaders in travel medicine had great affection for Don. Another noted Don was one of a kind and a real character and, most importantly, a good person and good boss.

Everyone at Shoreland was fortunate to learn from Don and benefit from his leadership. He was not one to start a project and then balk at adversity, but he did know how to recalibrate. Not every endeavor came to fruition, but he was always ready to move on to the next. With sorrow, but a clear vision from Don, we at Shoreland give our thanks to him and move forward.

Remarks from David O. Freedman, MD, FISTM

ISTM Secretary-Treasurer (2005-13)

Sad news that on November 4, 2023, Donald C. Cook, the founder and force behind Shoreland Travax, passed away peacefully and with family after a long cancer-battle that barely slowed him down until near the end. Since 1986, Don has been recognized by many as one of the most visionary founders of Travel Medicine as a discipline. Neither a clinician nor an academic, Don could go head-to-head with any of us on the finer points and prevail over most.

Travax was a unique innovation when Don recognized the gap that existed, then he continued providing the cutting-edge technology and analytic edge to the present day. Travax has made so much difference to so many travel health providers and most importantly to the travelers themselves that were very unaware of the entity that allowed this impact on their safety. Just last week, I was talking to a new neighbor here in Asheville who it turns out had been a reluctant traveling HR person for Monsanto back in the day and, when our stories coalesced, expressed her gratefulness for the Travax handouts she had gotten before every trip she took.

Aside from individual practitioners, Travax has provided customized support to the world's largest corporations, public health agencies, and military agencies throughout

the world for decades. Only a few are aware of the contributions that the Shoreland team under Don's leadership has made over this time to make the world a safer and freer place.

Don served as a sounding board and confidant to every North America based ISTM President since ISTM's founding. In the early days of the internet until 2011, Shoreland generously developed and hosted, largely at its own expense, ISTM's website, back-office administrative functions, and CISTM IT infrastructure. As tributes have poured in, they uniformly have the same sentiment, summarized as: Don was such a one-of-a-kind creative and energetic personality, a caring person, and I enjoyed talking and working with him on every occasion we met.

For me, a personal void has been left by being unable to have any more of the amazing conversations we had over a period of 25 years. Don and Travax contributed so much to my career (and career satisfaction) as he did with so many others. I am sure this same void is felt by so many he touched.

[READ OBITUARY](#)



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THE
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7th Southern Cross Australasian Travel Medicine and Tropical Medicine Conference

Fri 27 to Sun 29 September 2024 - Sofitel Brisbane Central

We are excited to announce the *2024 Southern Cross Australasian Travel Medicine and Tropical Medicine Conference*! Hear from local and international experts on travel medicine and tropical medicine, and participate in interactive workshops.



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