



Biomedical Alliance in Europe

CME Experts Permanent Committee

EACCME March 12, 2021: Facing the COVID challenge and beyond

How do providers see the future?

David B. Vodušek, Michel Ballieu



Biomedical Alliance in Europe

CME Experts Permanent Committee

On BioMed Alliance

On congresses in 2020/21

On expectations for the future

BioMed Alliance

35 Member Societies



Structure

General
Assembly

Executive Board

Committees

Task Forces

Working Groups

Activities



Past

- Horizon 2020
- Animal Research
- Scientific Panel of Health
- Code of conduct
- Plan S
- ...

Present

Active Committees

- **CME Experts Committee**
- Policy Officers Committee

Active Task Force

- Horizon Europe
- Clinical Trials
- Devices Regulation

Active Working Groups

- WG Code of Conduct update
- In Vitro Diagnostic WG
- Core Medical Devices (EU project)

Stakeholders

Policy

- EU commission
- EU Parliament
- EMA

Industry

- EFPIA
- MedTech Europe

Patients

- EPF

Others

- FEAM
- UEMS
- EIT Health

EU Health Coalition

multi-stakeholder

- 6 industry societies
- 33 medical societies





CME Experts Permanent Committee

Mission

*To set **standards** on how scientific societies plan and deliver educational programmes to achieve **high quality** medical education for the **benefit of its members** with an ultimate focus on **better patient care**.*

Continuing
Medical
Education is
relevant for
BioMed
Members

22 Member societies:



EACTS

ERA-EDTA

EAN

ERS

EANM

ESA

EAS

ESC

EASD

ESE

EASL

ESICM

EAU

ESPGHAN

EBC

EULAR

EFORT

European Cancer

EHA

UEG

EORTC

& **EPF** / European Patients' Forum

The medical congress in the 21st century



- I. The congress and **the mission** of scientific society = **to share knowledge with the final aim to reduce the burden of diseases.**

- II. The congress and the **survival** of scientific society = **Important factor in the “business model” of running a scientific society.**



2020
unexpected
strike of fate
to medical
congresses

It took a single virus for medical associations to be forced to convert their **traditional congress**, based on a long-established concept, into a **new format**.



2020
the turning
point in the
digital
revolution

It took a single virus for medical associations to be forced to convert their **traditional congress**, based on a long-established concept, into a **new format**.

Suddenly what was expected to occur in a decade **occurred in one year**.

Organisers were pushed to innovate and take risks hitherto unsuspected.

Conditions of uncertainty



Many if not most medical societies were - in 2020 - faced not only with the **switch** to virtual congresses, but also with the **fallacies of cancelling** arrangements which had been negotiated before.

In addition, due to uncertainties, decisions were taken and **reversed** in the course of the year.

Taking the partners from industry on board for the virtual congresses was the aim of most societies.



Conditions
of
uncertainty

**Accreditation
of on-line
congresses?**

Conditions of uncertainty

Accreditation of on-line congresses?

Activities of the BioMED CME Experts
Committee in relation to accreditation
of virtual congresses



Zoom meeting with UEMS Secretary General about
adaptation of accreditation to consequences of Covid-19
(March 27)

Participants: ERS, EAU, ECCO, BioMed

Requests for accreditation modifications sent to EACCME,
considering the expected vagaries of virtual meetings

CME
Experts
Permanent
Committee



Accreditation
of on-line
congresses?

UEMS considered some - but not all requests

Zoom meeting on accreditation with all members (May 19th)

Speakers: ERS, EAU, ECCO, ERA-EDTA

The medical congresses in 2020



Several societies decided for a free registration -
to test the interest for a totally new experience.

Most were rewarded - and thoroughly taken by surprise -
by the **enormous increase** in numbers of participants.

The increase in numbers was due to **young** participants
(even students), **female** participants and participants from
non-European countries (Latin America).

In May 2020, the European Academy of Neurology (EAN) held a virtual congress, free-of-charge



AN EXAMPLE

Of 43,596 registered participants,
20,694 active participants attended the virtual congress

Compared to the face-to-face congress in 2019 the number of participants **tripled** (6916 in 2019) and the cumulated number of participants attending the sessions **was five times higher**

(169,334 in 2020 vs 33,024 in 2019)

In May 2020, the European Academy of Neurology (EAN) held a virtual congress, free-of-charge



Out of active participants
55% were from outside Europe

42% were **board-certified neurologists** ↓
(previous congress: 80%),

↑ and 21% were **students** (previous congress : 0.6%)

In May 2020, the European Academy of Neurology (EAN) held a virtual congress, free-of-charge



Conclusion

The virtual congress fulfilled the main mission of a **high quality** EAN congress despite the restrictions.

The geographical distribution of the participants prove the expected **higher inclusivity** of a virtual congress.

The large participation of **students** and **neurologists in training** opens new educational potentials for the EAN.

In November 2020, the **European CME Forum** had a **Medical Societies Session** under the Auspices of BioMed Alliance organised by *Prof David B. Vodusek & Michel Ballieu*



- **Challenges of congresses in 2021 - *Julia Rautenstrauch (EULAR)***
- **The congress of the future - *Isabel Bardinet (ESC)***
- **Maintaining high educational standards and relevance in a digitised environment - *Prof Juan Palou (EAU)***

The medical congresses
in 2020 & 2021

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- **What medical societies have neglected in their educational efforts so far** *Robin Stevenson (JECME)*

The medical congresses
in 2020 & 2021

|

Other
medical
societies had
a similar
experience as
EAN

Virtual meetings
**allowed for easier
participation** (from
far away and from
poorer countries,
participants who
would have
difficulties to travel -
young mothers - or
who would not be
willing to travel.

The medical congresses
in 2020

Samantha Lawler, an astronomer at the University of Regina in Canada, tells *Nature* that virtual platforms allowed her to attend meetings **without compromising her teaching workload or responsibilities as the parent of small children.**

The medical congresses
in 2020

VIRTUAL REALITY

Nature polled its readers about their experiences with a year of attending scientific meetings online.



Nature **591**, 185-186 (2021)

doi: <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-021-00513-1>

Data are based on 925 poll responses. *Nature* solicited poll responses on its website; through the Nature Briefing, an e-mail newsletter; and on social media. Respondents are not necessarily representative of the entire scientific community. Numbers may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

II

Other
medical
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The medical congresses
in 2020

The **physical
encounter and
networking** was
highly missed by
participants of
virtual meetings as
revealed by
feedback.



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The medical congresses
in 2020

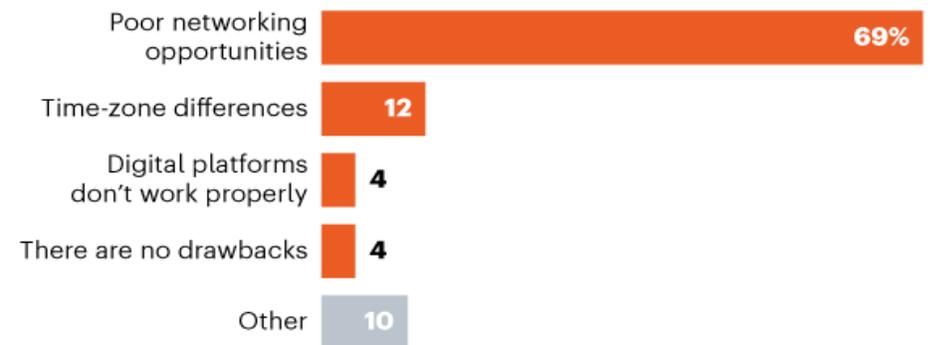
The physical encounter and networking was highly missed by participants of virtual meetings as revealed by feedback.



VIRTUAL REALITY

Nature polled its readers about their experiences with a year of attending scientific meetings online.

What is the biggest drawback of virtual conferences?



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The challenges of congresses in 2021

For the time being, because of projected restrictions, **virtual congresses** are planned for 2021 with the benefit of the 2020 experiences with the new reality.



The expectations of congresses in 2021

- Improved virtual meetings as compared to 2020
- **No more free registrations** as a general measure
- Elements of the congress of the future

Adaptation of CME accreditation

Scientists want virtual meetings to stay after the COVID pandemic

A *Nature* poll shows that a year of online research conferences has brought big benefits.



VIRTUAL REALITY

Nature polled its readers about their experiences with a year of attending scientific meetings online.

Do you think conferences should continue to be virtual or have a virtual component to them after the pandemic?

Yes **74%**

No **26**

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Future
congresses
-
accessibility
&
networking

NATURE NEWS
02 MARCH 2021

Scientists want virtual
meetings to stay after
the COVID pandemic

The pure on-site congress
is a thing of the past.

Hybrid congresses seem to be on the
horizon, when the situation will allow it...

*Next to accessibility, poll respondents said that
the lower carbon footprint offered by virtual meetings
is their greatest benefit.*



Future congresses

- ✓ Better incorporation of what was neglected in our educational efforts so far
- ✓ Reaching larger numbers, also from hitherto “minority” participants
- ✓ Including a more international audience

Future congresses



- *Registration fees - yes, no, how much?*
- *Overall income for the society?*
- *Insurance coverage?*



Future congresses

The *Nature* poll shows that blending online meetings with in-person meetings will be a challenge.

- The structure of the congress is going to change.
What is the best practice of an on-line or hybrid congress?
- What is the cost of a good on-line / hybrid congress?
Changes also in costs of accreditation - in addition to EACCME fees also tracking systems onsite and online, staff for accreditation coordination from application to participants credits delivery...
- *What is the registration fee participants are willing to pay for an on-line / hybrid congress?*
- *How will the arrangements with industry develop?*



Future congresses

- The business model of medical societies is expected to change
- The business model of EACCME should also evolve



Future congresses

The business model
of EACCME should
also evolve

- ✓ For the EACCME accredited live events where record content is **available post-event for participants**, the replay (asynchronous content) **should also be accredited with the same number of credits** (same content already accredited).
- ✓ The postponement deadline of June 30 is no longer realistic.
- ✓ Changing the rules and applying the same rule for all webinars (as for Covid-19 webinars).
- ✓ Lowering the threshold for becoming a Trusted Provider



EACCME should improve
in delivering
accreditation

General requests:

- ✓ EACCME has had and still has **unacceptable delays** in informing providers.
- ✓ EACCME is **difficult to reach** for responses by email.
- ✓ EACCME is difficult to reach by phone for clarifications.
- ✓ There are still a number of countries not recognising EACCME credits. *(Why have Providers organising events in these countries still to pay the full fee?)*



Accreditation needs
to adapt to the
new model
of congresses

Thank you!