

The International Council of Ophthalmology's International Task Force on Coordination and Education of Program Directors of Ophthalmology Residencies

Karl C. Golnik, MD, MEd^{1*}

¹Program Director, Professor of Ophthalmology and Neurosurgery, The University of Cincinnati, The Cincinnati Eye Institute, Cincinnati, OH

*Corresponding Author & e-mail: kgolnik@fuse.net

The International Council of Ophthalmology's (ICO) mission is to "... work with ophthalmologic societies, ophthalmologists and others to enhance ophthalmic education and the provision of eye care in order to preserve and protect vision for all people worldwide. Great disparity exists globally as to resource availability for education, structure of residency training, and assessment of resident performance." With this in mind the ICO (with the assistance and support of Drs. Bradley Straatsma and Bruce Spivey) created the International Task Force on Coordination and Education of Program Directors of Ophthalmology Residencies. Members of the Task Force include Bradley Straatsma, MD, JD (USA), Karl Golnik, MD, MEd (USA), Anthony Arnold, MD (USA), Pinar Aydin, MD (Turkey), Marko Hawlina, MD (Slovenia), Andrew Lee, MD (USA), Paulo Augusto Mello, MD (Brazil), Tetsuro Oshika, MD (Japan) and Enrique Graue Weichers, MD (Mexico).

The Task Force's goal is to improve the educational abilities of program directors and educational leaders, have these individuals bring back these concepts to their programs and thus enhance resident education on a global scale. This task force has three main objectives:

1. Organization, implementation, faculty recruitment, and continued improvement of an ICO sponsored Program Director's Meeting.
2. Provide other shorter meetings, symposia, and educational content at Supra-national Congresses.
3. Continually explore innovative approaches to global ophthalmology program director education.

The ICO Program Director's Meeting is a two day conference that emphasizes curriculum development, improving teaching skills and techniques of resident assessment. A variety of teaching methods are employed including traditional didactic lecture, small group breakout sessions and large group discussion. These teaching methods require limiting participants to about 50 per meeting. Simultaneous translation is often required. Endorsement by the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO), Association of University Professors in Ophthalmology (AUPO), the Pan-American Association of Ophthalmology (PAAO), and other international organizations has lent credibility to these meetings. Endorsement by the host country's national ophthalmology society is also crucial for success.

The meeting's Chairperson and a local co-Chair work together to assess the needs of the specific region's participants to assure relevance of the material presented. To facilitate camaraderie and enhance the possibility of future PD collaboration, a dinner is held for all participants on the first night of the meeting.

Thus far, ICO Program Director's Meetings have occurred in Mexico, Peru, Egypt, Pakistan, Argentina, and Brazil. Meetings are scheduled for Slovenia and Ethiopia in 2008 in addition to a follow-up meeting in

Accepted for publication October 19, 2008

Journal of Academic Ophthalmology 2008; 1:53-54

Available via open-access on the web at <http://www.academic-ophthalmology.com>

The author(s) have no personal financial interest in any of the products or technologies cited herein.

©2008 *Journal of Academic Ophthalmology*

ICO Task Force - Golnik

Brazil, Bali, China, and Columbia are potential sites for 2009. The first ICO Program Director's Meeting has resulted in organization and continued collaboration of program directors in Mexico. Enthusiastic program directors in Brazil requested a follow-up meeting which will take place September 1-2, 2008.

The Task Force has also been involved with other, less intense, educational symposia. An educational symposium occurred during the 2007 annual PAAO meeting in Cancun, Mexico and at the recent World Ophthalmology Congress (WOC) in Hong Kong (June, 2008). In fact, global interest in "how to educate" seems to be increasing as evidenced by occurrence of the first World Ophthalmic Education Colloquium (June 28, 2008) which included 18 symposia dedicated to medical student, resident, fellow and program director education. Additionally, the PAAO has recently formed the Residency Education in Latin America committee charged with developing standards for ophthalmology resident education and assessment.

Thus, global efforts to improve the education of ophthalmologists are paralleling similar recent initiatives in the United States [1,2]. Hopefully, these efforts will result in improved patient care on a global scale.

References

1. Golnik KG and Lee AG. New mandate in resident education. *Ophthalmology* 2005; 112 (7): 1323.
2. Golnik KC. The 2006 Straatsma Award Lecture: The (R)Evolution in Medical Education. *J Acad Ophthalmol* 2008; 1: 8-10.

