



# IAAS Annual Report

2020

Professor Douglas McWhinnie  
President

For all of us, 2020 has been an interesting year. For the IAAS, there was a bright start to the year with the European Commission Structural Reform Support Service Project to develop a Day Surgery infrastructure in eight Budapest hospitals proceeding with a 'Train the Trainers' meeting hosted by IAAS and the Hungarian Association for Ambulatory Surgery. IAAS is indebted to Past-President Gamal Mohamed for leading the project, Treasurer Luc van Outryve for looking after the purse strings and Secretary Jan Eshuis for contributing to the teaching. Then along came the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Many in ambulatory surgery healthcare have worked above and beyond during these difficult times to help patients, colleagues and family and they deserve our thanks and respect. From the IAAS point of view, the past year has seen its share of disappointments, with the 3<sup>rd</sup> IAAS European Congress scheduled for Madrid in April, cancelled by COVID necessity. We must thank our Spanish IAAS representatives, Luis Hidalgo-Grau and Fernando Docobo for their hard work in organising the meeting: effort which was not ultimately rewarded! As a result of this cancellation, we had to seek help from our Webmaster, Past-President Dr Ian Jackson, to develop an online platform for our ExCo and General Assembly Committee Meetings in May. Through necessity we have realised the potential of remote online committee meetings, but the downside is the loss of networking and most of all, friendship!

The follow-up visit of the SRSS project was unsurprisingly cancelled, both due to the inability to travel, but most importantly, due to the clinical workload of our Hungarian colleagues. The visit was therefore scheduled remotely with representatives of the eight hospitals enjoying an online educational programme and sharing their experiences of their day surgery developments.

With no realistic possibility of holding face to face meetings throughout the remainder of the year, the decision was made to hold our first online conference. Due to the potential limitations of an online platform, and as this was a new venture for IAAS, we decided to hold the conference in two parts: the first session for invited experts and the second session one week later for free paper submissions. As ever, the Webmaster delivered! Carlos Magalhaes (President Elect) accepted the task of chairing the scientific committee and selecting the free paper presentations from the submitted abstracts. To maximise our worldwide audience, these two conferences were scheduled to commence at 1pm UTC, allowing our North American colleagues to join us in the morning and our Subcontinent and Far East colleagues to enjoy the presentations in the afternoon and evening. Without doubt, the conference exceeded expectations with a large number of delegates. With no end of the pandemic in sight, a further online conference is scheduled for Spring 2021.

Until we meet again, keep safe!