



European Society for Trauma and Emergency Surgery (ESTES)

www.estesonline.org

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Message from the Vice President

Embracing the digital world

You may already have guessed that these articles are written well in advance of publication. From the authors perspective, that means trying to guess what will be topical a few months down the line. When I started writing a piece last year about COVID-19, I remember wondering whether I should refer to it as a 'pandemic'. At the time cases were just beginning to be identified outside China. Although I was fairly sure it would be an accurate description by the time the article was published, I had no idea of the impact it would have on our lives both personally and professionally. As we slowly embraced the 'new normal' we moved from physical encounters to digital ones.

For ESTES, like many other societies, this has been a challenging period. By the time the article was published, the Norwegian authorities had restricted travel and closed the conference centre in Oslo where the 2020 ECTES congress had been scheduled. Like most people at the time, we assumed that this would only be a temporary setback and that within a few months things would be back to normal. With vaccination programmes getting underway, COVID-19 may, indeed turn out to be just that, but with a far longer duration of 'temporary' than was originally anticipated. The Oslo congress was first postponed for one year, then two.

So much of the Society's routine business is conducted at the annual congress. The general assembly, the Society's sovereign body which oversees the peaceful transition of power from outgoing president to incoming, and the election of new officers. The business meetings of the sections and committees. All of this provides an opportunity for the Society to refresh and rejuvenate.

Thanks to the King of the Belgians' Royal Decree No. 4, we were able to hold our general assembly online. To facilitate this the Society moved from WebEx to Zoom. The sections and committees increased their online activities and have been able to undertake new and exciting projects.

To maintain contact with ESTES members we launched a series of fortnightly webinars in July. The idea was borrowed from SICUT (one of our institutional members) and would not have been possible without the continued behind-the-scenes work of four of their members: Diego Mariani, Alan Biloslavo, Hayato Kurihara and Mauro Zago. Since then, well over a thousand people have registered for our first two series of webinars—18 in total—covering a wide range of topics from prehabilitation in emergency surgery to the Beirut port blast. We have had webinars on polytrauma, from children to the elderly and covered common surgical conditions and specialist injuries. These highly informative, interactive sessions have been put together by ESTES sections and institutional members and I am personally grateful to all the experts who have given so generously of their time to share their experiences with us. We have set up an ESTES YouTube channel where many of them can be viewed again. The Emergency Surgery Course®, a joint venture between ESTES and the AAST, has also moved online. It was first delivered in this new format to coincide with the AAST Annual Scientific Meeting in September and will be run on 8th–9th May scheduled at times that are more



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convenient for a European audience (see <https://www.estesonline.org/event-calendar/>). Like many professional examinations, the European Board of Surgery Qualification in Emergency Surgery (FEBS[EmSurg]) will also be held online this year.

Over the past year we have learned a lot about the digital world and have become increasingly proficient in it. The culmination of that experience will be the 'Virtual ESTES week' from 25th–30th April (<https://www.estes-congress.org/>).

There are of course numerous benefits to moving online. The cost, both in terms of money and time, of being able to attend a meeting without having to leave the house or office is much less and it has opened a new world of possibilities. The downside to this is that while the number of meetings has increased, the social side has virtually disappeared. If we are more likely to remember how a meeting makes us feel than what was actually said, the digital world is a poorer alternative. The 'Virtual ESTES week' will be good, but I look forward to meeting you in person in Oslo at the 2022 ECTES!

Jonathan Tilsed
ESTES Vice President



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Announcements

Upcoming related congresses & courses

Polytrauma Course

April 23–24, 2021
Virtual Congress

ESTES Virtual Week

April 25–30, 2021
Virtual Congress

**Pisa Workshop of Acute Care Surgery and
Trauma Fluid Management in Abdominal Sepsis:
Fluid Restriction vs. Liberal Administration**

April 30, 2021
Virtual Workshop

ESTES/AAST Emergency Surgery Course

May 8–9, 2021
Virtual Course

Polytraumaversorgung—das Zürcher Paradigma

September 16–17, 2021
Zurich, Switzerland

More congresses and courses to be found in the **ESTES events calendar** at
www.estesonline.org

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