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Editorial

It gives me immense pleasure to launch the first newsletter for GISI which will be circulated through E-mail to all members of the Society. Gastrointestinal infections constitute a large proportion of clinical practice. There are a large number of diseases that require specialist appraisal, sophisticated investigations and special management. Due to the high morbidity and mortality in India by gastrointestinal infections, a need for forming a society for gastrointestinal infections was felt. Therefore a Society called "Gastrointestinal Infection Society of India" (GISI) was founded by Dr. Chetana Vaishnavi in the year 2007. Regular symposia conducted through this society would help to enrich the knowledge of the medical fraternity with the latest professional skills and devices with respect to GI infections contributing to the larger noble aim of improving the quality of health care. The 1st National Conference on the gastrointestinal infections (1st GISICON) was held in January 2007 where the microbiologists and gastroenterologists of the country interacted with themselves on the newer modalities of diagnosis and treatment for gastrointestinal infections. The Founder Members from among the active gastroenterologists, microbiologists and scientists from related field chose the office bearers for the Society in a meeting held during the conference. Prof. Meera Sharma Head, Department of Medical Microbiology, PGIMER, Chandigarh was elected as the first President of GISI. The Society was registered in the year 2008 with area of operation throughout the country.

The aims and objectives of the Society are as follows:

1. To promote the advancement of basic and clinical research on prevalent and emerging gastrointestinal infections
2. To provide a platform for discussion and deliberations on various modalities for the diagnosis and treatment of gastrointestinal infections.
3. To promote scientific knowledge and disseminate the information collected to the members of the society and the general public from time to time.

Report of the 1st National Conference of Gastrointestinal Infection Society of India

The Microbiology Division of the Department of Superspecialty of Gastroenterology hosted the 1st National Conference on Diagnosis and Treatment of Gastrointestinal infections on Jan 13-14, 2007 at Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh. The conference was organized by Dr. Chetana Vaishnavi, Addl. Professor (GE Microbiology). The conference was inaugurated by Prof. R.C. Sobti, Vice Chancellor, Punjab University who delivered the keynote address. A total of 300 microbiologists, gastroenterologists, basic scientists and private practitioners from all over the country participated in the conference. Some of the eminent speakers during the conference were Prof. V.M. Katoch, Dr. Rama Chaudhury, Prof. A. Ayyagari, Prof. A.K. Jain, Prof. M.P. Sharma and Prof. P. Kar. Almost all aspects of the diagnosis and treatment of gastrointestinal infections were discussed.



Inauguration of 1st GISICON



Prof. B. Nagi with Prof. V.M. Katoch

Message from Prof. Meera Sharma

Gastrointestinal infections (GI) including medical and surgical conditions are a major cause of mortality and morbidity worldwide. A wide variety of viruses, bacteria and parasites are implicated in GI with many newly emerging and re-emerging pathogens. Accurate diagnosis of GI is an ongoing challenge even in sophisticated medical centres because vast numbers of microbial agents are involved. Thus, there is need to develop rapid molecular techniques for the quick and accurate diagnosis of GI. Further concerns of today's era of organ transplantation, HIV/AIDS and other conditions causing immune-suppression are fungal infections, atypical mycobacteria and coccidian parasites. Already existing complications of GI are further compounded by the fast developing drug resistance to most of the pathogens. Finally we also need to understand the pathogenetic mechanisms of these infections and conduct epidemiological investigations using modern tools to define the infections.



I take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to Prof. Atul Sachdev for accepting the responsibility of hosting GISICON 2010 that too at a very short notice. The organizing team under the able guidance and dynamic leadership of Prof. Sachdev worked very hard and left no stone unturned to make this programme a success. I am very happy to say that about 200 delegates from all over the country attended this conference.

The GISI was conceived in 2007 with the sole objective of bringing together gastroenterologists, microbiologists and physicians on one platform to interact and develop consensus guidelines for the diagnosis and treatment of commonly prevalent infections of GI tract. Also the aim was to promote clinical and basic research. As we know that the behaviour pattern of most of these infections is different from that of western world thus we need to develop our own guidelines and management strategies.

The GISI is just three years old with 125 active members. The first conference was hosted by Deptt. of Gastroenterology in January, 2007 at PGIMER, Chandigarh and was attended by 300 delegates from all over the country. The society was registered in April, 2008. The hard work done and initiative taken by Dr. Chetana Vaishnavi, Additional Professor, Deptt. of Gastroenterology, PGIMER, Chandigarh is commendable and highly appreciated. However, for the healthy growth of this society, we all need to work very hard. The need of the day is to motivate more and more gastroenterologists and microbiologists to become members to strengthen this body. The venue for the next conference has already been finalized. It will be hosted at Kasturba International Medical Centre, Manipal in 2011.

With best wishes to all the members



Hon'ble S. Manpreet Singh Badal

Report of 2nd Biennial Conference of Gastrointestinal Infection Society of India

The 2nd Biennial Conference of Gastrointestinal infection society of India (GISI) was inaugurated on 13th March 2010 by the Hon'ble Finance minister of the government of Punjab, S. Manpreet Singh Badal. In his address he stressed on the need to inculcate a sense of nation building at an individual level. He cited various examples quoting widely from history both from India and abroad, where people with principles and dedication served the nation and are remembered even to this day. He also stressed on the fact that the enemies of India like malnutrition, poverty and illiteracy needed to be tackled on a priority. He emphasized that the present generation has an opportunity to bring glory to the nation and we should leave no stone unturned in achieving this goal.

Prof Meera Sharma, president of the society elaborated on the importance of gastrointestinal infections in our country and the need for further research in this area.

The Director-Principal, Prof. Raj Bahadur, thanked the minister for encouraging the young audience to take up the issues of nation building. He also urged the minister to give GMCH a grant for poor patients hailing from Punjab. The minister was gracious enough to grant a sum of Rs 10 lakh per annum from his discretionary fund to help such patients.

Prof Atul Sachdev introduced the theme of the conference to the audience. Eminent speakers from India who are experts in their respective fields deliberated on important gastrointestinal infections. Prominent among the conditions discussed today were gastrointestinal tuberculosis, water and blood borne hepatitis, typhoid, cholera, various diarrhoeal diseases, and GI infections in HIV/AIDS.

The organizing secretary Dr Sanjay D'Cruz proposed the vote of thanks.

On 14th March, 2010 Dr. Vineet Ahuja from AIIMS stressed on newer concepts in the pathogenesis of tuberculosis. Prof. B Nagi from PGIMER, discussed the radiological clues to GI tuberculosis. Prof. Amarender Puri from GB Pant hospital Delhi delved into non-radiological investigation in GI tuberculosis, laying special stress on tissue diagnosis and the role of ADA in cases of peritoneal tuberculosis.

Prof Pokharna from Jaipur elaborated on the Hepatitis B infection. Hepatitis C was discussed by Prof Amit Mathur. Dr Naveet Wig from AIIMS spoke on diarrhea in AIDS patients. Dr Govind Makharia from AIIMS spoke on small intestinal bacterial overgrowth.

The conference was well attended and appreciated by over 150 delegates from Chandigarh and neighbouring states of Punjab Haryana and Himachal Pradesh.

Announcements

1. The Life Membership fees have been amended to Rs 1500 and from now on payments will be received by cash or bank draft only or cheques at par in favor of "Gastrointestinal Infection Society of India" payable at Chandigarh.
2. Membership form is enclosed along with the newsletter.
3. The 3rd GISICON will be hosted at Manipal by Prof. Mamatha Ballal. The dates will be communicated by her to all.
4. Articles for Journal of Gastrointestinal Infections should be submitted as soft copy to the Editor, GISI. Instructions to author shall be published in the next newsletter.
5. All GISI members are requested to pass on any news that they desire to be published in the newsletter. This will include information of awards received, fellowships obtained or travel abroad for academic purposes and any other information that may be of interest to the members.

