



ASSI ASSOCIATION OF
SPINE SURGEONS
OF INDIA

ASSOCIATION OF SPINE SURGEONS OF INDIA

Bi-Annual Newsletter | May 2016

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Dear Colleagues,

It is a moment of great pride and joy to be addressing all of you again.

As I enter my second year as President of your association the ASSI, I feel humbled by the amount of good work and effort put in by my colleagues Dr H.S. Chhabra – Hon. Secretary & Treasurer and Dr Saumyajit Basu – Hon. Joint Secretary. Both these gentleman have left no stone unturned in trying to streamline the activities of the Association of Spine Surgeons of India.

The inputs from the President – Elect – Dr Raghav Dutt Mulukutla, all the Past – Presidents & the energetic Executive Council, have made the ASSI a very viable and progressive association, making huge strides both Nationally and Internationally.

I solicit the participation of all members to make the ASSI, the largest and best association of Spine Professionals in the world. We, as the ASSI are for the first time participating as partner in the "Spine Week" to be held at Singapore from May 16-20, 2016. I am sure we shall be there in large numbers to announce our presence in the "Academics & Science of Spine Care".

The ASSI needs to further our International presence by joining hands with other similar bodies and taking its members to more joint ventures like the "Spine Week". We have had successful collaboration with the 'Spine Society of Europe' & the "AO-Spine". We should look at furthering such activities with other similar scientific bodies. The Executive Council is making efforts towards the same.

I thank you all for the support you have given me as your President and empowering me to be at the helm of affairs. I am sure you would continue the active interest you have shown to further "raise the bar" and make the ASSI reach greater and greater heights in time to come.

Yours truly

Dr. Ram Chaddha
President – ASSI

FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK



Dear Colleagues,

Participation of ASSI in SpineWeek as a collaborative partner is an important milestone in the moulding of ASSI as a leading scientific association in the field. This has been possible due to the active contribution of all members under the dynamic leadership of an able President and enterprising Executive. However the success in the field of scientific activities / education should not make us complacent since the endeavor for quality improvement is an ever ongoing process.

The achievements in the field of scientific activities should shift our focus towards the other two important objectives of a professional Society – research and advocacy. The ongoing Pott's Spine multicentre study, increased focus on spine Registry and sponsoring research projects are the steps taken by ASSI in promoting research. This endeavour needs to be strengthened and the support of all members in this field would be vital.

In the field of advocacy an important endeavour of ASSI is collaboration with the International Spinal Cord Society (ISCoS) for observing 5th September as Spinal Cord Injury Day. Along with other societies in the field of spine, ASSI would carry out various activities throughout India as per an approved plan to create awareness about the need for prevention and creation of an inclusive society for spinal cord injured. The participation of all members in this initiative would be vital for its success.

As members of ASSI, we have a wonderful opportunity to fulfill our obligations to the Society and work together to alleviate the suffering of mankind from spinal ailments. As one of the largest associations in the field, we have the potential to be world leaders in this regard.

Look forward to your wholehearted contribution and a show of strength in the SpineWeek at Singapore.

Dr. H.S. Chhabra
Secretary – ASSI

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Annual General Body Meeting (E.G.B.M.) of
Association of Spine Surgeons of India (ASSI) held on
Saturday, November 28th, 2015
at 6:10 p.m.
Venue: Cidade De Hotel, Goa

1. President's Welcome

President welcomed all the members to the AGBM. He mentioned that ASSI had been making a good progress and requested all members to contribute actively to the activities of the Society.

2. Condolences & Leaves of Absence, if any

The members were briefed that Dr. G D Sunder Raj, ex-Vice President (2010-2011) as well as senior member ASSI left for heavenly abode on 5th July. The members condoled his death. May God rest his soul in peace and give strength to the family to bear the loss.

3. Ratification of the Minutes of the last A.G.B.M. – Pune and E.G.B.M.-Vishakhapatnam

The Minutes of AGBM – Pune and EGBM-Vishakhapatnam were resolved unanimously (copies enclosed at Annexure A).

4. Secretarial Report

Dr HS Chhabra briefed the members about the activities of ASSI since 19th August 2015. The details are as under:

a. Updating data-base of ASSI members

Dr HS Chhabra briefed the members about the work of the secretariat. Ms. Neema Bisht had been working on the updation of data-base of ASSI members. As per the updated membership list, ASSI now has 1351 members as against 806 when the endeavour was started. This also includes 106 new members who have joined since 27th January 2015. Email addresses of 1159 members are now available as against the 318 which were available before the exercise was started. 935 members have updated their contact details (including postal address etc.) with the Secretariat.

b. Fellowships of ASSI

Dr. HS Chhabra briefed the members that there were 13 candidates undertaking ASSI Fellowship at present at various centers (list enclosed at Annexure B).

He also informed that 6 others successfully cleared the exit examination this year 2015. All candidates have submitted their fellowship report (copies enclosed at Annexure C).

c. ASSI Exit Examination

Dr. HS Chhabra briefed the members that the exit examination for 'ASSI Spine Fellowship' for the batch 2013-2015 was held on 12th September 2015 at Indian Spinal Injuries Centre, New Delhi.

The expert panel of scientific and academic committee of ASSI approved the format for the examination which included a theory paper (100 marks), one long case (50 marks), one short case (25 marks) as well as one ward round case (25 marks) and table viva on various aspects of sub specialty including implants, instruments, radiology, orthotics, surgical approaches, and bone models (100 marks). This was informed to candidates well in advance.

The examiners for the Exit Examination were - Dr Arvind Jayaswal, Dr. Shankar Acharya, Dr. P. Sarat Chandra, Dr. Patrick Kluger and the undersigned. There were two candidates from New Delhi & Mumbai and one each from Coimbatore & Kolkatta. The examination started as scheduled at 8:00 a.m. with the theory examination (8.00 am -10.00 am). A copy of the question paper is enclosed at Annexure D. It ended at around 6:00 p.m. when the examiners got together to compile the results.

All six candidates were declared successful. A copy of the result is enclosed at Annexure E for perusal. Some photographs are also enclosed at Annexure F.

The exam was successfully held due to the whole hearted contribution of the examiners led by Prof. Arvind Jayaswal. The smooth conduct of the exam would not have been possible without proactive efforts of Dr. Ankur Nanda who co-ordinated the endeavour and was very ably supported by Dr. Srinivasa, Dr. Sahil, Dr. Kedar, Dr. Karthik and Dr. Saurabh. The entire team of spine consultants at ISIC, Ms. Neema Bisht and Ms. Sonia Juneja provided the necessary support for the smooth conduct of the examination.

d. Committees of ASSI

The various Committees of ASSI had been involved in the activities of ASSI pertaining to the committee. The reports of the activities of the various committees are as under:

i. Education Committee Report

The education committee met informally on the sidelines of ICS 2015 at Visakhapatnam. Unfortunately Dr. Anupreet Bassi and Dr. Shashidhar could not be present in the meeting. Dr. Samir Dalvie, Dr. Arvind kulkarni and Dr. Vishal Kundnani were present. The activities of the education programs of ASSI were discussed.

A meeting of past president, secretary President and President elect of ASSI and members of education committee interviewed candidates for ASSI Spine fellowships. These doctors were called for interview on the basis of marks obtained in the online examination. The doctors were individually interviewed and education committee along with the presidents and secretary of ASSI as well as the mentors of the hosting centers selected the candidates. Centres for training of the Spine fellows was decided and allotted.

It was decided that the education committee shall once again meet in 29th ASSICON at GOA.

ii. Scientific Committee Report

The Scientific Committee of ASSI has successfully collaborated with the local organizing committee to bring out a highly interactive case based program at the ICS, Vishakhapatnam in August 2015 - thanks to Dr Naresh Babu and his colleagues. All three days were dedicated to case based discussion and related short lectures, giving the audience an excellent take home message, which was a mixture of experience and evidence. We remain thankful to AOSpine for sponsoring 3 international faculty - Dr C. C. Wong, Malaysia, Dr Marcelo Gruenberg, Argentina and Dr Masato Tanaka, Japan.

ASSICON Goa was turning out to be a huge success. The organizing committee members, especially Dr Gautam Zaveri had interacted with the scientific committee of ASSI on multiple occasions. The program included multiple preconference workshops, ranging from cadaveric course to live surgical demonstration, to give the participants a wide variety of options served in a single platter. In the main conference topic based panel discussions gave everyone a chance to update themselves with the current thoughts on burning issues of various spine related disorders. Free papers had also been accommodated. International faculty included Dr Christian Mazel, Dr Mukund Gundana, Dr Dilip Sengupta, Dr Anant Tambe, Dr Jwalant Mehta and Dr Karen Weissman. On a different note, Dr Kunal Sarkar, renowned cardiothoracic surgeon of Kolkata delivered the Presidential Guest Oration on "Healthcare at the Crossroads". ASSICON Goa had proved to be a memorable academic bonanza.

Members could now look forward to the SpineWeek, 2016, also known as Spine Olympiad since it is held every 4 years. This meeting will be held from May 16 to 20 at Singapore. All major spine societies of the world come together for a joint meeting which goes on for a full week, i.e. Monday to Friday. This is the first time that ASSI is participating as a partner. ASSI will have a full hall to itself for two and half days -- Monday, Tuesday and half of Wednesday. It is a good opportunity for ASSI to showcase its scientific work on an international forum. There would also be a half day joint session with Asia Pacific Spine Society (APSS) on the topic of "Spinal Infections". ASSI was hopeful that there would be a great exchange of ideas in this event. Members were encouraged to plan to participate in SpineWeek Singapore.

iii. Social Work Committee Report

The Social Wing of ASSI under the guidance of Dr S Y Bhojraj has been involved in the following activities:

Social wing of ASSI activity update: (Since July 2015).

MCGM's VN Desai municipal hospital, Santacruz - conducting weekly twice surgeries and OPD on an

ongoing basis with Spine foundation and BMC having a public private partnership wherein spine foundation has spent about Rs. 8,00,000/- (Rupees Eight lakhs only).

Conducted a combined Spine and Joint arthritis camp with CSSC in Santa Cruz East in October 2015 - where simultaneously 4 OPDs were conducted inside the urban slums where 150 pts each - total > 600 pts were seen and treated - Expenditure for this camp was around Rs. 15000/- (Rupees fifteen thousand only).

Spent on implants for economically backward patients who could not afford spinal implants at various places - Wadia hosp, Mumbai - pt operated by Dr ArjunDhawale, Wockhardt Hosp, Goa - pt operated by Dr Ismail Shaik - Implant cost Rs. 27500/- each.

Upcoming Spine surgery camps:

Dec 2015 - SEARCH, Gadchiroli.

Jan 2016 - Spine camp at Vasai.

Feb 2016 - Parmarth Ashram, Rishikesh.

Dr Shekhar Bhojraj mentioned that funding was required for activities of the committee and requested ASSI to look into how the committee could be supported.

It was decided that an amount which ASSI could spend in the coming year would be decided by the Executive in consultation with the Chartered Accountant allocating suitable amount to various committees which have sought funding.

iv. Advocacy Committee Report

1. Emphasis on spinal ailments in PG curriculum

In the last GBM, the members had been informed about receipt of letter from Medical Council of India (MCI) informing approval in principle of ASSI's suggestion to give more exposure on "Management of spinal ailments in the PG curriculum for the specialty of orthopaedics". ASSI had also represented to the National Board of Examinations for a similar consideration in the curriculum for DNB Orthopaedics (copy of letter enclosed at Annexure G).

2. Gazette Notification by MCI about eligibility of orthopaedic surgeons to perform spine surgeries

Follow-up with MCI was being regularly in this regard and it was hoped that the notification would be issued in the near future.

3. Creating awareness about Spinal ailments

ASSI has come out with position statements on "Stem Cell and Other Cellular Interventions after SCI", "Spine Surgery is Safe" and "Prevention of SCI" and used the services of Communicators India to disseminate information about it through the media. ASSI has now entered into a fresh agreement with the same agency to create awareness about position statements on "osteoporosis" and "back pain".

4. Prevention activities

In the last GBM, the plan of action of the Prevention Committee comprising of Dr. Prashant Kekre, Dr. Sanjog Mathur, Dr. K. Venkatesh and Dr. HS Chhabra had been approved. The following action has been taken as per the plan:

a. ASSI has liased with 6 other societies (Indian Orthopaedic Association (IOA), Delhi Orthopaedic Association (DOA), Spine Society-Delhi Chapter, Indian Academy of Neurology (IAN), Spinal Cord Society (SCS) and Indian Association of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation) to put up a joint representation to Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities division of Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment to have a spinal cord injury awareness day. A copy of the letter submitted to the Ministry is enclosed at Annexure H.

b. Poster competition on "Community awareness on Prevention of SCI"

ASSI had organized a poster competition on "Community awareness on Prevention of SCI". Guidelines for compiling posters and for assessing them have been framed. Mailers have been sent to all members

inviting them to participate in the competition. There has been a very enthusiastic response to the poster competition with 17 submissions. Since all the posters looked good, all of them were displayed during 29th ASSICON. The 3 best posters chosen by the panel for awards were by Dr. Ajay Krishnan, Research Team ISIC and Dr. Varun Kumar Agarwal respectively. These 3 best posters would also be posted on the ASSI website and could be used for creating awareness.

c. Liasing with SICOT and WOC for SCI Prevention Activities

An effort is being made to collaborate with World Orthopaedic Concern (WOC) through its secretary general Dr D K Taneja, SICOT (through Dr Rajasekaran its President Elect), International Spinal Cord Society and Asian Spinal Cord Network (through Dr H S Chhabra, Chair of Prevention Committee of ISCoS and Executive Member of ASCON) for some prevention programme for third world.

v. Research Committee report

In the last GBM the protocol & proforma of the Multicenteric Potts Spine study titled: "Effectiveness of various diagnostic and management tools for the treatment/management of people with Pott's spine in India-A prospective, observational cohort study" had been approved.

24 ASSI experts confirmed their participation in the study. The protocol and proforma were circulated to all the participants with a request to take any necessary approvals as per the policy of their center/Institute and then initiate data collection.

The order for creating an online portal for data collection was placed on Krithi Technologies at the cost of Rs. 30,000/- on 22nd August 2015 after taking the approval of Executive. Due to huge server migration, Krithi Technologies got a bit delayed in getting the portal functional. The portal will be hosted on the ASSI website. They plan to get it functional by November 21, 2015. Meanwhile the centers had started collecting data and it was available for 41 patients so far. It was decided that the contribution of cases by the experts would be monitored.

Dr. Yogesh Pithwa had created a Microsoft access file (.acc) where data can be stored like Google sheets/excel file. This file helps in maintaining the uniformity of the data entry. Otherwise it works offline only and cannot connect one participating center to other. Dr. Yogesh Pithwa has offered to make this available to participating centers, if they find it useful for maintaining data.

vi. Spine Registry Committee Report

It was now nearly 4 years down the line after the ASSI Spine Registry was initiated. There were more than 15,000 patients whose data had been uploaded. The registry had started off with a total of 39 centers, which have been successfully pruned down to 15 centers which have been consistently uploading all their cases. This is a decision which was ratified in the last EC meeting at ASSICON Pune and subsequently was ratified in the GB.

The next target was to achieve 20,000 patient data available on the Registry, which could be achieved within a very short time. Once that is done, study groups could be set up to look at the demographics of the data. To that end the following initiatives were taken after multiple consultations with the technical persons in charge of the registry:

1. Total data collating and generation of Excel sheet reports
2. Centre wise distribution of data for each pathology or surgical procedure.
3. Surgical procedure and Pathology wise distribution in a given time period.

It was hoped that these updates of the ASSI spine registry would be available soon and such that useful information from the data could be extracted.

It was now time to realize the short-comings of the data uploading process which had been identified as:

1. Most of the uploaded patients did not have follow-up data
2. Very few Xray/MRI/CT pictures were available.
3. More detailed data on the complications mimicking that of the Mortality/Morbidity data of SRS should be worked upon.

It was hoped that in the coming years, these can be achieved so that the ASSI Spine Registry could be the torch bearer of relevant contribution to the advancement of the science.

It was decided that it was mandatory for each spine fellow to enter data in the spine registry. This would be a prerequisite for their eligibility to appear in the exit examination. It was also decided that Ms. Meenakshi, who is attached part time with ASSI for research would monitor data quality.

vii. Website Committee report

Dr Ajoy Shetty presented the report of website committee (details at Annexure I).

e. Editing and revising the chapters of Dr. Kulkarni's Textbook

Dr. HS Chhabra briefed the members that Dr. GS Kulkarni had requested ASSI to help in editing and revising the chapters of Lumbar and Cervical Spine Sections of the Textbook. There were total 27 chapters in both the sections. A list of authors and the name of editors who edited the chapters is enclosed at Annexure J.

f. ASSI Participation in Global Spine Forum during North American Spine Society (NASS) 2015 Annual Meeting

Dr. HS Chhabra briefed the members that North American Spine Society (NASS) had offered ASSI a complimentary booth and a one hour session in the Global Spine Forum during North American Spine Society (NASS) 2015 Annual Meeting held from October 12-16, 2015 in Chicago, US. The session was held on Friday i.e. 16th October from 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. The theme was "**Challenges in management of spinal ailments in emerging economies/countries**". Dr Abhay Nene, Dr. Karthik Kailash, and Dr HS Chhabra were the faculty for this session. The program of the session is enclosed at Annexure K.

ASSI was also given a complimentary booth (Booth no 763) in the Exhibition. Ms. Nazie Dana, Program Director-IASA, was kind enough to accept ASSI's request to manage the booth. ASSICON pamphlets, Newsletters, standees on position statements and ASSI Textbook were displayed.

g. ASSI participation in Spine Summit Asia Pacific Hong Kong 2015, September 25-27

Dr. HS Chhabra briefed the members that ASSI had been invited by AO Spine Asia Pacific as a Supporting Organization for Spine Summit Asia Pacific – Hong Kong 2015. Dr Ram Chaddha, Dr. Raghav Dutt, Dr. Ajoy Shetty and Dr. B.N. Upendra represented ASSI in the event.

5. Accounts & Income Tax Status

Dr. HS Chhabra briefed the members that the Balance Sheet and Income & Expenditure Accounts for the years ending on 31.03.2014 and 31.03.2015 had been finalised (copies enclosed at Annexure L). The salient features were as below:

Financial year: 2013 - 14

Total income of the Society during this financial year was Rs.211.48 lacs whereas the total expense was Rs.162.63 lacs. The net profit of Rs.48.86 lacs have been recorded in the books.

As on 31.03.2014, the corpus fund of Rs.113.76 lacs was kept separately in a scheduled bank.

Financial year: 2014 - 15

Total income of the Society during this financial year was Rs.45.07 lacs whereas total expense was Rs. 47.11 lacs. The net loss of Rs.2.03 lac has been recorded in the books of accounts. During the financial year, the society has given of donation of Rs.27.90 lacs to Spine Society West Bengal.

As on 31.03.2015 the corpus fund of Rs.108.94 lacs was kept separately in a scheduled bank.

The auditors had pointed out that ASSI needs to urgently take steps to meet the requirement of utilizing 85% of total income.

As pointed out earlier, the chartered accountants had also noted that Income Tax returns for the financial year 1998-1999, 1999-2000, 2000-2001, 2001-2002, 2002-2003, 2003-2004, 2004-2005, 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 were missing. The effort to try to find out from the previous chartered account in this regard continues.

The members unanimously resolved to continue with M/s Anthony Trinidad & Co as Statutory Auditors of ASSI.

6. Spine Week 2016 – Update

Dr. HS Chhabra briefed the members about the SpineWeek 2016. This Meeting would take place at the iconic Marina Bay Sands Convention Centre in Singapore from May 16-20, 2016. The ASSI sessions would be on 16th, 17th & 18th May 2015.

A core group comprising of Dr. Arvind Jayaswal, Dr. S. Rajasekaran, Dr. Ram Chaddha, Dr. Raghav Dutt, Dr. Saumyajit Basu, Dr. Samir Dalvie and Dr. H S Chhabra had been constituted to look into subsidizing the registration of members, appointment of event manager cum travel agent and other matters pertaining to SpineWeek 2016. The committee had worked out a process for subsidizing the registration of members. It had also negotiated with companies in order to select a suitable one offering the most competitive rates.

Cirrus Travels Pvt. Ltd, represented by Ms. Sapna Rateria, Director had been selected to coordinate registration and help arrange air travel as well as accommodation.

It was discussed that various events could be planned in build up to Spine Week like webinar, live surgery workshop etc. A Newsletter may also be brought out.

All members were requested to participate wholeheartedly in the event. They were informed that the committee strongly recommended that they finalize with regard to airtravel as soon as possible as May is peak travel time to Singapore.

7. ASSICON - 2017, Hyderabad – Update

Dr. Raghav Dutta briefed the members about the preparations for ASSICON 2017 at Hyderabad. The dates of ASSICON 2017 Hyderabad is on 27, 28 and 29 Jan 2017 (Friday, Saturday and Sunday). A local committee including the executive members of Twin Cities Spine Association and other members had been formed. They were in the process of finalizing the venue and the event manager for the conference. Novotel Hyderabad or Taj Krishna could be possible venues. In case SRS showed interest, one more day could be added to the conference (Thursday Jan 26, 2017). They would know for sure in this regard by the first week of December 2015).

He welcomed all the members for the conference.

8. ASSI Presidential Guest Speakers - Spine Week 2016 & ASSICON 2017

In an earlier GBM it had been decided that each year there should be a "Presidential Address" as well as a "Presidential Guest Speaker", each of 20 min duration with 5 min for introduction.

In the last EC there were discussions that there should be one Presidential Lecture every alternate year so that during his tenure, he speaks once (not twice) and the Presidential Guest Oration should be alternating with the Presidential Lecture. This would save time in the conference and the effort to find out a befitting speaker as a Presidential Guest Orator every year. However no decision could be taken in this regard.

The option of inviting some world renowned faculty as the Presidential Guest Speaker at Spine Week was approved by the members.

It was also decided that in future, the President would invite a suitable expert for Presidential Guest lecturer in the first year of his/her tenure. In the year that he/she is exiting, he/she would deliver the Presidential Address.

9. Ratification of New Members

The members were informed that there were 106 new applicants for life membership of ASSI (list enclosed at Annexure M). The board unanimously approved their membership.

10. Co-opted members of ASSI

As per the decision in the last GBM the list of co-opted members needs to be proposed and ratified each

year. It had been proposed that we should have a re look at the members of various committees who are not active. The current list of co-opted members is enclosed at Annexure N.

The members deliberated and approved the following as co-opted members of ASSI:

The members were informed that the final list would be circulated soon.

11. Activating Nomination Committee of ASSI

The Nomination Committee of ASSI had been constituted. It had been decided that the Committee should screen all the nominations for the Executive positions of ASSI. It should also ensure that the office bearers are selected through a process such that a healthy relationship is maintained amongst the members and factionalism and rivalry is avoided. The Committee would be activated for the next vacancies.

It was decided that all the vacancies would be announced in Spineweek. Nomination committee would screen all the applications and do the needful.

12. ASSI Constitution Amendment

In the GBM of ASSI on 29th January 2011 it had been unanimously resolved to constitute a "Constitution Committee" with Dr. VT Ingahalikar as the Chairman and Dr. Atul Goel, Dr. DK Taneja, Dr. Arvind Jayaswal & Dr. Raghav Dutt as members. The GBM had requested that the Committee give its report of the revised Constitution.

Dr. VT Ingahalikar had sent a revised draft of ASSI constitution. In the revised draft, it has been suggested that there should be no provision for associate members. He had also requested all Executive Committee members to send their comments within a month so that the constitution could be finalised and circulated to all members for comments, if any. The revision of constitution would be discussed in the forthcoming GBM.

13. ICS 2017: call for proposals supported in writing by local Spine Society

Dr. HS Chhabra briefed the members that the ICS is normally held during second week of August. Proposals had been invited for holding the meeting. Dr. Ranjith Unnikrishnan, had put up a bid to organize ICS 2017 at Kovalam, Kerala on behalf of Kerala Spine Society (a specialty sub section of the Kerala Orthopaedic Association). KOA Spine Forum, Kerala Trivandrum Spine Society would be co- hosts.

Since there were no any other bidders, the members approved that ICS 2017 be held at Kovalam.

14. ASSICON 2018: call for proposals supported in writing by local Spine Society

Dr. HS Chhabra informed the members that two proposals had been received to host ASSICON 2018. Dr. Subir N. Jhaveri, had put up a bid to organize ASSICON 2018 at Ahmadabad on behalf of Spine Society of Gujrat. Dr. Sajan Hedge, had also put up a bid to organize ASSICON 2018 at Chennai on behalf of The Chennai Spine Club.

On the basis of voting, it was decided that ASSICON 2018 be organized by Dr. Sajan Hedge at Chennai.

15. Proposal for Asian Spine Journal as Official Journal of ASSI

Dr. HS Chhabra briefed the members that on the sidelines of IMAST 2015 at KL, Prof Cheung had verbally requested ASSI through Dr Saumyajit and Dr Jayaswal to consider the proposal of making Asian Spine Journal, a pubmed indexed journal, the official journal of ASSI. The EC had considered this offer and decided that clarifications should be sought regarding what it entails, Saumyajit had written to him and his responses were as below : 1. What does it entail for the ASSI -- subscription subsidy to the members ? -- publication preferences to the members ? -- abstract publication for ASSI meetings ?

Some open access journal ask authors to pay some amount of money for their article to be open to all global researchers. However, ASJ is a true open access journal which is open to all researchers for reading without any payment and also can be published without charge. Therefore, the articles in ASJ have greater opportunity to be read by global researchers than other kinds of open access journal.

Of course, there is no subscription fee for all researchers. Every researcher can have access to the all articles of ASJ through the homepage of ASJ and also through other database such as PubMed,

Scholarone, Scopus.

Now, two ASSI members are working as an Editorial board member of ASJ (Prof. Arvind Jayaswal and S. Rajasekaran). I'd like to ask ASSI to recommend 3 more ASSI members as Editorial board member of ASJ. If we have enough Indian editorial members, I'll arrange at least one Indian editorial member for reviewing the manuscript from ASSI members.

1. The abstract of ASSI meeting will be published as an supplementary volume of ASJ within 3 months after your meeting without any charge.

2. Is there any minimum subscription?

There is no minimum subscription. All members of ASSI can access to the ASJ free of charge.

3. Is there any minimum abstract submission criteria ?I think that the format of abstract would be better to follow the submission guideline according to "the instruction for authors" of ASJ.

The members were briefed that the Executive had recommended that the offer be accepted for a duration of 3 years.

16. Any other matter with the permission of the chair

a. Proposal by Dr.Chandra Sekhar for Knowledge partner initiative

Dr. HS Chhabra briefed the members that Dr. Sajan Hedge had forwarded a proposal by Dr Chandra Shekharas per which recording of interviews of key faculty from across the world on hot button issues is done in a high definition studio at the venue of the conference.

These interviews are uploaded online, with SEO for key words to drive organic results on Google search. The Knowledge Partner Initiative is typically supported either by the conference organisers or pharma companies. The company has worked with Glenmark for CSI 2014 and Sanofi for CardiacPrevent 2015.

It was decided that the company could be asked to give a quote for Prevention campaign on Social Media.

b. Reimbursing local organisers for ASSI booth, registration of VTI Gold Medalist, Past Presidents and members over 70 years and accommodation of Secretary.

Dr. HS Chhabra briefed the members that there was a suggestion from one of the local organizing committee members that ASSI should reimburse expenses with ASSI booth, registration of VTI Gold Medalist, Past Presidents and members over 70 years and accommodation of Secretary.

After deliberations, it was decided that these were the responsibilities of the organizing committee and all such issues should be part of a MoU which the organizers should sign with ASSI. The bidders would need to give an undertaking that they would abide by the MoU.

c. Venue for exit examination and fellowship interviews in 2016

Dr. HS Chhabra briefed the members that the next year a batch of 8 candidates would be finishing their tenure of ASSI Spine fellowship in September 2016. Dates and venue for exit exam and fellowship interviews need to be decided since next year ICS is not being held. Early or mid August would be suitable to give the fellows sufficient time so that they could join on 1st October.

After deliberations, it was decided that possibilities of clubbing it with any spine activity in the last week of July or first week of August 2016 would be explored.

d. "ASSI Overseas Fellowship" at Texas Back Institute

Dr. HS Chhabra briefed the members that the General Body had been informed earlier about the continuation of what used to be Dartmouth fellowship in the new location and a different name.

Dr Sengupta has informed that he has been having problems with the Texas Medical Board and the individual hospital to permit the travelling fellow from India. In the State of Texas, the visiting doctors need credentialing from the Texas State Medical Board as well as the hospital. The Dartmouth fellowship

was established in 2006, and it was in the State of New Hampshire. The visiting fellows could be present to observe in the clinics, Operating Rooms and also could scrub in the surgeries, but could not assist. The rules across the country (US) have changed, and have become more stringent. The rules are also different in different states, and Texas is one of the most difficult state to get permission for the physicians to observe or practice medicine.

In view of the above, Dr Sengupta has requested ASSI to hold off the Traveling fellowship to for 2016. He shall let us know when he can get the Credentialing Issues with the State Medical Board and the Hospitals sorted out, to reinstate the fellowship program in the format, as he had been able to do it in Dartmouth during 2006-2014.

Dr Sengupta had apologized to ASSI for any inconvenience so caused.

The members were of the unanimous opinion that the contribution of Dr. Dilip Sen Gupta towards ASSI were substantial and further continuation of the fellowship would be as per his convenience and suitability.

e. Handing over of cheque to ASSI by ASSICON 2015 organizing Committee

Dr. Amol Rege handed over a cheque of Rs 2.5 lac to the President on behalf of the organizing committee of ASSICON 2015.

f. Handing over of cheque to ASSI by 29th ASSICON organizing Committee

Dr. Gautam Zaveri handed over a cheque of Rs 5 lac to the President on behalf of the organizing committee of 29th ASSICON.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

REPORT ON 29th ASSICON 2015

The 29th Annual ASSICON was held at The Hotel Cidade Goa on 27, 28 and 29 November 2015. The event was organized by the Bombay Spine Club along with the Goa Medical College. Under the guidance of the ASSI President, Dr Ram Chaddha, the three organizing secretaries- Dr Gautam Zaveri, Dr Abhay Nene and Dr Samir Dalvie worked tirelessly to organize a grand event at very short notice.

For the first time in the history of ASSICON, 5 simultaneous pre-conference workshops were held on the 27th morning. These included interactive symposia on Adolescent Idiopathic scoliosis chaired by Dr Samir Dalvie, and on Spinal trauma chaired by Dr Mihir Bapat. At the Goa Medical College, two hands-on cadaver workshops were held. The workshop on Cervical instrumentation techniques was chaired by Dr SK Srivastava, and the Thoracic instrumentation & transpedicular decompression workshop was chaired by Dr AB Goregaonkar. The live spine surgery symposium wherein a Mini TLIF and Thoracic pedicle screw insertion were demonstrated, was chaired by Dr Vishal Kundanani.

The theme of the conference was "All you wanted to know in spine surgery, but were afraid to ask" and the organizers strived to impart knowledge through an excellent interactive program. Ten different topics including Deformity correction in ankylosing spondylitis, Complex C1- C2 instability, Thoracic stenosis, Post-operative surgical site infections, Infantile scoliosis, etc were discussed threadbare. Dr Christian Mazel from Paris, Dr Karen Weissman from Santiago, Dr Dilip Sengupta from Texas, Dr Dmitri Kondrashov from San Francisco and Mr Anant tambe from UK along with the excellent Indian faculty imparted valuable pearls in the management of these complex problems. Dr Kunal Sarkar, noted Cardiothoracic surgeon delivered the Presidential address and highlighted the challenges faced by the Indian Healthcare Industry.

A record number of 153 abstracts were received reflecting the healthy state of ongoing research in India, of which 58 were selected for podium presentation and 55 were presented as posters. The VTI Gold medal session saw some excellent presentations. Dr Vishwanath Patil from Bombay Hospital, Mumbai won the prize for his paper on "Cervical footprint anthropometry in the Indian population: Implication on design of Artificial Disc Replacement devices". A keenly contested poster competition ended with Dr Dhruv Patel from Ahmedabad winning the prize for his poster on "High Magnitude scoliotic curves- our experience of 16 cases"

In the pleasant evenings, the delegates and their families enjoyed the spirit and warm hospitality of Goa on a Boat cruise on Thursday, at a Goan Carnival on Friday and at an Arabian beach party on Saturday. There were 447 registered delegates, 164 of whom had come with family. There was excellent participation in the large trade exhibition, much to the delight of the exhibitors.

ASSI Congratulates the Bombay Spine Club for this excellent feast.



Report of ASSI Scientific Committee

1. **Dr Saumyajit Basu (Chair)**
2. Dr. Vijay Kumar
3. Dr. Bhavuk Garg (co-opted)
4. Dr. Amit Jhala (co-opted)
5. Dr. BN Upendra (co-opted)
6. Dr. Gautam Zaveri (co-opted)
7. Dr. Ketan Khurjekar (co-opted)
8. Dr. K. Appaji Krishnan (co-opted)
9. Dr Rupinder Chahal (co-opted)

The scientific committee of ASSI has been instrumental in the following activities in this year

ASSICON, Goa

Thanks to the organizers of the Goa meeting, we all enjoyed an excellent program at Goa. The highlight of the same was the beautiful coordination which could be brought about in such a short notice. Special thanks to Dr Gautam Zaveri for putting in a lot of hard work into this. The preconference workshops were well attended and very relevant. The main conference was full of panel discussions on very important topics and a separate session on medico-legal aspects stole the show! The panellists put in their best and the guest faculty was very responsive to the needs of the audience. A detailed report of ASSICON Goa is given separately.

SpineWeek, Singapore

The main focus of the scientific committee in this year is the ASSI meeting at SpineWeek, Singapore. All efforts have been made to make the flavour of the program innovative, interactive and international.

The most notable aspect remains the enthusiasm and quality of the abstract submitted for consideration. There were about 130 abstract submissions, all of which were blinded and went out to about 4 reviewers and the final scores were sorted out according to merit – the selection process was completely unbiased, 40 were selected for podium presentations and 40 more got selected for poster presentations. 6 papers out of about 20 submissions were selected for VTI gold medal session. The quality of the papers would be predictable of a steady improvement in the quality of scientific material being presented. This time, as in the previous years, there has been a tremendous response for ASSI award submissions and the judges had a tough time to select the best. All abstracts selected for podium presentations and VTI gold medal along with the ASSI award winning abstracts would be published in the Asian Spine Journal -- the official journal of ASSI, as decided in the last GB meeting.

The didactic part of the program has been made quite high-end with more than a dozen international speakers from various parts of the world joining us for various lectures. We also have a galaxy of national doyens covering a wide range of topics from lumbar degenerative to tumours to deformity. The lecture topics have been made relevant and thought provoking. The guest lecturers have been allotted 12 minutes time to accommodate the large number of speakers and to have adequate discussion time to make the program interactive. There are 3 case discussion sessions and all presenters have been asked to submit the case with full work-ups and follow-ups prior to the conference for a proper screening of the same. There are 3 debates and a separate video session to spice up the program and to make it interesting for the audience.

The scientific committee guarantees a good academic program of high quality in the SpineWeek and hopes to carry forward this effort to future conferences to be held under the auspices of ASSI.

Report of ASSI Education Committee

1. **Dr. Raghav Dutt (Chair)**
2. Dr. Arvind Kulkarni
3. Dr Vishal Kundnani (co-opted)
4. Dr. Samir Dalvie (co-opted)
5. Dr. S.S. Kale (co-opted)

6. Dr. Mohinder Kaushal (co-opted)
7. Dr. Ranjith Unnikrishnan (co-opted)
8. Dr. Shankar Acharya (co-opted)
9. Dr. Neeraj Gupta (co-opted)

The education committee met informally on the sidelines of ICS Goa. The committee also had a discussion about non contribution of Dr. Anupreet Bassi and Dr. Sashidhar Bk and were not participating in the matters of the committee. It was felt that since they were otherwise engaged it is better to nominate two other members of ASSI for smooth running of the committee. The chairman has suggested the names which will be discussed in the next executive meet and ratified in the GBM.

Dr. Hrushikesh Mehata topped the ASSI Fellowship Exit Examination is eligible for the IASA fellowship. The committee requested ASSI office to officially inform IASA.

It was also decided that the education committee will once again meet during Spineweek

Report of ASSI Research Committee

1. Dr. HS Chhabra (Chair)

2. Dr. S. Karunkaran
3. Dr. Abhay Nene (co-opted)
4. Dr. K. Venkatesh (co-opted)
5. Dr. Surya Prakash Rao (co-opted)
6. Dr. Ajoy Shetty (co-opted)
7. Dr. J. Naresh Babu (co-opted)

1. ASSI Pott's Spine Study Report

The ASSI Pott's Spine Study on 'Trends in treatment of spinal TB amongst ASSI members' was conceptualized with the objective as under:

- to assess the role of Biopsy in the treatment of tuberculosis of spine
- to assess the efficacy of chemotherapy regime 2HRZE + 7HR along with other regime
- to evaluate the appropriate decisive factor (clinical and radiological) for discontinuation of ATT.

The protocol was finalized before the last GBM and the online portal for data submission was commissioned on November 21, 2015. 7 centers are uploading data and there is data from 58 cases so far.

2. ASSI Research Awards

ASSI supports two research projects by its members with an award of Rs. 1,50,000/- per project. A call for proposals by members in this regard has been advertised in Indian Journal of Orthopaedics (IJO) and Neurology India (NI) in the month of May 2016. Repeated mailers are being sent to all members.

3. ASSI Research Award Projects reports

a. Multi-Modal Analysis of Early Lumbar Disc Degenerative Disease – A Clinical, Radiological and Genetic Evaluation of Young Patients with Back Pain and Disc Degeneration

- Principal Investigator: Dr S. Rajasekaran

Project Report

Degeneration of human intervertebral discs is inevitable as it is part of aging. However it also affects young people resulting in low back pain and neural sequelae. Previous studies on the etiology of disc degeneration have studied patients of all age groups. A study on young patients with early disc degeneration focused on genetic associations will be a better model.

The study population was recruited based on any sex, age between 18 to 70 years, no other spinal pathology, no previous lumbar spine surgery and no significant spinal injury. The present analysis included details of patients less than 35 years of age only. Apart from clinical assessment, detailed MRI evaluation for the presence or absence of the following six phenotypes in all the five lumbar discs (Disc Bulge/ herniation, Annular tears/ Hyperintense zones, Pfirrmann score, Schmorl's node, Modic changes

and Total End plate damage score) was done. Genotyping of 71 SNPs belonging to 41 candidate genes was performed using the Sequenome® platform.

543 individuals of age less than 35 years were classified as case and control based on the presence or absence of one of the six phenotypes. The rs1940044 (marker of MMP7); rs7575934 (marker of IL1F5); rs3787049 (markers of COMP) and rs8179183 (marker of LEPR) were significantly associated with DISC BULGE; the rs696990 (marker for COL9A1), rs2249350 (marker for ADAMTS5), rs162509 (marker for ADAMTS5) and rs11247361 (marker for IGF1R) were significantly associated with Annular tears, SNPs of MMP1, MMP20, VDR, SKT and AGC1 were associated with Modic changes, rs1996352 of MMP7 with Schmorl's nodes and the SNPs of CALM1, FN1 MMP7 and COMP were significantly associated with Pfirrmann's score.

This is the first association study of genetic polymorphisms with degenerative disc disease of the lumbar spine in young adults conducted in India. Among 71 SNPs of 41 candidate genes, the specific genes associated with early disc degeneration in the young population was identified. These candidate genes need further evaluation in large scale studies and in other ethnicities so that preventive strategies guided at curbing early disc degeneration could be the focus in future. Future studies through proteomic evaluation of disc components will help us in identifying deranged proteins of the disc and complementary genetic association studies could pave the way for better understanding of the etiopathogenesis of disc degeneration.

b. "MicroRNA Profiling of Peripheral Blood Mononuclear Cells in Spinal Cord Injury: An attempt to understand the molecular signature of the acute phase of injury"

- Principal Investigator: Dr Harvinder Singh Chhabra

- Co-Investigator: Dr Kanchan Sarda

Project Report

Study Objectives:

1. To isolate peripheral blood mononuclear cells from healthy individuals (control group) as well as those suffering from spinal cord injury (experimental group).
2. To isolate miRNA from the above collected samples and conduct a comparative microarray analysis.
3. To analyze the microarray data for unique expression profile in experimental group.

The proposal was a preliminary study designed to explore the possibility that genetic analysis of PBMCs may lead to revealing a molecular signature which is unique to SCI. To this end we proposed to undertake miRNA microarray analyses on PBMCs obtained from two acute complete SCI subjects and compare that to the profile from 2 healthy individuals.

To achieve the study objectives peripheral blood mononuclear cells from 2 healthy individuals and 2 individuals with acute spinal cord injury was collected. MicroRNA isolation from the collected samples has been undertaken and quality been carried out. The quality and quantity of the isolated miRNA meets the required standard for conducting microarray experiments. The isolated RNA has been sent to Genotypic Technology for undertaking the microarray analysis. The expression data, once collected by the microarray analysis conducted by Genotypic Technology, will be then analyzed by us to see if a unique expression miRNA profile can be identified for acute SCI.

Report of ASSI Social Work Committee

1. Dr Shekhar Bhojraj (Chair)
2. Dr Subir Zaveri
3. Dr. Premik Nagad (co-opted)
4. Dr. Abhilash N. Dhruv (co- opted)
5. Dr. Rushama Tandon (co-opted)

Social wing of ASSI activity update: (Since November 2015).

MCGM's VN Desai municipal hospital, Santacruz - conducting twice weekly surgeries and OPD on an ongoing basis with Spine foundation and BMC having a public private partnership wherein spine foundation has spent about the 4,00,000/- (Rupees four lakhs only) for anesthesia fees, physician fees, physiotherapy and implants.

December 2015: Conducted a Spine Surgery camp at SEARCH, Gadchiroli - 6 surgeries + 2 spinal blocks given. 400 pts seen in OPD - Rs. 1,20,000/- (Rupees one lakh twenty thousand was spent on Surgical cost and implants)

February 2016: Conducted a Spine Surgery camp at Nirmal Ashram and Parmarth Ashram in Rishikesh, Uttarakhand - 1 Anterior + posterior scoliosis correction + 2 Lumbar decompression surgeries done at Nirmal ashram hospital and an OPD camp was conducted at Parmarth Ashram hospital where 120 pts were seen - Rs. 2,00,000/- (Rupees two lakhs were spent on Surgical cost, images and anaesthesia fees).

Upcoming Spine surgery camp: April 2016- SEARCH, Gadchiroli.

Report of ASSI Spine-Registry Committee

1. Dr Rajasekaran (Chair)

2. Dr. Saumyajit Basu
3. Dr. Ajoy Shetty
4. Dr. Bharat Dave

Previous Issues

As has been discussed threadbare in the last 2 GB meetings, the top 15 contributing centres have been retained in the data submission system. The rest have been temporarily disabled. Kirthi technologies, the company which services the database, has been made to develop an administrative zone of the database which allows direct data export from the registry. This admin zone is password protected.

Ongoing Processess

Ms Meenakshi, the ASSI research manager has been entrusted with the job of exporting the monthly data out of the ASSI Spine Registry and an email is sent to all the 15 contributing centres attaching the data uploaded from that centre during the previous month. This email is religiously sent out on the morning of the 1st of every month. This is thoroughly supervised and a reminder note is sent to those centres which have not contributed throughout the previous month. Those centres which have a running ASSI fellowship program are sent a note that their mentors should persuade r the ASSI fellows to upload the data because this is a mandatory part of the fellowship program.

Future Considerations

We are soon going to hit the proposed 20,000 target which had been set up when the Registry was set up with a research grant from Synthes. Once this is achieved, we intend to start looking at the accumulated data in a better way. We would try to invite research proposals, looking in to the data and a separate research grant could be given out by the ASSI for this. We could allocate thesis topics to the ASSI fellows, based on the database, which can become a part of their evaluation during their exit examinations.

Report of ASSI Advocacy Committee

1. Dr. Ram Chaddha(Chair)

2. Dr. Arvind Jayaswal
3. Dr. Rajasekaran
4. Dr. Raghav Dutt
5. Dr. Suresh Pillai
6. Dr. HS Chhabra

Emphasis on spinal ailments in PG curriculum

Medical Council of India (MCI) had approved in principle ASSI's suggestion to give more exposure on "Management of spinal ailments in the PG curriculum for the specialty of orthopaedics". ASSI had also represented to the National Board of Examinations for a similar consideration in the curriculum for DNB Orthopaedics. We have been informed by concerned officials of National Board of Examinations that action is at hand in this regard.

Gazette Notification by MCI about eligibility of orthopaedic surgeons to perform spine surgeries

Follow-up with MCI was being regularly done in this regard and it was hoped that the notification would be issued in the near future.

Creating awareness about Spinal ailments

ASSI has come out with position statements on "Stem Cell and Other Cellular Interventions after SCI", "Spine Surgery is Safe" and "Prevention of SCI" and used the services of Communicators India to disseminate information about it through the media. ASSI has now entered into a fresh agreement with the same agency to create awareness about position statements on "osteoporosis" and "back pain".

Report of Prevention Committee

1. Dr. Prashant Kekre

2. Dr. Ram Chaddha
3. Dr. Rajasekaran
4. Dr. Raghav Dutt Mulukutla
5. Dr. Saumyajit Basu
6. Dr H.S. Chhabra
7. Dr. GR Vijay Kumar (co-opted)
8. Dr. B.N.Upendra (co-opted)
9. Dr. Amol Rege (co-opted)
10. Dr. M.M. Prabhakar (co-opted)
11. Dr. K. Venkatesh
12. Dr. Karthik Kailash (co-opted)

Prevention activities

The plan of action of the Prevention Committee had been approved by the GBM. The following action has been taken as per the plan:

a. Poster competition on "Community awareness on Prevention of SCI"

ASSI had organized a poster competition on "Community awareness on Prevention of SCI". Guidelines for compiling posters and for assessing them had been framed. Mailers were sent to all members inviting them to participate in the competition. There was a very enthusiastic response to the poster competition with 17 submissions. Since all the posters looked good, all of them were displayed during 29th ASSICON. The 3 best posters chosen by the panel for awards were by Dr. Ajay Krishnan, Research Team ISIC and Dr. Varun Kumar Agarwal respectively. These 3 best posters have also been posted on the ASSI website and would be used for creating awareness.

b. Liasing with SICOT and WOC for SCI Prevention Activities

An effort is being made to collaborate with World Orthopaedic Concern (WOC) through its secretary general Dr D K Taneja, SICOT (through Dr Rajasekaran it's President Elect), International Spinal Cord Society and Asian Spinal Cord Network (through Dr H S Chhabra, Chair of Prevention Committee of ISCoS and Executive Member of ASCON) for some prevention programme for third world.

c. Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Day: 5th September

A day to commemorate 'Spinal Cord Injuries' has been declared by International Spinal Cord Society (ISCoS) with the intention of increasing awareness amongst general public. It is presumed that the awareness would facilitate an inclusive life for persons with disability and ensure success of prevention programs. The prevention committee of ASSI will be collaborating with ISCoS and other related societies to observe 5th September as the SCI day and carry out various activities as under:

- ♦ A press release would be issued at least 2 weeks before the SCI day. A press conference would be held on

- or before 5th September (preferably one week before the day).
- ♦ Announcement of SCI Day would be displayed prominently on the website of ASSI.
- ♦ The Prevention Audiovisuals and radio jingles already prepared by the ISCoS Prevention Committee would be made available on the website of ASSI so that they could be downloaded and used by anyone for creating awareness. A hindi version is also available through Spinal Cord Society. Options would be explore to have them screened in the national and/ or regional electronic media.
- ♦ The possibility of selecting a National Brand Ambassador to propagate the message on SCI prevention and management would be explored.

In addition members could organise any of the following activities commemorating the day in their respective regions:

- ♦ Symposiums on regional specific topics, eg,
 - Prevention of SCI
 - Accessibility in public life
 - Wheelchair and Assistive Technology workshops
 - Sexuality and Fertility in SCI
 - Vocational Rehabilitation in SCI
 - Advances in SCI management
 - Family support and Support of family in SCI
- ♦ Articles/panel discussion/advertisements in print and TV media
- ♦ Awareness and education programs in the community and especially in schools and colleges. The awareness programs could be simultaneously used for propagating prevention programs for spinal cord injuries. The programs in educational institutes can include the following:
 - Screening of Prevention AVs
 - AV on successful SCI patients
 - AV on skill training
 - Poster competition
 - Lectures/Symposiums
 - Training of trainers (Mentor development) on effective evacuation of accident victims, which then could be percolated down to other trainers and children
- ♦ Awareness campaigns through social media including facebook, twitter and whatsapp
- ♦ Poster competition amongst different sections of societies
- ♦ Screening of audiovisuals/ films pertaining to SCI via different medias
- ♦ Wheelchair day, to include, eg,
 - Rally/marathon
 - Race
 - Skill training
 - Fashion show
 - Dance
 - Workshop
 - Distribution of wheelchairs amongst deserving persons of the society
 - Sports competitions
 - Basketball
 - Cricket
 - Rugby
 - Lawn tennis
- ♦ Pre-recorded messages through mobile phones
- ♦ Creation and broadcasting of radio jingles on SCI
- ♦ Vocational training and employment carnival
- ♦ Involving policy makers of the region for propagating information pertaining to SCI, through the following initiatives:
 - Observation of "Spinal Cord Injury Day" in their region
 - Legislation and enforcement of prevailing related laws
 - Training program for first aid and evacuation from the accident site
- ♦ Liaising with NGOs for various initiatives as under:
 - Promoting use and availability of safety harness while working on construction sites, trees, heights etc.
 - Innovative local techniques like fruit picking while standing on ground using an assistive devise, manufacturing of safety harness with locally available material.

- Promoting proper lifting techniques with gadgets instead of carrying load on head.

For deeper reach to the society and the desired impact there is a need to involve the government (both at central and state levels), government organizations, corporate sector, media, NGOs, hospitals, schools, colleges and the world of entertainment, to name a few, and of course, the public at large.

Report of ASSI Website Committee

Dr. Ajoy Shetty

S.No	Assigning Date	Description
1	1/2/2015	Add a hospital and create login for that hospital in spine registry
2	1/19/2015	Image upload checking
3	1/20/2015	Spine registry image upload
4	1/20/2015	Export report for spine registry from 01 oct 2014 to 20 jan 2015
5	1/20/2015	Export report for spine registry from 01 oct 2014 to 20 jan 2015
6	1/28/2015	Export member email id and send it to mail attachment
7	1/29/2015	Export members details and send it to the mail attachment
8	1/30/2015	Add NewsLetter - January 2015
9	1/30/2015	Add Final Results Assi Awards 2015
10	2/11/2015	Add new members in online DB
11	2/18/2015	Export full report of spine registry.
12	3/7/2015	Add President Message
13	3/24/2015	Add Dr. Sajan Hedge name in past president page
14	4/7/2015	Expoert year wise report for spine registry patient list
15	4/8/2015	Check the doctors login in online
16	5/5/2015	ASSI Spine Fellowship
17	6/4/2015	Upload - re-constituted list of various Committees of ASSI
18	8/18/2015	Upload - result of "ASSI Spine Fellowship" for the batch 2015-2017
19	9/17/2015	Result of ASSI Spine Fellowship Exit Examination" for the batch 2013-2015
20	11/12/2015	Corrections - Potts spine proforma
21	11/17/2015	Corrections - Potts spine proforma
22	11/21/2015	File Upload - Potts spine proforma

S.No	Assigning Date	Description
23	11/23/2015	Updatons in assi spine regisgry
24	11/23/2015	Center list for multicenter Potts spine study
25	11/23/2015	Multicenter Potts study portal
26	11/24/2015	Dr Basu - Corrections
27	12/1/2015	List of cases - ASSI spine registry
28	12/2/2015	Call for various ASSI Awards forSpineWeek 2016
29	12/9/2015	ASSI spine registry - report
30	12/17/2015	Request for issue username and password for 49 new members
31	12/17/2015	Request for issue username and password for 26 new members
32	12/17/2015	Request for issue username and password for 84 new members
33	12/22/2015	ASSI - Corrections
34	1/6/2016	Kindly upload below mentioned under "SpineWeek 2016"
35	1/6/2016	ASSI spine registry - report
36	1/6/2016	SpineWeek package link
37	2/3/2016	ASSI-Spine registry - password corrections
38	2/13/2016	Please provide list of cases
39	2/13/2016	Potts spine online portal
40	2/29/2016	ASSI spine registry corrections
41	3/3/2016	Data Uploaded in ASSI Spine Registry -- Feb 2016

SpineWeek 2016

This grand Spine Meeting will take place at the iconic Marina Bay Sands Convention Centre in Singapore from May 16-20, 2016. The ASSI sessions would be on 16th, 17th & 18th May 2015.

ASSI has made special arrangements for its members facilitating their group registration through the Secretariat. Cirrus Travels was appointed to help with regard to travel and accommodation arrangements.



The scientific program has some out really well. Dr. Rajasekaran will deliver the Presidential Guest Lecture. The detailed scientific program is available on the website of ASSI.

More than 175 members of ASSI have already registered for the event. We all are looking forward to the event.

Report on IASA / ASSI Research Award

IASA/ASSI Research Award tilted on "Correlation of Diffusion Tensor Imaging (DTI) Tractography with neurological status in patients with dorsal spine tuberculosis with neurodeficit and its role in predicting postoperative neurological recovery"

Firstly, I am grateful to Dr. Saumyajit Basu, my mentor for the FNB programme, for providing such a topic worth of getting selected as IASA/ ASSI Research award paper. I was asked to do preliminary work and assess the feasibility on study of tractography in TB patients in April 2013. I took one whole month to know about tractography and its application in spine pathology and theregarding literature. Then I consulted our radiologist Dr. A V GuhaMajumdar, who introduced us Mr. Raja sekhar, GE engineer who has sound knowledge in the application of tractography in spine pathologies. We have done trial calculations in the month of September and also in November to assess the reproducibility and the feasibility and potential obstacles for the study . Incidentally in December 2013, IASA in association with ASSI has announced research grant in the field of adult deformity, we have modified our study protocol accordingly and sent the proposal and thankfully the research project got selected for the prestigious IASA/ASSI Research Grant 2014.

On march 31, 2014 I had received the mail from IASA secretary, Nazie Dana regarding the selection and timeline for the project and grant disbursement details.

We have recruited the consecutive patients suspected of dorsal spine tuberculosis with neurological deficits and only one patients had different diagnosis on HPE And thus excluded from our study . As our institute was multi speciality unit we had substantial no. of patients in other departments who underwent MRI for non spinepathology , thus are the potential CONTROLS for the study . As we had 22 patients , we thought 30 controls should be minimum for the study . Dr. Basu used to cross check every months research work to ensure smooth completion of the research project. We had completed the patient recruitment in April 2015 and control recruitment in MAY 2015 . We completed the DTI parameter calculation in MAY and had done the analysis in JUNE , after thorough pondering over the potential fallacies we have restricted ourselves to FA and volumetric ADC and comparing the volumetric data among the patients and controls. We used ANOVA test to compare the patients and controls and Pearson correlation factor for the correlation between the DTI PARAMETERS and neurology in patients with dorsal spine tuberculosis. We have submitted our report to IASA and ASSI in October 2015.

Dr. Kiren Kumar T
FNB Spine Fellow
Park Clinic, Kolkata

Non-academic articles

Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Day - 5th September
www.sciday.com

"International Days" are celebrated to mark important aspects of human life and history. International Spinal Cord Society (ISCoS) will be observing 5th September as 'Spinal Cord Injuries Day' with the intention of increasing awareness amongst general public. It is presumed that the awareness would facilitate an inclusive life for persons with disability and ensure greater chances of success of prevention programs.

Spinal cord injury (SCI) and the resultant paralysis has devastating physical, mental, social, sexual and vocational consequences for the injured. In addition to the physical and psychosocial effects, a traumatic injury increases the economic burden on the person who sustains an SCI and potentially his or her entire support network. As per the statistics from USA, depending on the severity, SCI can cost an injured individual \$334,000 to 1 million the first year after injury. Costs in each subsequent year range from \$41,000 to 178,000. And it isn't always bad luck that causes spinal cord injuries. In many cases, it is carelessness, recklessness, ignorance or bad decisions.

The goal of management is to get the spinal injured to lead an inclusive life. Because of the permanence of disability in complete injuries, prevention assumes special significance. The common saying is, 'Prevention is better than cure'. But in fact, where a spinal cord injury is concerned, 'Prevention is Cure'.

September 5, a neutral day without any significance as such, has been proposed for the 'Spinal Cord Injury Day' since the weather across the globe is likely to be conducive for outdoor activities and schools as well as colleges are generally open allowing the younger generation to be targeted.

ASSI will collaborate with ISCoS and other Societies for undertaking various activities on 5th September. A website (www.sciday.com) has been commissioned and a logo has been finalized. All Societies would be requested to display information about SCI day on their website. WHO, UN and other international bodies are being approached to recognize 5th September as SCI day.



The following are the activities which are proposed to be organized in India:

- a. Planned to have SCI Mela in at least five major cities across India. The cities shortlisted include Delhi, Jalandhar, Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Mumbai, Hyderabad and Bangalore.
- b. Program for the day would include:
 - Wheel chair rally in the morning
 - SCI symposium

- Inclusive cultural program in a stadium (eg. JL Nehru stadium in Delhi)
 - Wheelchair athletics events
 - Wheelchair fashion show
 - Wheelchair chair performances (dance, plays, etc.)
 - Felicitation of employers (who are employing disabled individuals)
- c. Awareness about SCI in the educational institutes will be propagated using the following tools:
 - A national level poster competition on SCI among school children shall be conducted.
 - Screening of prevention AVs on SCI shall be run during school assemblies.
- d. Awareness about SCI shall be percolated amongst general public through:
 - Running of AVs in TV media
 - Printing of SCI articles in newspaper/magazines
- e. Planned to have postal stamp on SCI released by Department of Posts, Government of India

We expect all ASSI members to come forward and participate wholeheartedly in the activities.

SRS Travelling Fellowship

Dr. Ajay Kothari

SRS(Scoliosis Research society) Travelling Fellowship 2015

I had been awarded SRS travelling fellowship for the year 2015. This is a very reputed one month fellowship where the surgeon can visit two centers in North America.

I visited two spine centers:

1. Hospital for specialised surgery - under mentorship of Dr Frank Schwab and Dr Han Jo Kim
2. Leatherman Spine center - Under Dr Steve Glassman and Dr John Dimar

It was a very useful fellowship where I could get to see lot of new advances in adult deformity and adult degenerative spine. Also there was huge exposure to paediatric deformities, tumours, spinal trauma, cervical spine degenerative conditions and infections.

After the end of 1 month fellowship, I attended SRS annual conference at Minneapolis. It was the golden jubilee year of SRS. This was my first SRS annual conference. What made this event special was my teacher Dr. Prof Rajasekaran was awarded prestigious Winter Blount Humanitarian Award at this conference. This award ceremony brought great pride to each Indian attending the conference.



*Dr Ajay Kothari(L) with
Dr Frank Schwab,
Hospital for specialised
surgery, USA*



*Dr Ajay Kothari(L) with
Dr Steven Glassman at
Leatherman spine center,
Kentucky, USA*

Re-constituted – list of various committees of ASSI

Scientific Committee <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr Saumyajit Basu (Chair) 2. Dr. GR Vijay Kumar 3. Dr. Bhavuk Garg (co-opted) 4. Dr. Amit Jhala (co-opted) 5. Dr. BN Upendra (co-opted) 6. Dr. Gautam Zaveri (co-opted) 7. Dr. Ketan Khurjekar 8. Dr. K. Appaji Krishnan 9. Dr Rupinder Chahal 	Spine Registry <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr Rajasekaran (Chair) 2. Dr. Saumyajit Basu 3. Dr. Ajoy Shetty 4. Dr. Bharat Dave
Education Committee <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. Raghav Dutt (Chair) 2. Dr. Arvind Kulkarni 3. Dr Vishal Kundnani (co-opted) 4. Dr. Samir Dalvie (co-opted) 5. Dr. S.S. Kale (co-opted) 6. Dr. Mohinder Kaushal (co-opted) 7. Dr Ranjith Unnikrishnan 8. Dr. Shankar Acharya 9. Dr. Neeraj Gupta 	Advocacy <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. Ram Chaddha(Chair) 2. Dr. Arvind Jayaswal 3. Dr. Rajasekaran 4. Dr. Raghav Dutt 5. Dr. Suresh Pillai 6. Dr. HS Chhabra
Research Committee <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. HS Chhabra (Chair) 2. Dr. S. Karunkaran 3. Dr Abhay Nene (co-opted) 4. Dr. K. Venkatesh (co-opted) 5. Dr. Surya Prakash Rao (co- opted) 6. Dr Ajoy Shetty (co-opted) 7. Dr. J. Naresh Babu (co-opted) 	Website <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr Ajoy Shetty
Social Work <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr Shekhar Bhojraj (Chair) 2. Dr Subir Zaveri 3. Dr. Premik Nagad (co-opted) 4. Dr. Abhilash N. Dhruv (co- opted) 5. Dr. Rushama Tandon 	Nomination & Constitution <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr VT Ingahalikar (Chair) 2. Dr. Arvind Jayaswal 3. Dr. P K Dave 4. Dr. S M Hardikar 5. Dr. Shekhar Y Bhojraj 6. Dr. S. Rajasekaran 7. Dr. Sajan Hegde 8. Dr. Ram Chaddha (President) 9. Dr. Raghav Dutt (President Elect) 10. Dr. HS Chhabra (Secretary)
	Prevention Committee <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. Prashant Kekre (Chair) 2. Dr. Ram Chaddha 3. Dr. Rajasekaran 4. Dr. Raghav Dutt Mulukutla 5. Dr. Saumyajit Basu 6. Dr. GR Vijay Kumar 7. Dr. B.N.Upendra 8. Dr. Amol Rege 9. Dr. M.M. Prabhakar 10. Dr. K. Venkatesh 11. Dr. Karthik Kailash

A.S.S.I. Awards & Fellowships for 2016

ASSI - Publication Award Genetic susceptibility of lumbar degenerative disc disease in young Indian adults.	Dr. S Rajasekaran
ASSI - Clinical Research Award Validation of Simplified Sub Axial Cervical and Thoracolumbar Spine Fracture Classification Systems	Dr. HS Chhabra
ASSI - Basic Science Research Award Role of human umbilical cord blood stem cells and neural stem cells in neuronal regeneration and functional restoration: A comparative study in male adult rats with acute spinal cord injuries	Dr. S Sinha
ASSI - Young Investigators Award Analysis of spinopelvic parameters with L5 is the new sacrum after fusion in high grade spondylolisthesis- An explanation of satisfactory results with in-situ fusion	Dr. SN Aiyer
IASA/ASSI - Research Award Correlation of Diffusion Tensor Imaging (DTI) Tractography with neurological status in patients with dorsal spine tuberculosis with neurodeficit and its role in predicting postoperative neurological recovery	Dr. K Kumar

Prestigious Positions / Awards / Achievements of ASSI Members

Achievements

International

Dr Arvind G Kulkarni, Consultant Spine Surgeon, Bombay Hospital, Mumbai

- ♦ Invited by Bangladesh Society of Neurosurgeons to demonstrate live MIS-TLIF at their Annual Pre-conference Workshop in Dhaka (20th and 21st Feb 2016) along with lectures and cadaveric dissection.

Dr Ajit Swamy

- ♦ Spine deformity correction 3 months IGASS Fellowship in Lyon, France

Dr.Vishal Kumar

- ♦ AO Trauma Fellowship at Leeds, UK
- ♦ AO Spine India Fellowship at ISIC, Delhi

Dr. S. Dilip Chand Raja

- ♦ Secured the first rank in NATBOARD FET(orthopaedics) 2016 examination
- ♦ Selected for young scientist award by the Indo-Korean orthopaedic foundation

Dr. Naresh

- ♦ Member of Scoliosis Research Society Global outreach committee
- ♦ Ilected AO Spine India Research officer.

Dr. Bhavuk Garg

- ♦ Invited as guest speaker to deliver talk on "spinal osteotomies" by Egypt Orthopaedic Association in May.

National

Dr. Chandrashekhar Vijay Gaike, Director and Consultant Spine Surgeon- Sankalp Spine Care Centre (Aurangabad- Maharashtra, India).

- ♦ AO spine Asia Pacific spine fellowship at ISIC.
- ♦ ASSI Travelling fellowship.

Prestigious Positions

National

Dr. Deepu Banerji, Director Neurosurgery, Fortis Hospitals Mumbai.

- ♦ President Elect Neurology Society of India

Awards

International

Dr Gaurav Raj Dhakal, Spine Surgeon, Associate Professor, National Trauma Center, Kathmandu, Nepal

- ♦ North American Spine Society Clinical Traveling Fellowship 2015.

K S Anand

- ♦ "Asia Pacific Spine Society (APSS) Medtronic three months Spine Fellowship"

Dr. Sanjay Yadav, Asst. Prof, Dept. of Orthopedics, Institute of Medical Sciences BHU

- ♦ SICOT Spine fellowship

National

Dr. HS Bhatoe

- ♦ Vishisht Chikitsa Ratna Award by Delhi Medical Association



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR FELLOWSHIP

2 YEARS SPINE SURGERY CLINICAL —| FELLOWSHIP 2016 - 2018 |—

Training Institutions

Apollo Hospitals, Chennai
Bombay Hospital, Mumbai
Park Clinic, Kolkata
Sancheti Spine Centre & Hospital, Pune

B.J. Medical College and Civil Hospital,
Ahmedabad
Indian Spinal Injuries Centre, New Delhi
P D Hinduja National Hospital, Bombay

Eligibility Criteria for candidates:

- ♦ MS Ortho/DNB Ortho / MCh Neurosurgery
- ♦ Must have demonstrated interest in spine surgery (attending spine conference and presentations, publications related to spine surgery etc)
- ♦ ASSI Member (by 15th June 2016)

Program features:

- ♦ Selection based on online examination, interview and credentials
- ♦ Course starts in October 2016
- ♦ Eight vacancies. Choice of centers depends on availability, ranking and choice of institute.
- ♦ Opportunities for both clinical and research work
- ♦ Participation in the management of ample spine surgical cases.
- ♦ Maintenance of a logbook & Structured Training.
- ♦ Exit exam at the end of the course with Certification.
- ♦ Course stipend from Rs. 38,000/- to Rs. 70,000/- per month.

Last Date of Application: 15th June 2016

- ♦ Interested candidates must apply with their CV, by mail or post at the following address:
ASSI Secretariat, c/o Indian Spinal Injuries Centre, Sector-C, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi-110070
- ♦ Please send email version to: assi.secretariat@isiconline.org; assi.secretary@isiconline.org



CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR RESEARCH

—| ASSI RESEARCH AWARD 2016 |—

In its endeavor to promote research amongst its members, A.S.S.I. invites proposals for research by its members. Interested members should submit the research proposal as per format available on www.assi.in by **Wednesday, June 15, 2016** to the Secretariat at assi.secretary@isiconline.org / assi.secretariat@isiconline.org or post their application to Dr. HS Chhabra, Secretary - ASSI, Indian Spinal Injuries Centre, Sector - C, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi-110070. A panel of experts from ASSI would review all research proposals. Two best shortlisted research proposals could be funded Rs. 1,50,000/- for one year. The award will be declared by 30th June 2016.

30th Annual Conference of Association of Spine Surgeons of India

26th - 29th January 2017, HICC, Hyderabad



www.assicon2017.in

WELCOME TO 30TH ASSICON 2017

Dear Colleagues,

The Association of Spine Surgeons of India will be conducting their 30th Annual Conference in the city of Hyderabad. On behalf of the the organising committee of ASSICON 2017 it is with great pleasure that we invite you to join us from 26th to 29th of January 2017 and be a part of this scientific extravaganza. Cadaveric workshops, seminars, symposia, video demonstrations, booth lectures, meet the masters and many more interesting scientific sessions are being planned. The venue of the conference is HICC, which is a worldclass state of the art facility in the midst of IT hub. Another highlight of the conference is the pre conference scientific session to be conducted by Scoliosis Research Society (SRS Worldwide). Needless to say the best of international and national Faculty is being invited for this unique event.

Do visit the city of pearls with your family and enjoy the Forts, Palaces, Shopping Arcades, Museums and the rich heritage of Nizams.

Welcome to **HYDERABAD!** Welcome to city of **HOSPITALITY!**



Jaishankar Pingle
Chief Patron



Ragheva Dutt Mulukutla
Organising Chairman



Surya Prakash Rao V
Organising Secretary

Conference Secretariat

Mr. Satyanarayana, Conference Coordinator, Uday Omni
5-9-94 Chapel Road, Hyderabad, Telangana 500 001, India
M: 94406 02168

W: www.assicon2017.in E: 2017assicon@gmail.com

Notice for Extra – ordinary General Body Meeting of the A.S.S.I.

The extra-ordinary General Body Meeting of the Association of Spine Surgeons of India will be held on Tuesday 17th May 2016 at 17.40 at Marina Bay Sand Hotel, Singapore. All members of the A.S.S.I. are requested to attend.

The following matters are on the agenda:

1. President's Welcome
2. Secretarial Report
3. Accounts & Income Tax Status
4. ASSI Presidential Guest Speakers - ASSICON 2017
5. Update on ASSICON - 2017 - Hyderabad
6. Announcement of vacancies for ASSI Executive Committee Members
7. New Co-opted members of ASSI; revised list of various committees of ASSI
8. Spinal Cord Injury Day – 5th September
9. ASSI Constitution Amendment
10. ICS 2017 - Kovalam; Date & Venue
11. ASSICON 2018: Date & Venue
12. Any other matter with the permission of the Chair

Spine conferences from April to December 2016

Save the Dates

Month	Dates	Conference	Society	City	Website
Year 2016					
June	1-4	WCMISST: 5th World Congress	Minimally Invasive Spine Surgery and Techniques	ICC Jeju, Jeju Island, Korea	http://www.wcmisst.org/
July	13-16	IMAST : The 23rd International Meeting on Advanced Spine Techniques	Scoliosis Research Society	Washington	http://www.srs.org/imast/2016/
September	6-9	Scoliosis Research Society(SRS) Annual Meeting	Scoliosis Research Society(SRS)	Philadelphia, PA	http://www.srs.org
	14-16	55th ISCoS Annual Scientific Meeting	International Spinal Cord Society (ISCOS)	Vienna, Austria	http://www.iscosmeetings.org
October	5-7	EUROSPINE 2016	European Spine Society and the European Spinal Deformity Society,	Berlin, Germany	http://www.eurospine2016.eu/home/
	6-8 tentative	ISSICON 2016 & ASSN	Association of Spine Surgeons of Nepal (ASSN)	Kathmandu, Nepal	www.issicon2016.com
	14-16	3rd National Conference of Minimally Invasive Spine Surgeons of India (MISSICON 2016)	MISSI (Minimally Invasive Spine Surgeons of India) and Spine Society Delhi Chapter	JW Marriott Aerocity, New Delhi	www.missicon2016.com
	26-29	North American Spine Society (NASS) 31st Annual Meeting 2016	North American Spine Society (NASS)	Boston, Massachusetts	www.nassannualmeeting.org
December	1-3	Cervical Spine Research Society Annual Meeting	Cervical Spine Research Society	Toronto, Ontario	http://www.csrs.org/events/future-meetings/

ASSI LIVE SPINE SURGERY COURSE

July 29 to 31, 2016

Renowned National Faculty
Live demonstration of Surgeries
Exit Examination - July 28
Interviews for ASSI fellowship - July 31

Venue: Indian Spinal Injuries Centre
New Delhi

For details contact - ASSI Secretariat - 011 42255356
assi.secretary@isiconline.org/assi.secretariat@isiconline.org

www.assi.in