

It is indeed my privilege to welcome you to the 14th IHPBA World Congress.

The journey to this point has been a challenging one because of the global uncertainty in this era of COVID 19 pandemic. As with so many things in our daily lives we had to re-examine everything we do and it was the same with the World Congress. Driven by our aims and objectives as an organisation, we believed that we had a duty to retain a presence globally and meet our responsibility to ensure that our members had access to high quality, up-to-date information and education to ensure our patients would still receive excellent care. To achieve this we needed to find an alternative method of delivery. I am proud and pleased to tell you that together with all our partners, the LOC, ANZHPBA, AHPBA and after often difficult discussions about the way forward including cancellation, rescheduling, hybrid meeting we unanimously decided to go completely virtual.

I believe that together with our Scientific Committee led by Shailesh Shrikande and supported by our PCOs, ACS Global and MCI, we have for you a very exciting programme with Key Note lectures, live Q&A sessions, on demand presentations and so much more. This format has facilitated attendance by many who would not usually been able to travel. In addition the IHPBA has always had the main sessions recorded but this format has allowed all the presentations to be recorded and made available on the congress platform for 6 months, and then on IHPBA's online education platform, myHPB where they can be accessed by our members in perpetuity.

The pandemic has had a significant impact on the global economy and this includes our partners in the biomedical industry. Without their on-going support we would not have been able to host this meeting. We are sorry that some of our usual supporters have not been able to join us in this endeavour but we hope they will be able to do so in the future.

As president one of the biggest disappointments for me is that I will not have the opportunity to meet with many of you, old friends and new ones. However I am grateful that we have been able to attract such a large number of you to the premier global HPB congress. I hope that during the current surges in some countries, you remain safe and that the need for your service contribution does not keep you away from the virtual meeting, but that if it does we recognise your enormous contribution to the care of the ill in your countries and hope that you will take advantage of the presentations on MyHPB.

Enjoy the congress, stay safe, social distance and wear your masks.



Martin Smith
IHPBA President



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