



## Message from Dr Kathleen Brady, President of ISAM



Dear Colleagues,

*The last several months have been a stressful time for all of us with the COVID-19 pandemic causing so much death and illness, wreaking havoc with the economy and disrupting many of our societal norms. For many in the healthcare field, there has been the tremendous burden of trying to care for people with a lethal disease for which we have no cure, too little information and often, not the proper equipment for the job.*

*In the area of addictions, we deal with a stigmatized population who often have medical vulnerabilities, housing instability and suffer from poverty and lack of resources to get the care they need – making our work even more complex and stressful. In the face of these challenges, two ISAM leaders, Hamed Ekhtiari and Alex Baldacchino, helped their colleagues from the Practice and Policy Group to initiate an international webinar series on COVID-19 and Substance Use Disorders to provide an opportunity for participants to learn more about how and what worked in countries that were going through the epidemic and/or preparing.*

*The first three webinars had over 200 registrations from 26 countries across the world and the videos had over 300 views in 24 hours. The final webinar will be held in September.*

*This is one incredible example of the power of ISAM to create a world community of addiction healthcare providers who can share common problems, solutions and wisdom. I thank all of you who attended and contributed and I encourage you all to watch the videos on the [ISAM NIG channel](#). For keeping up with ISAM-NIG news, you can follow its [Twitter account](#). Please, stay safe; take care of yourselves, your loved ones, colleagues and patients. We need to support each other more than ever during these difficult times.*

*Dr Kathleen Brady*

**ISAM-CSAM 2020 Annual Meeting & Scientific Conference  
12-14 November 2020  
The World of Addiction: Now & the future  
(Le Monde d'Addiction: Maintenant et au future)  
Victoria Conference Centre, Fairmont Empress Hotel, Victoria,  
BC, Canada**



**At this time the ISAM-CSAM 2020 annual meeting and scientific conference in Victoria, Canada is still going ahead as planned. We will follow the Government of Canada recommendations regarding gatherings and international travel. Should the conference be cancelled, registration fees paid would be refunded in full. We appreciate your interest in ISAM-CSAM 2020 and hope you will submit an abstract and/or register for the conference. Any updates will be posted on the webpages.**

### **ISAM & CSAM CALL FOR ABSTRACTS**

The International Society of Addiction Medicine (ISAM) and the Canadian Society of Addiction Medicine (La société médicale canadienne sur l'addiction) welcome you to our joint Annual Meeting and Scientific Conference to be held November 12 - 14 in Victoria, BC, Canada. Our 2020 conference will highlight new research findings, socio-political ideas and treatment approaches to addiction.

Over the last few years, the world has experienced a series of new major addiction challenges. These include the lethality of successive laboratory-based products in addition to our plant-based drugs, new methods of administration such as vaping, increased awareness of the need for safe prescription practices and the expanding salience of behavioural addictions.

These developments are resulting in a re-examination of some of our key concepts in addictions including our definitions, the foundations of recovery, the boundaries of harm reduction, the contributions of new medications, the role of spirituality and the additional needs of populations with co-morbidities and special issues.

We invite you to be part of the foremost conference on addictions in Canada. Contribute an abstract for an oral presentation, a symposium, a poster, a workshop or a professional development session. We especially welcome abstracts that focus on our conference theme of international issues in addictions, and the future of addictions. We encourage abstracts from trainees in all health care disciplines. We also

welcome abstracts in French.

**Deadline for abstract submissions is  
June 15, 2020 at 11:59pm**

Please see webpages: [www.isamweb.org](http://www.isamweb.org) or [www.csam-smca.org](http://www.csam-smca.org)  
for further instructions.

**To register:** Please see [www.isamweb.org](http://www.isamweb.org) or [www.csam-smca.org](http://www.csam-smca.org)

**Hotel accommodation during the ISAM-CSAM 2020 conference:**

Booking is now open at the Fairmont Empress Victoria. Please reserve room through the [www.isamweb.org](http://www.isamweb.org) to take advantage of the discounted conference rate.

**ISAM Training & Leadership workshops 2020:**

For registration for the two ISAM workshops on Sunday Nov 15, 2020, please go to the 'Events' tab on the ISAM webpages.

**ISAM Grants in Aid of Travel to Victoria, Canada 2020:**

In addition to the annual two NIDA Grants in Aid of Travel and generous sponsorship, several more grants in Aid of Travel will be offered for attendance and presentation. Please see the ISAM webpages for application and criteria.

**ISAM Certification Examination:**

The ISAM exam will be offered in Victoria at ISAM-CSAM 2020 Victoria on Nov 15, 2020 post-conference. For details and application form, please go to 'Products' tab on the ISAM webpages.



## CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST FOR THE ISAM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Core Responsibilities of ISAM Board of Directors:

- Term: 3 year renewable
- Medical graduate;
- Hospital or Generalist specialist in one or more areas of addiction medicine (including psychiatry);
- History of senior educational, managerial and /or research experience;
- Support to ISAM goals and aspirations.

As part of ISAM's strategic direction to further increase its global platform the International Society of Addiction Medicine is establishing new positions for members for the Board of Directors. ISAM members interested in being considered for this position should send a CV and a letter expressing their vision for ISAM publications to [isam.mdorozio@gmail.com](mailto:isam.mdorozio@gmail.com).

**Deadline for submission:** July 1, 2020

**Shortlisting of suitable application:** 15th September 2020

**Personal communication with preferred candidate:** 30th September 2020

Attendance of successful candidate at BOD meeting ISAM 2020 Victoria (mandatory) Nov 2020.

### ***New ISAM Board of Director Positions:***

**Education Officer:** The skills and knowledge acquired through education tend to be more theoretical and allow students/trainees to develop reasoning and judgment surrounding broad topics in this case addiction medicine. Education typically occurs on a more protracted timeline, over the course of a semester or, in some cases, over multiple years. Additionally, education is typically sought out and paid for by a student/trainee in the hopes of securing future employment or advancing along a career path.

Products:

- ISAM Examination Prep Course (working in conjunction with the Chief Examiner)
- Undergraduate and postgraduate courses in addiction medicine
- Standards and professional pathways

**Training Officer:** Training refers to the acquisition of specific and applied knowledge

and skills especially around competencies. Frequently training is task orientated and occurs “on the job” or “in the field.” The purpose of training is to improve quality and competency typically with a focus on one set of skills. Training usually occurs after employment has already been secured, and is usually mandated, provided by, and funded by one’s employer. Although some training courses can last for multiple weeks, training courses are usually of a much shorter duration than educational courses due to the fact that training encompasses more specific and focused topics.

Products:

- Workshops on leadership and training the trainers
- Planned workshops on recent advances in addiction medicine
- CPD or CME activities 20 to ISAM Congress
- CPD and CME activities 20 to ISAM Interest Groups webinars and other modalities

**Official announcement of successful candidates: ISAM General Assembly in Victoria.**

## ISAM INTEREST GROUPS

ISAM’s core values allow us to strategically look at how we can increase and improve the capability and capacity of addiction medicine to pursue related activities that will help improve clinical care and delivery.

In the last 3 years, ISAM has worked hard, with members and partners, to facilitate processes that allow wider participation of the ISAM community to work around specific relevant topics in the field of addiction medicine. This will be accomplished through:

- Joint publications to draw a roadmap for international collaborations around the topics of addiction
- Agreed consensus around clinically relevant topics
- Mobilizing international funding resources for collaborative research in the field in the global level
- Topic specific informed educational materials in different languages for patients, families, communities and policy makers.
- Global surveys.

We are glad to announce that we currently have four functioning ISAM interest groups with another in current formation. They include:

1. **Neuroscience Interest Group (NIG)**. Co-chairs: Drs Antonio Verdejo-Garcia and Hamed Ekthiari.
2. **Spirituality Interest Group (SIG)**. Co-chairs: Drs Marc Galanter and Greg Bunt.
3. **Practice and Policy Interest Group (PPIG)**. Co-chairs: Drs Shalini Arugoniri and Christos Kouimtsidis.
4. **Behavioural Addiction Interest Group (BIG)**. Co-chairs: Drs Henrietta Bowden-Jones and Marc Potenza.

A 5th interest group is in formation, currently led by Drs Helena Hansen and George Brousse and focusing around Philosophy, Anthropology and relevant Human Science topics in addiction medicine.

These groups are composed of individuals working in the field of addiction interested and/or specialists in the fields of clinical delivery and leadership, quality improvement, healthcare systems innovation, clinical governance and precision/personalized medicine, neuropsychology, neuroimaging and many others.

Any ISAM members interested to join and contribute in any of the above interest groups do please initially get in touch with the ISAM office (and attach your CV) at [isam.mdorozio@gmail.com](mailto:isam.mdorozio@gmail.com) and you will then be directed to the relevant co-chairs.

**Dr Alex Baldacchino A., May 2020**

## **ISAM PRACTICE AND POLICY INTEREST GROUP**

The ISAM PPIG has been formed amidst the agility and resourcefulness necessitated by the COVID-19 context internationally. The PPIG now has a membership of 42 members globally, and we anticipate that this will grow over time. The terms of reference and key directions will evolve in parallel with the group.

The interest group will have a specific focus on frontline clinical addiction treatment and service provision, as well as the policy, research and regulatory innovations that can support best-practice clinical care. Interest group activities will include webinars, consensus statements and position papers. We also plan to hold symposia on clinically relevant themes of interest at the annual ISAM Congress. Potential symposia for ISAM 2020 could include topics relating to practice during COVID-19, the use of telemedicine in addiction care, supporting pregnant women and mothers with addiction, and managing pain and opioid use.

ISAM PPIG is currently hosting a series of webinars, aiming to focus on international addiction treatment responses to COVID-19. They are designed to address issues relevant to the clinical front-line, and a means to share information and engage in collegiate discussion to facilitate delivery of informed, reflective and evidence-based and equitable clinical care at this challenging time.

The first two ISAM PPIG COVID-19 Webinars can be viewed at the following links: [Webinar 1](#); [Webinar 2](#).

The Webinar Series has been extremely well-received, clearly addressing a need in the clinical space. The 3rd webinar was held on Thursday 7th May 2020 and will be available on [isamweb.org](http://isamweb.org) shortly.

The 4th and final webinar on COVID-19 is planned for:

**Wednesday 23rd September 2020**  
**COVID-19 and SUD: Lessons Learnt and the Way Forward**

We look forward to 'seeing you' soon!

The Co-Chairs of the ISAM PPIG are:

**Dr Shalini Arunogiri:** A consultant addiction psychiatrist in Melbourne, Australia. She is a clinician researcher, Deputy Clinical Director of Turning Point & Deputy Head of the Department of Psychiatry, Central Clinical School, Monash University. She is Chair of the Bi-national Faculty of Addiction Psychiatry at the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists.

**Dr Christos Kouimtsidis:** A consultant in addiction psychiatry in the UK. Christos is an Honorary Clinical Senior Lecturer with Imperial College London and St Andrew's University, Scotland. He is also the National Coordinator for Drugs of Greece.

PPIG seeks expressions of interest from clinicians and professionals internationally to contribute to the ISAM PPIG. ***If you are interested in being part of the ISAM PPIG, please register your interest here: [bit.ly/ISAMPPIGInterest](https://bit.ly/ISAMPPIGInterest).***

### Shalini and Christos

Detail on the valuable activities of the other ISAM Interest Groups will feature in our next Newsletter. We hope you look forward to our next edition! 😊 😊 😊

The Newsletter editorial board welcome articles from the membership to be considered for our future editions. Please email [office@isamweb.org](mailto:office@isamweb.org).

#### The Newsletter Editorial Board

Adrian Abagiu; Jenna Butner; Susanna Galea-Singer; Jan Klimas.



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