



Dear Colleagues,

All members of the AOS are aware that during the last MDS meeting in Paris, new Officers and half of the Executive Committee have taken up their new appointments. I wanted to express my sincere thanks to all the membership that has participated in the development of the AOS over the last 2-3 years. I think we should all be proud of the accomplishments that have occurred within the AOS over that period of time and also for establishing the infrastructure and process by which the AOS will continue to develop and to provide education within our region.

I thought that I should, for the purposes of new members of the AOS, outline some of the history behind the development of our section and highlight some of the activities. I originally approached Andrew Lees at the Rome meeting in June 2004 regarding the development of a section of the Asia Pacific Region as most of the educational courses appeared to be focused on North America and Europe. This concept was accepted in principle and as a result in November 2004 a planning committee meeting was arranged at the AOCN meeting in Singapore. The planning committee members consisted of a group of Neurologists that had previously had regular meetings for the Asia Pacific Parkinson association, which had held bi-annual meetings over a period of approximately eight years.

There was unanimous agreement at that meeting that we should proceed with an application for the development of a separate section and a proposal was drafted by the planning committee, which was accepted by MDS in March 2005. The first Officers and Executive Committee meeting was held during the Kyoto Congress in November 2006. Subsequent to the establishment of the Section, the first Asian Oceanian Parkinson's Disease Movement Disorders Congress (AOPMC) was held in October 2007 in Singapore and more recently the second AOPMC was held in February 2009 in New Delhi. An initiative from the outset of the formation of the section was to obtain a survey of the educational needs within the region. We have attempted to obtain information from educational courses, visiting professorship programs and the regional meetings in order to canvas as many delegates as possible. So far we have had 750 completed surveys from a large variety of member countries over a two year period of 2007-2009. It appears that the majority of respondents are senior specialists or consultants, who are involved predominantly in patient care. Approximately 85% are non-members of MDS and approximately 60% have had no formal training in Movement Disorders. Of the consultants that have had training in Movement Disorders, most have had this training in their country of practice (80%) and the training has been of less than two years. Most have access to the internet suggesting that this may be a forum by which communication can occur across the region.

The AOS Education Committee was formulated and a number of educational courses have been performed over a two-year period and these have been quite successful. The first course was in March 2008 in Varanasi, India, the second occurred in June 2008 in Nanchang City, China, and the third occurred in January 2009 in Bandung, Indonesia with a day program taking place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in April 2009 as part of a regional neurology meeting. A further course took place in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam in May 2009. Overall the total number of delegates that have attended these educational courses was 585 and although the requested costs were US\$44,000, the actual costs of running these courses was only US\$15,000. The cost per delegate therefore through our regional courses is approximately US\$25. You should all agree that this is very economical education.

There have also been a number of Visiting Professorship Programs which have occurred over this 2 year period. Initially, New Delhi, India in November 2007, followed by Shanghai, China in March 2008, and more recently in March 2009 there was Visiting Professor Program to Beijing, Shanghai and Bangkok. The total number of delegates that attended has been 826 and of the latter meeting in China and Thailand the delegate number increased through teleconferencing facilities video linked to nine provinces and 104 hospitals.

The regional meetings in Singapore and New Delhi attracted a total of 1300 delegates and it is very pleasing to say that both of these have produced substantial profits for the AOS.

Overall, as you can see we have been extremely successful in a short period of time. We should all be proud of the progress we have made and I think we should continue to support the officers and the executive committee in our endeavour to improve education across the Asia and Oceania region.

I need to emphasise to you all that the AOS exists for you and that we need you to speak to any of us regarding your needs, you regional needs and any educational or other ideas you may wish to address. Please contact the AOS Officers or Executive Committee members with your suggestions. I wish all the new Officers and Executive Committee members the best wishes in continuing this very important task.

Robert Iansek, PhD, FRACP
Past-Chairman, MDS-AOS