



ASSI  
ASSOCIATION OF  
SPINE SURGEONS  
OF INDIA

## ASSOCIATION OF SPINE SURGEONS OF INDIA

ASSI Annual Newsletter | December 2013

### FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Dear Colleagues,

You would surely agree that ASSI continues to grow in strength and stature at a very fast pace. In the last year we have had significant achievements, amongst the most notable of which have been getting endorsement from Medical Council India (MCI) on the eligibility of orthopedic surgeons to perform spine surgeries. Some of the other notable achievements have been the streamlining of the office of ASSI, empowerment of committees of ASSI, implementing guidelines for the fellowships of ASSI (including information disseminating, empanelment of hosting centers, selection process for candidates, curriculum and exit examination) and increasing visibility of ASSI including ASSI booth at all events.

The networking with other spine societies across the globe has also been a significant step forward. The ICS 2013 in Kodaikanal was a good example of ASSI – AO Spine Collaboration, SRS (Scoliosis Research Society) and its eminent international faculty from all over the world will be visible in full strength in the ASSICON 2014 Meeting which is being clubbed with the SRS World Wide Conference (WWC). Senior officials of North American Spine Society (NASS) will be participating in ASSICON 2014 and have reciprocally offered ASSI a symposium in the scientific program and a booth at NASS Meeting of 2014. British Association of Spine Surgeons (BASS) / British Scoliosis Association (BSS) has offered a Presidents' Travelling fellowship in 2014 to one of the ASSI members who would be selected by ASSI itself. Indo-American Spine Alliance (IASA) has also sought the help of ASSI to popularize the availability of an IASA research grant, receive proposals, and evaluate candidates.

We would want to strengthen further the activities of ASSI and would seek the help of all of you in this regard. Meanwhile, we look forward to having you with us for the ASSICON 2014 which promises to be a great scientific and social event.

Dr. Sajan Hegde,  
President – ASSI



## FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK



Dear Colleagues,

I would want to take this opportunity to thank all of you for giving me the opportunity of serving on the prestigious position within ASSI. It has been my endeavor to try to live up to your expectations, which understandably would be quite high, going by the standards set by my predecessor. However I have been fortunate in getting the full support of all of you and especially the President, Vice-President as well as Jt. Secretary and other senior members in my endeavor.

We have tried to streamline the activities of ASSI. The first priority was to set up an office and streamline its activities. With Ms. Neema Bisht joining as the part-time Secretary, we first took over the job of updating the database of members of ASSI. We now have the email address of 785 members as against the 318 which were available before the exercise was started. The endeavor has also resulted in updating the membership list with the names and details of those who had registered and paid their membership fee but whose names had not been updated in the membership list. The updated membership list now has 1076 members as against 806 when the endeavor was started. This of course also includes 77 new members who have joined since then.

With the streamlining of activities of the ASSI office, we could address numerous other issues, a report of which has been circulated to you earlier. Of course, these issues could be addressed mainly due to the participation of an increasing number of ASSI office bearers and members. The strengthening and empowerment of the committees has played a big role in streamlining the activities of ASSI.

As the main Society of spinal professionals in India, ASSI has a responsibility of not only addressing the issues pertaining to its members but also the community at large. We are aware that a lot still needs to be done in order to establish proper services for prevention and management of various spinal ailments. It thus becomes one of the prime objectives of ASSI to address these issues. It is hence only appropriate that ASSI has also established advocacy and social work committees. However each member of ASSI should take it as his or her endeavor to contribute in this regard.

We look forward to seeing you all in Kolkata.

Regards

Dr. H.S. Chhabra,  
Secretary – ASSI

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## Minutes of the Annual General Body Meeting of "Association of Spine Surgeons of India"

Venue: Le Meridien Convention Centre, Kochi, Kerala

Date: Saturday, January 19, 2013

Time: 1830 hrs – 1915 onwards

### 1. Condolences

There were no condolences.

### 2. Passing the minutes of AGBM – New Delhi & E.G.B.M – Srinagar

The minutes of General Body Meetings at New Delhi and Srinagar were resolved unanimously.

### 3. Secretarial Report

Dr Ram Chaddha informed the members that the Secretarial report had been printed and circulated. However this report was till December 2012. The following activities of ASSI took place subsequently:

a) Participation in IOACON meeting - ASSI conducted the entire scientific proceedings for Spine over all the three days of IOACON 2012 at Chennai. These scientific proceedings were well appreciated and witnessed packed halls.

b) ASSICON Kochi- Applicants were interviewed and selected for various ASSI fellowships as under:

- **ASSI Inland Travelling Fellowship 2013 Award** - Dr. Nikhil Joshi & Dr. Premik Nagad; they would need to choose 2 centres they would wish to visit before or after ICS 2013 Kodaikanal. The arrangements for their visit would be facilitated by the Secretariat. They would be guests at ICS 2013 Kodaikanal. The ASSI would fund travel from the hometown of the fellows to ICS & the two centres and back.
- **ASSI Dartmouth Hitchcock Fellowship 2013** - Dr. Gururaj Sangodimath.
- **ASSI Long Term Clinical Fellowships for 2 years** (subject to the approval from the host Centres):
  - a) Dr. G. Sudhir - preference for Ganga Hospital, Coimbatore,
  - b) Dr. Amit Narayan - preference for ISIC, New Delhi,
  - c) Dr. Soumya Chakraborty - preference for Gangaram Hospital
- **VTI Gold Medal Award 2013** - Dr. Janardhan Aithala was judged as the winner for his paper titled "Use of Oswestry Disability Index in Indian Patients - Problems & need for modifications".

Concern was expressed about awardees not being present during inauguration of ASSICON to receive the certificate. It was decided that the ASSI secretariat should inform the awardees and confirm their presence.

### 4. Accounts & Income Tax Status

Dr. H. S. Chhabra: informed the house that the balance sheet for the financial year 2012 – 2013 was still to be filed. The balance sheet had been signed and the required documents had been just handed over. The balance sheet would thus be filed soon. As also mentioned in the last meeting, all organizers of conferences need to submit the audited financial statement. Under the regulations applicable to a society, ASSI has to spend 85% of the profit either within the same year or over the next 5 years.

The members discussed ways and means to utilize the surplus. Dr. Gautam Zaveri strongly suggested that an office of ASSI be established with a full time secretary. Dr. Appaji Krishnan and Dr. Gore also gave similar suggestions.

Dr. Rajasekaran suggested that VTI gold medal awardee should be exempted from registration in ASSICON.

Dr. Subir Zaveri suggested that ASSI could hold camps where free surgeries could be offered. Volunteers could be asked to devote time for the same. He also suggested that the number of young investigator awards could be increased.

Dr. Gore suggested that journal access could be negotiated for members.

Dr Chhabra suggested that ASSI could give emphasis on promoting research and education activities of its members. Funds could be earmarked for research projects and educational activities. The services of a CRO could be availed to oversee and coordinate research projects. Data managers could be employed to help pool the data for ASSI spine registry.

Dr Chhabra also suggested that the reasons why the Managers previously recruited by the Society were not able to deliver may also be looked into.

Dr Ram Chaddha suggested that Dr Ingalthaliker, Dr Rajasekaran & Dr Gautam Zaveri could look into the suggestions proposed by members to utilize the surplus funds & put up a report in ICS 2013 meeting to be held in Kodaikanal.

#### 5. ICS- 2013- Kodaikanal: Dates, Venue, Theme

Prof. R Sivakumar, organizer of ICS-2013 invited the members to attend the Instructional Course in Spine being hosted by the Madurai Spine Club at Hotel Carlton, Kodaikanal from 16th -18th August, 2013. Hotel Kodai International was kept as a standby. Group transportation would be available from Madurai. The organizers proposed the theme of "Failed Spine Surgery" They promised an academic feast within the enchanting environment of Kodaikanal.

The registration fee as proposed by the organizers was accepted by the general body (copy of proposed rates enclosed). Prof Siva Kumar suggested that ASSI could consider giving an initial amount to the organizers of each conference as a seed money. This amount could be returned subsequently. This arrangement would help the organizers to start the work for the conference well in time and return the amount as and when they were able to raise funds.

#### 6. ASSICON 2014

Dr. Saumyajit Basu invited the members to attend ASSICON-2014 on behalf of the organizers. The 27th Annual Conference of the A.S.S.I. would be held at Hotel Hyatt Regency, Kolkata from January 23rd – 26th, 2014. The venue is 12 km from airport and 14 km from Howrah Station. It has good infrastructural facilities to host a conference. There are plenty of options for sight seeing locally as well as in the neighboring areas.

SRS had agreed to participate in the meeting. The theme for the SRS component could be "Early onset scoliosis" and "Adult Spinal Deformity with special reference to sagittal parameters".

Dr Basu also informed that the ASSICON 2014 website ([www.assicon2014.com](http://www.assicon2014.com)) had already been launched.

Dr Gautam Zaveri and Dr Rajasekaran expressed their concern that in the last few ASSICON meetings, the proceedings were spread over 4 days, which was too long. Since this had also been finalized for ASSICON 2014 (mainly due to participation of SRS), subsequent meetings should start on Friday afternoon or at the most Friday morning and finish by Sunday afternoon. Friday mornings could be used for Workshops. The members unanimously approved this proposal.

Dr Raghav Dutt & Dr Gautam Zaveri were of the opinion that there was a need for guidelines for conducting ASSICON and ICS. Dr Gautam Zaveri mentioned that he had already sent a proposal to the President & Secretary. Dr Rajasekaran requested him to mark a copy to all Executive Committee members and have it finalized by ICS.

#### 7. A.S.S.I. Orator 2014

The following names were proposed for Presidential Oration:

- a) Prof. Amartya Sen
- b) Mr. Saurav Ganguly
- c) Sister Nirmala
- d) Dr Dillip Sengupta
- e) Head of Ramakrishna Mission

The final decision would be taken by President ASSI and communicated to the organizers of ASSICON-2014.

## 8. Ratification of New members

Dr. Ram Chaddha informed the house that there were 26 new applicants for life membership of ASSI. His proposal to accept the membership was unanimously approved by the house. Dr. Ram Chaddha informed that with the addition of the new members, the total membership of ASSI had increased to 850.

Dr. Ajoy Prasad Shetty suggested issuing membership numbers to life members. Other suggestions included issuing Identity Card and Certificate of ASSI membership. However to implement these suggestions email addresses of all members would be required. Members were requested to forward to the secretariat their name and email ID as well as that of all other members (past & present) known to them. This would help in updating the data base.

## 9. Election of Office Bearers

Dr. Ram Chaddha informed the house that six members of Executive Committee & all co-opted members were finishing their tenure. Dr. Amol Rege and Dr. Saumyajit Basu had completed their tenures as members of Executive Committee, Dr. H S Chhabra as Jt. Secretary, Dr. Ram Chaddha as Secretary & Treasurer, Dr. Sajan Hegde as Vice President & Dr. Rajasekaran as President. Dr. Saheel Maajid & Dr. Suhail Afzal had been co-opted for ICS 2012, Srinagar and Dr. Suresh Pillai for ASSICON 2013. The General Body appreciated their contribution towards the activities of the A.S.S.I.

Dr. Ram Chaddha informed the members that as per the decision of the last General Body Meeting, the Vice President would be designated instead as the President Elect.

There was thus vacancy for two executive committee members, Joint Secretary, Secretary, President Elect and President. Dr. Sivakumar & Dr. Saumyajit Basu would be there as co-opted members in their capacity as organizing secretary of ICS 2013 and ASSICON 2014 respectively.

Dr. Rajasekaran suggested that Executive committee members be given specific assignments. It was thus decided to have the following committees of ASSI which would look after responsibilities as mentioned:

1. Education Committee- Travelling fellowship, Long term fellowship, Young surgeon forum, Research.
2. Scientific Committee – Program of ASSICON & ICS.
3. Social Work Committee – Camps, public relationship.
4. Advocacy Committee – Liaisoning with Public media and Government; some issues which could be addressed include authorization of orthopaedic surgeries for doing spine surgeries, prevention of misuse of Stem Cell Therapy for Human Spinal Cord Injury, spurious degrees etc.
5. Spine Registry Committee.

The members would volunteer to these committees. The following members opted or were nominated to the committees:

Scientific Program Committee – Dr. Gautam Zaveri & Dr. Saumyajit Basu (for a period of 2 years)  
Education Committee – Dr. K.V Menon, Dr. Vishal Kundnani  
Social- Dr. Shekhar Bhojraj & Dr. Subir Zaveri  
Spine Registry- Dr. Rajasekaran, Dr. Abhay Nene  
Advocacy- Dr. Ram Chaddha & Dr. H S Chhabra  
Website-Dr. Ajoy Shetty, Dr. Samir Dalvie

For the post of two executive committee members Dr. Karunakaran, Dr. Suresh Pillai & Dr. Arvind Kulkarni showed their interest. Since there were only two seats Dr. Suresh Pillai withdrew in favour of the other two members.

For the post of Jt. Secretary, Dr. V.T Ingalthalikar proposed and Dr. Vishal Kundnani seconded the name of Dr. Samir Dalvie whereas Dr. Gautam Zaveri proposed Dr. Saumyajit Basu's name.

Both the candidates mentioned that they would leave it to seniors & members to decide. They also volunteered to move out of the hall while the decision was being taken. Voting was conducted by a show of hands. Dr. Saumyajit Basu won the election with 45 votes in his favour as opposed to 25 votes of Dr. Samir Dalvie.



Dr. Appaji suggested that the names should be screened by a Nomination Committee. This suggestion found favour with many members.

Dr. VT Ingalthalikar proposed the name of Dr. H S Chhabra for the post of Secretary. Dr. Appaji seconded the proposal. Dr. Chhabra was elected unanimously. Similarly Dr. Ram Chaddha was unanimously elected to the post of President Elect and Dr Sajan Hegde elected as the President.

The Office Bearers of the Association of Spine Surgeons of India for 2013-14 would thus be as under:

**President:**

Sajan Hegde (2013-15) – [drsajanhegde@yahoo.co.in](mailto:drsajanhegde@yahoo.co.in)

**President Elect:**

Ram Chaddha (2013-15) – [spineram@yahoo.com](mailto:spineram@yahoo.com)

**Secretary & Treasurer:**

H. S. Chhabra (2013-16) – [drhshchhabra@isiconline.org](mailto:drhshchhabra@isiconline.org)

**Joint Secretary:**

Saumyajit Basu (2013-16) – [saumyajitbasu@hotmail.com](mailto:saumyajitbasu@hotmail.com)

**Members:**

Rajesh Parasnis (2011-14) – [rajeshparasnis@rediffmail.com](mailto:rajeshparasnis@rediffmail.com)  
K. Venkatesh (2011-14) – [venkateshort1@cmcvellore.ac.in](mailto:venkateshort1@cmcvellore.ac.in)  
Gautam Zaveri (2012-15) – [zaverigr@hotmail.com](mailto:zaverigr@hotmail.com)  
V. Suryaprakash Rao (2012-15) – [vsprao@rediffmail.com](mailto:vsprao@rediffmail.com)  
Arvind Kulkarni (2013-16) – [drarvindspines@gmail.com](mailto:drarvindspines@gmail.com)  
S. Karunakaran (2013-16) – [drkarunaspine@gmail.com](mailto:drkarunaspine@gmail.com)

**Co-opted members:**

R. Sivakumar – [drsivakumarspine@yahoo.co.in](mailto:drsivakumarspine@yahoo.co.in)  
Rushama Tandon – [rushtan@rediffmail.com](mailto:rushtan@rediffmail.com)  
Amol Rege – [regeamol@hotmail.com](mailto:regeamol@hotmail.com)  
K. V Menon – [kvm422@hotmail.com](mailto:kvm422@hotmail.com)  
Subir Jhaveri – [subirjhaveri@hotmail.com](mailto:subirjhaveri@hotmail.com)  
Ajoy Prasad Shetty – [ajoyshetty@gmail.com](mailto:ajoyshetty@gmail.com)  
Abhay Nene – [abhaynene@yahoo.com](mailto:abhaynene@yahoo.com)  
Samir Dalvie – [sdalvie@hotmail.com](mailto:sdalvie@hotmail.com)

**10. ICS-2014: Proposal for Dates, Venue & Theme (Supporting Letter of local Spine Body)**

The members were informed that the Executive Committee had decided that ICS should be held during second week of August. For 2013, 2014 and 2015 ICS would be held jointly with AO Spine. The members unanimously agreed to this proposal.

Two proposals were received to organize ICS 2014. Dr Rushma Tandon, on behalf of Spine Society Delhi Chapter, proposed it to be conducted in Fatehgarh Palace, Udaipur in August 2014. Dr Amit Jhala and Dr Subir Zaveri proposed it to be held in Ahmadabad by Gujrat Spine Society.

The majority of the members in favour of the ICS to be held at Udaipur by Spine Society Delhi Chapter the tentative dates would be 13th -15th August. Spine Society Delhi Chapter would decide on the theme and get back. Two proposed topics were Peadiatric Spine and Geriatric Spine.

**11. ASSICON-2015: Proposal of Dates & Venue (Supporting letter of local Spine Body)**

Dr. Amol Rege put forward a bid for holding ASSICON-2015 in Pune. The General Body unanimously decided to accept the proposal.

**12. Any other matter with the permission of the Chair**

**a) ASSI Anthem** – Dr. VT Ingalthalikar mentioned that the Inaugural ceremony of ASSICONS should be closed with the ASSI Anthem. However some members felt that such a ceremony should finish with the

National Anthem. It was decided that the ceremony could begin with ASSI Anthem and finish with the National Anthem.

**b) Spine Registry** – Dr. Rajasekaran briefed the members that despite a lot of effort having been put in launching the Spine Registry, the support from many of the contributing centres was not as per expectations. He complimented Dr. Bharat Dave, Dr. Abhay Nene, Dr. Saumyajit Basu and the concerned at Ganga Hospital for having been consistent in contributing to the registry. He invited other interested centres to write to him for participation.

**c) Active Membership** – Dr. Rajasekaran mentioned that despite his deep interest in commencing the process of active membership, a policy in this regard could not be framed in the last few years. Despite the life membership having touched the number of 850, it was difficult to estimate the actual number of active members. There could be various advantages of active membership like bulk subscription of prestigious journals, difficult case forums etc. Dr VT Ingahlalikar fully supported the concept of active membership.

The members unanimously decided to commence with active membership. It was decided that the benefits of active membership could gradually evolve. The active membership fees could initially be Rs. 2000.

**d) Life Membership Fee** – Dr. Ram Chaddha proposed to increase the life membership fee from Rs. 3000 to Rs. 5000. The house decided to retain it at Rs. 3000 since the active membership was being launched.

The members decided that Secretary and Joint Secretary would work on online membership.

**e) Spine Week** – Dr. Rajasekaran briefed the members about the proposal for ASSI to be one of the co hosts of the next Spine week to be held at Kualalumpur in mid 2016. ASSI would need to forego one of the Annual Meetings. It could hence forego ICS of 2016. The members unanimously approved the proposal.

**f) Nomination Committee** – Dr H S Chhabra suggested that a Nomination Committee should screen all the nominations for the Executive positions of ASSI. The office bearers should be selected through a process such that a healthy relationship is maintained amongst the members and factionalism and rivalry is avoided. The Nomination Committee could comprise of the President, President Elect, Secretary and the immediate past two or three Presidents.

**g) ASSICON 2013** – The Executive committee & general body wanted to place on record the efforts of the organizing committee and especially those of Dr Sajesh Menon and Dr Suresh Pillai behind the grand success of ASSICON 2013.

**h) Handing over of President ship** – In a brief ceremony Dr Rajasekaran handed over Presidentship to Dr Sajan Hegde who remarked that it would be a very difficult task to take over from Dr Rajasekaran. However he was sure that he would get plenty of advice and support from Dr Rajasekaran, Dr Arvind Jayaswal, Dr VT Ingahlalikar Dr Hardikar and other Past Presidents of ASSI.

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



## | Report on ASSICON 2013

The 26th annual conference of ASSI was conducted at Le-Meridien Hotel & convention Centre, Kochi, Kerala from 17-20th January 2013 in a grand way. The overwhelming participation from delegates all over India and a handful from other countries, made it an excellent one. The eminent faculties across twelve countries and many from India added the flavor to the academics. Many young surgeons from India proved that they are capable of taking ASSI on their hands in the future.

The inauguration of the meeting was done by Mr. Babu Paul IAS. The President, Secretary, Vice President & Treasurer of ASSI and the organizers were present on the dais during the occasion. The variety local cuisine and the cultural extra extravaganzas made the event a memorable one for everybody who attended the programme.

On behalf of the organizing committee of Spine Forum Kerala, myself and Dr. Sajesh Menon, we thank each one of the delegates, faculty and office bearers of ASSI for giving us the opportunity to conduct the 26th ASSICON in a memorable way.

Dr. Suresh Pillai  
Organizing Secretary, ASSICON 2013, Kochi



Minutes of the "Extra-ordinary General Body Meeting" of  
"Association of Spine Surgeons of India"  
Venue: Hotel Carlton, Kodaikanal  
Date: Saturday, August 17, 2013  
Time: 1300 hrs. onwards

**1. Ratification of the Minutes of the last GBM held at Kochi on 19th January 2013**

The minutes of General Body Meetings at Kochi were resolved unanimously.

**2. Secretarial & Action Taken Report**

Dr. HS Chhabra briefed the members about the activities of ASSI since 20th January 2013. The details are as under:

**a) Appointment of Part Time secretary**

The office of ASSI was commissioned at ISIC with the appointment of Ms. Neema Bisht as part time Secretary w.e.f. 4th March 2013. At present, she is working half a day. Her scope of work is

Updating and maintaining database of members

Regular activities of the Society like coordination with regard to conferences, updating website etc.

Coordination with various committees of ASSI with regard to their activities

Helping with regard to action on the decisions of the previous meeting

The performance of Ms. Neema Bisht would be evaluated periodically.

The members had been informed earlier that Ms. Neema Bisht could be contacted on [assi.secretariat@isiconline.org](mailto:assi.secretariat@isiconline.org) / 011-42255356 (between 8:30hrs to 13:00hrs from Monday to Saturday).

Dr. Sajan Hegde appreciated the work done by the Secretariat with regard to streamlining the functioning of the office and updating the database of ASSI Members.

**b) Update on Meeting with MCI-Chairman**

Dr. HS Chhabra briefed the members that the matter of eligibility of Orthopaedic Surgeons to perform spine surgeries was taken up with the Medical Council of India. A representation approved by legal authorities and the Executive of ASSI was sent to Dr. K K Talwar, Chairman MCI and an appointment was sought to discuss the matter with him. Meanwhile he had been invited to the meeting of the Executive of Indian Orthopaedic Association to discuss the same issue. It was then decided that the representatives of ASSI and IOA could meet Dr. K. K. Talwar together. On 2nd April 2013 Prof. S. S. Yadav (representative of IOA) and Prof. Arvind Jayaswal as well as the undersigned (representatives of ASSI) met Dr. Talwar and had detailed discussions with him for over half an hour. Dr. Talwar was very supportive and infact mentioned that no doubt should arise in anybody's mind that orthopaedic surgeons are qualified and eligible for managing and operating spinal ailments. He suggested that instead of the representation, we should send a letter which should state that Orthopaedic surgeons have been traditionally doing spine surgery since they are qualified and eligible to do so and hence MCI is being requested to issue a statement ratifying this. He further mentioned, that, if we had documentary proof of any court order or any Govt. or other body making a written statement that orthopedic surgeons are not qualified and eligible to do spine surgery, we should forward it to MCI and they would then send a written letter to them mentioning that the statement was not proper.

A letter was hence again drafted in consultation with legal authorities and approval was taken from the Executive. Two separate letters were then sent on behalf of ASSI and IOA respectively along with a covering letter (copies enclosed). It was planned that once a response would be received a separate letter would be sent to have the problem of Arogyashree Scheme sorted out.

He informed the members that the matter was being followed with the MCI office and it was hoped that the letter as requested from MCI would be received soon. However Dr. K.K. Talwar was replaced all of a sudden by Dr. R.K. Srivastava. When the office of Dr. Srivastava had been contacted for an appointment, they had asked for a fresh letter to be sent with the representations in his name. Dr. Chhabra informed that the same had been done and a response was awaited.

Dr. Sajan Hegde informed the house about the valuable contribution of Dr. Arvind Jayaswal for this issue. His suggestion that the advice of Dr. Gopinath Shenoy could be taken in this matter, was unanimously accepted by the members.

**c) Updating data-base of ASSI members**

1. No. of members
2. Contact details
3. Membership No
4. Life membership certificate

Dr. HS Chhabra informed the members that the contact details of the members also needed updation. Ms. Neema Bisht has been working on the updation of data-base of ASSI members. In the first step, the email IDs as well as other contact details of members were updated from the registration forms (filled at the time of becoming a member). Simultaneously, mails were sent to all members for whom email IDs were available requesting them to verify and update the contact details available with the ASSI.

In the next step, the contact details were updated from all available sources including the IOA membership directory, contact details from previous conferences etc.

In the third step a letter was sent through post to all members whose email IDs were not available. However, quite a few of the addresses were improper.

We now have the email address of 726 members as against the 318 which were available before the exercise was started.

The endeavour has also resulted in updating the membership list with the names and details of those who had registered and paid their membership fee but whose names had not been updated in the membership list. The updated membership list now has 1019 members as against 806 when the endeavour was started. This of course also includes 19 new members who have joined since then.

The members were informed about the suggestion from an ASSI member that the membership certificate should also include the details of the year in which it was issued. After discussion it was decided that the details of the certificate as at present was sufficient.

**d) Issue of username and password to members for accessing restricted part of website.**

Dr. HS Chhabra informed the Board that Username and password has now been issued to all members for accessing the restricted part of the website. Some features can be accessed only by members using username and password like membership list with contact details, case forum, events, update profile, update picture and change password. It was suggested that this part of the website could also be used to put information about other aspects which are to be restricted from non-ASSI members. This could include certain aspects relating to conference etc.

**e) Fellowships of ASSI**

**1. Guidelines and its enforcement**

Dr. HS Chhabra briefed the members about the guidelines for Fellowship and Reference/Hosting Centres which had been approved by circulation amongst the Education Committee. The members unanimously approved the guidelines.

The members were also briefed about the process followed for disseminating information about the ASSI fellowships through advertisement in the Indian Journal of orthopedics and mailers. 10 applications had been received. Guidelines for screening the applicants through a checklist and evaluation through an interview as well as a marksheet had been framed. It was decided that the curriculum for ASSI Fellowship should be finalized soon.

**2. Date of Commencement**

Since commencing ASSI Fellowships after interviews during ASSICON had resulted in quite a few selected candidates not joining due to getting a NBE fellowship subsequently, it was decided that the fellowships would henceforth be commenced after interviews at ICS. The first interviews were thus being held during ICS in Kodalkanal. The General Body unanimously approved this.



### *3. Exit Examination*

It was proposed that the Exit Examination for ASSI Fellowship would be conducted during ASSICONS. However after discussions it was decided that the EXIT Examination should be held separate from ASSICON or ICS at a suitable reference/hosting centre as decided by the Education Committee and the Executive. There should be atleast two External Examiners, the expenses for whom could be borne by ASSI. In 2014, the EXIT Examination could take place in February.

### *4. Disseminating information for Fellowships and call for applications for Reference / Hosting centres to apply for accreditation*

The fellowships of ASSI were advertised in Indian Journal of Orthopedics (IJO) August edition. In addition, mailers were sent to all members for the fellowship as well as for application for consideration as Reference / Hosting Centres for Fellowships.

### *5. D-Ortho as eligibility criteria?*

Some D-Ortho candidates had applied for ASSI Fellowships. It was felt that only those who have a proper post graduate degree should be eligible. Hence D-Ortho would not be eligible. The General Body also agreed in this regard.

### **f) Committees of ASSI**

The members were briefed that the various Committees of ASSI had been activated as per the decision of the last GBM. The reports of the activities of the various committees were presented during the Meeting:

*1. Education Committee report including guidelines for Reference / Hosting Centers for ASSI Spine Fellowship.* Guidelines had been finalized. A copy has been enclosed at Annexure A.

*2. Scientific Committee report including guidelines for conducting ASSICON and ICS:*

Dr. Gautam Zaveri and Dr. Saumyajit Basu presented the activities of the committee, the details of which had been circulated earlier. It was mentioned that the committee members had decided that Dr. Gautam Zaveri could co-ordinate the finalization of the scientific program of ICS 2013 whereas Dr. Saumyajit Basu could work on the scientific program of ASSICON-2014.

Dr. Saumyajit Basu briefed the members about the outline of the scientific program of ASSICON 2014.

Dr. Gautam Zaveri presented the guidelines for conduct of future ASSICONS and ICSs as worked upon by the committee. After detailed discussions the following was decided:

Each ASSICON should start with a half day workshop/ symposium on a Friday. The main conference could start Friday afternoon post lunch and could carry on till lunch time on Sunday.

Each ASSICON / ICS event should involve at the most 3 foreign faculty each of whom could be given the responsibility of taking 2 lectures of 15 mins each with 5 mins of discussion time. This would come up to a total of 2 hours allocated to the foreign faculty. The lectures of the foreign faculty should be during the plenary session.

The conference dinner should be limited to one night only, preferably the Saturday night.

ICS should be held during the second weekend of August. It should start on a Friday morning/afternoon and end by lunch time on Sunday. The scientific sessions should be based on the theme (which should be a specialized topic) for 1 day and on general topics for 1 ½ day.

The President lauded the activities of the scientific committee. He also suggested that there was a need to strengthen the committee and to induct some younger members with a view to ensuring continuity. After discussions, it was decided to induct Dr. Bhavuk Garg, Dr. Amit Jhala and Dr. Upendra as the new co-opted members of the scientific Committee.

### *3. Social Work Committee report*

Dr. SY Bhojraj briefed the members about the plans of the social work committee. The committee was planning to start centres for delivering subsidized and free spine care to cases in different zones in the country (west, east, north and south). One of the centres in the "north" likely to be in Rishikesh

(Uttaranchal) is in the planning stage.

Further camps were planned across the Country. The first surgical camp would be organized in March end / early April at the Rishikesh centre. There would be one or two evaluation spine camps prior to the surgical camp. Dr. Subir Jhaveri presented the work already done by the committee (details at Annexure B).

#### *4. Advocacy Committee report*

The advocacy committee had liaised with the Medical Council of India (MCI) on the issue of eligibility of orthopaedic surgeons to perform spine surgery. The members were also informed that the Public-Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by Dr. Rajasekaran in the Supreme Court regarding Road Traffic Safety is gaining national prominence.

#### *5. Spine Registry Committee report*

The members were informed that despite the whole hearted effort by Dr. Rajasekaran, most of the centers were not filing their cases in the registry. After detailed discussions, it was decided that a new trust would be given to get the registry going.

#### *6. Website Committee report including update on website (details at Annexure C)*

The work for maintenance of the ASSI website had been given again to Kirithi Technologies (company already doing the maintenance). It was pointed out that certain details on the website needed updation. It was suggested that Dr. Ajoy Shetty could work with the Secretariat in this regard.

#### *7. Dr. Samir Dalvie – co-opted Member*

The members were informed that in the last General Body Meeting Dr. Samir Dalvie had been considered ineligible to opt for membership of the education committee since at that time it was felt that members could hold only one position and he had applied for the post of Jt. Secretary. Since Dr. Saumyajit Basu was subsequently elected as Jt. Secretary, the ineligibility of Dr. Samir Dalvie was not justified. Hence it was suggested that Dr. Samir Dalvie should be nominated as a co-opted Member of Education Committee. The members unanimously agreed to this suggestion.

Members were also asked to volunteer if they wanted to contribute to the activities of the various committees as co-opted members. The following showed interest in this regard and were appointed as co-opted members:

Dr. Premik Nagad & Dr. Abhilash N. Dhruv – Social Work Committee

Dr. Anupreet Bassi – Education Committee

Dr. Shashidhar BK – Education Committee & Scientific Committee

#### **g) Spine Registry**

Dr. HS Chhabra informed the members that Dr. S. Rajasekaran had repeatedly raised concerns about the commitment of some of the designated centres to contribute to the ASSI Spine Registry. The volume of data available with the ASSI members would be unparalleled anywhere in the world and hence this is a wonderful opportunity for ASSI.

It was decided to give a thrust to the activities pertaining to spine registry. It was also suggested that a mailer could be sent to all members about the spine registry briefing them about the objectives, the responsibilities of the designated centres and the other details. Dr. Abhay Nene was requested to compile the requisite information for the mailer.

#### **h) Financial Report**

##### *1. Accounts & Income Tax Status*

The members were briefed about the Accounts & Income Tax status of ASSI. The balance sheet for the financial year 2012 – 2013 had still not been filed. It was decided that the balance sheet could be approved by circulation. It could then be filed.

##### *2. Transfer of bank accounts*

The members were informed that the bank account has been shifted to State Bank of India (SBI), JNU Branch, New Delhi.

### **3. Appointment of Statutory Auditors of ASSI**

Since the office of ASSI and the Bank Account had shifted to Delhi, after taking approval from the ASSI Executive M/s. Anthony Trinidad & Co had been appointed as Statutory Auditors for ASSI for Financial Year 2013-2014. The members ratified the appointment of M/s. Anthony Trinidad & Co as Statutory Auditors for ASSI for Financial Year 2013-2014.

### **4. Audited Financial Statements of ASSI Events**

It was discussed that the organizers of each conference/event were required to submit the audited financial statement by the next GBM. The accounts would not be closed till this was done.

The members were also informed that under the regulations applicable to a society, ASSI has to spend 85% of the profit either within the same year or over the next 5 years. The action would also need to be taken in this regard.

#### **i) Letterheads of ASSI**

The members unanimously approved the modified letterheads of ASSI.

#### **j) ASSI booth at all ASSI events**

The members were informed that as per the earlier decision of the General Body, the local organizers of ICS at Kodaikanal and ASSICON 2014 had whole heartedly accepted the request to allot a complimentary booth to ASSI.

#### **k) Complimentary registration and accommodation to VTI Gold Medal Award Winner**

The members were also informed that as per the decision in the previous GBM complimentary registration (but not accommodation) would be provided to VTI Gold Medal Award winner for ASSICON 2014.

It was decided that the applicants for VTI Gold Medal Award would be required to submit the full paper for consideration.

### **3. NASS**

- a) Invitation from North American Spine Society (NASS) for complimentary booth in NASS Meeting being held from October 9-12, 2013, New Orleans, Louisiana.
- b) Offering NASS a complimentary booth space at ASSICON 2014.
- c) ASSI Symposium at NASS Meeting.

The members were informed that NASS had offered ASSI a complimentary booth during its meeting being held at New Orleans in October 2013. Subsequently ASSI had received a letter from NASS asking if a complimentary booth could be offered to NASS during ASSICON 2014. There was another correspondence from NASS in which they asked ASSI if they would want to conduct a session in the NASS meeting.

Since Dr. Basu was happy to offer a complimentary booth to NASS, ASSI communicated the same to NASS. However since there was hardly any ASSI members participating in NASS and since the notice to hold the symposium was short, it was decided that ASSI could ask NASS if it would consider offering a complimentary booth and a symposium to ASSI during the NASS meeting of 2014. In their reply NASS has said that this could be considered. It was decided that if ASSI participated in NASS 2014 and NASS allotted a complimentary booth, ASSI should put up a good show. The decision on who could man the booth could be taken subsequently. Ms. Neema Bisht could be considered in this regard.

### **4. ASSICON 2014**

#### **a) Update by Dr. Saumyajit Basu**

Dr. Saumyajit Basu gave an update of the preparations of ASSICON 2014 (copy enclosed at Annexure D). The members lauded the efforts of Dr. Saumyajit Basu and the local organizing committee for preparations for ASSICON 2014.

#### **b) ASSI Orator – 2014**

The members were informed that as per the decision of the last GBM Dr. Saumyajit Basu was pursuing the matter with Dr. Amartya Sen to deliver the ASSI Orator-2014. Dr. Sajan Hegde was simultaneously



pursuing with Dr. Sanjay Gupta in this regard though the first preference would be Dr. Amartya Sen. If both were not available the possibility of inviting Mr. Saurav Ganguly would be explored.

#### 5. ICS 2013

The members unanimously lauded the contribution of Dr. R. Sivakumar and the whole team of the organizing committee for a very well organized and successful ICS 2013.

#### 6. ICS -2014

Dr. Rushama Tandon briefed the members about the preparations for ICS. The members appreciated the work done so far. However they requested organizers to consider changing the dates from the ones proposed (8th - 10th August 2014) to 15th - 17th August 2014. Dr. Rushama Tandon mentioned that she would discuss with the concerned and get back within a couple of weeks.

The members also decided that Dr. Gautam Zaveri should shortlist the names of 6 potential AO Spine Faculties and forward them to Dr. Sajan Hegde and Dr. Prashant Kekre for finalizing the 3 faculty who would be invited for ICS 2014.

It was also discussed that after the tie up with AO Spine for 3 ICSs expires, the possibility of involving other groups specializing in specific areas could be explored. one of the subsequent ICS could have the theme of "Spinal Tumor".

#### 7. ICS – 2015

Dr. S. Krishna Kumar put up a proposal on behalf of Kanyakumari Orthopaedic Club to organize ICS 2015. It was decided that the decision would be taken after considering other proposal in the next GBM during ASSICON 2014.

#### 8. ASSICON 2015

Dr. Amol Rege informed the members about the progress with regard to ASSICON 2015 (copy enclosed at Annexure E).

#### 9. Utilization of Surplus Funds of ASSI

Discussions were held on the report of Dr. Gautam Zaveri and the Statutory Auditor of ASSI for utilization of funds of ASSI (details enclosed at Annexure F). It was decided that further professional advice would be taken from the Statutory Auditors in this regard.

#### 10. Corporate Sponsorships

Letter to be sent on behalf of ASSI GB and Executive expressing resentment and concern.

Few members had raised concern about the manner in which the concerned officials of some corporates deal with them when they approach them for support for the conference. The behavior of Mr. Saravanan with Dr. R. Sivakumar in this regard was particularly objectionable. The members felt that a letter should be sent on behalf of ASSI General Body and Executive to Mr. Naveen Bali expressing concern about the behavior of Mr. Saravanan with the Organizing Secretary of an ASSI event.

#### 11. Any other matter with the permission of the Chair

**Medico legal Cover** – The members discussed at depth the matter of empanelling some lawyers specializing in medico legal cases so that members could take advice on any medico legal problems. Dr. Rajasekaran pointed out that IMA had floated an attractive scheme which gave similar benefits. The details of this scheme could be circulated to the Executive and if found suitable members could be briefed about the scheme. ASSI could also discuss with the concerned official in IMA to check if they could give some benefits to ASSI members if they availed the facility as a group.

**Creating awareness about spinal ailments and safe spine surgery**- The issue of creating community awareness about spinal ailments and safe spine surgery was discussed at depth. It was decided that the possibility to recruit a media consultant company in this regard could be explored. Audio visuals, jingles etc could be prepared for media campaigns. The members also discussed about disseminating information about the eligibility of orthopaedic surgeons to perform spine surgeries once the MCI give favorable decision. The Advocacy Committee could look into this matter.

**Compilation of list of experts of ASSI** – the members discussed about the possibility to compile a list of experts of ASSI. Various regional, state and national related associations (orthopaedic, neurosurgery, general physician etc) could then be approached information them about the availability of ASSI experts for educational events.

**Local chapters of ASSI** – it was discussed that ASSI should explore the possibility of opening local chapters. However the provision within the ASSI constitution to open such chapters should first be checked. If there was no provision then steps should be taken to get the needful done in this regard.

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

## Instructional Course in Spine 2013 (ICS 2013, Kodalkanal)

*"The ICS2013Kodai had many chilling failed spine pages in content. Each title a reminder of past mistakes, edited and overwritten with refreshing tricks & trades dedicated to younger generation".*

*"Kodai hills echoed with past spine scars and the secret road maps to circumvent them".*

The ICS2013Kodai was held on August 16, 17 & 18 – 2013at Hotel The Carlton, Kodaikanal. The theme of the event was "Failed Spine Surgery". Madurai Spine Club organized ICS for the first time under the aegis of Association of Spine Surgeons of India (ASSI) along with AO Spine Foundation. The event was big successful with total 225 delegates. Organizing Chairman – Prof. Dr. A. Devadoss & Organizing Secretary - Prof. Dr. R. Sivakumar made sure that each and every delegate had a friendly atmosphere with good ambience throughout the event.

Dr. Sajan Hegde ASSI president, Dr. H.S. Chhabra ASSI Secretary inaugurated the function on 16th Aug 2013 with 3 AO faculties Dr. Manabu Ito, Japan, Dr. Luiz R Vialle, Brazil & Dr. Paul Thng, Singapore.

The scientific programme was based on case discussion and followed by Lectures, which was divided into 3 sessions every day mainly covering the Failed Cervical Spine, Failed Lumbar Spine, Tumours and Infections. The event also included "Symposium on Failed Lumbar Spine Surgery" on first day which was more informative and helpful for the Postgraduates and Spine fellows. Sessions with video presentations were more interactive. The interesting case discussions by various members were presented on 16th and 17th with good exchange of idea and appreciation. The Scientific program was adorned by 51 Faculties including the 3 Foreign Faculties. Dr. Gautham Zaveri being the coordinator of the Scientific programme, everything went on time.

For the first time in ICS Poster Presentation were introduced. 51 Poster Presentations were displayed on 17th Aug 2013. Dr. Sanjay Yadav from All India Institute of Medical Science, New Delhi has awarded "The Best Poster Presentation Gold Medal Award" for the Topic "Early Onset Scoliosis with Intraspinal Anomalies – Are Growth Rods Safe?"

Delegates enjoyed the Sightseeing and Spouse activities on 16th & 17th Aug 2013 during the non Scientific Programme. The sports included were Shuttle Badminton, Chess, and Tabletennis, and the winners took away the final prize. Delegates also had the opportunity to visit Pilgrimage like Madurai Meenakshi temple and Palani temple and got blessed.

On 16th and 17th Aug 2013 - Cultural programme were organized in the evening & followed by dinner. Last but not the least the Valedictory function was concluded thanking the AO Spine faculties, ASSI President and Secretary, Executive Committee and to all the delegates who made the event more successful.

In toto "ICS2013 at Kodai hills had rocked the spine world"

Prof. Dr. R. Sivakumar  
Organizing Secretary



*Inaugural Function – Our Honourable President & Secretary – traditional lightening.*





*Dr. Luiz Vialle, Brazil*



*Dr. Manabu Ito, Japan*



*Dr. Paul Ting, Singapore*

### AO Faculty delivering their Lectures



*Faculty and Delegates in interactive sessions*



*Faculty and Delegates in interactive sessions*



*Poster Presentation Award*

### Valedictory Function



ASSI Advocacy: MCI written statement regarding eligibility  
of Orthopedic Surgeons to perform spine surgeries

Certified copy of the Minutes of Board of Governors meeting of Medical  
Council of India

Medical Council of India  
New Delhi

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors dated 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>  
August, 2013.

The 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Board of Governors was held on 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> August,  
2013, at 11.00 A.M. in the Council office at Sector-8, Pocket-14, Dwarka, New  
Delhi-110077. The following members of the Board of Governors attended the  
meeting :-

- 1) Dr. R.K. Srivastava, Chairman, BOG; - In Chair
- 2) Dr. K.S. Sharma, Member, BOGs.
- 3) Dr. Raja Babu Panwar, Member, BOG;
- 4) Dr. Manoj K. Singh, Member, BOG;
- 5) Dr. Brijendra Kumar Rao, Member, BOG

and Dr. P. Prasananaraj, Additional Secretary, MCI.

Leave of absence was granted to Dr. K. Mohandas, Member,  
BOG. and Dr. A.K. Bardhan, Member, BOGs for 6.8.2013

2. The following items, as per Agenda circulated, were considered by the  
Board of Governors and decision taken thereon as under -

2.19 Dr. H.S. Chhabra, Secretary, Association of Spine Surgeons of India's  
letter dated 2.8.2013 regarding Orthopaedicians providing spinal care  
including surgery to patient : After discussion in detail, the Board of Governors  
decided that the Orthopaedicians may also provide for spinal care including surgery  
to the patients.

(Dr. Raja Babu Panwar)  
Member, BOG

(Dr. Manoj K. Singh)  
Member, BOG

(Dr. A.K. Bardhan)  
Member, BOG

(Dr. K. Mohandas)  
Member, BOG

(Dr. Brijendra Kumar Rao)  
Member, BOG

(Dr. K.S. Sharma)  
Member, BOG

(Dr. R.K. Srivastava)  
Chairman



## A.S.S.I. Awards & Fellowships for 2014 (Application protocols)

### A.S.S.I. - CLINICAL RESEARCH AWARD – 2014

A.S.S.I. encourages clinical research projects undertaken by its members. The A.S.S.I. – Clinical Research Award is a certificate of honour and Indian Rupees 50,000/- (Fifty thousand) which is presented at the inaugural function of ASSICON.

Three copies of the complete report of a research project finished in 2013, including the treatise, yet unpublished, were to be submitted for consideration for the award by Tuesday, December 31, 2013 to the Secretariat.

The judges are three senior A.S.S.I. members.

### A.S.S.I. – BASIC SCIENCES AWARD – 2014

A.S.S.I. encourages research on "Basic Sciences" undertaken by its members. The A.S.S.I. – Basic Sciences Award is a certificate of honour and Indian Rupees 50,000/- (Fifty thousand) which is presented at the inaugural function of ASSICON.

Three copies of the complete report of the project finished in 2013, including the treatise, yet unpublished, were to be submitted for consideration for the award by Tuesday, December 31, 2013 to the Secretariat.

The judges are three senior A.S.S.I. members.

### A.S.S.I. – YOUNG INVESTIGATORS AWARD – 2014

A.S.S.I. encourages research projects undertaken by its young members less than 35 years of age. The A.S.S.I. – Young Investigators Award is a certificate of honour and Indian Rupees 25,000/- (Twenty-five thousand) which is presented at the inaugural function of ASSICON.

Three copies of the complete report of a research project finished in 2013, including the treatise, yet unpublished, were to be submitted for consideration for the award by Tuesday, December 31, 2013 to the Secretariat.

The judges are three senior A.S.S.I. members.

### A.S.S.I. PUBLICATION AWARD – 2014

A.S.S.I. acknowledges & recognizes the member who has made the most substantial contribution to published literature in the year 2013.

The award includes a certificate and an award of Indian Rupees 12,500/- (Twelve thousand five hundred) to be presented at the inaugural function of ASSICON. The A.S.S.I. Publication award is judged by a three member committee namely - President, Vice President and Secretary (or any other senior member like a Past President of the A.S.S.I., if applicant for the award is also one of the above office-bearers)

#### The following point scale is used:

##### *International Journals*

First author of invited review articles/ full original papers - 10

First author of case report - 7

Co-author - 4

##### *Indian Journals*

First author of invited review articles/full papers - 7

Co-authors of any of above - 3

The applicant who gets the maximum amount of marks for publications published in 2013 gets the award. If there is a close call, the award may be shared to recognize and encourage members.

Three copies of all publications of 2013, were to be submitted for consideration for the award by Tuesday, December 31, 2013 to the Secretariat.

#### A.S.S.I. – TRAVELLING FELLOWSHIP FOR 2014

A.S.S.I. awards two travelling fellowships from amongst the A.S.S.I. members. The duration of the fellowship is three weeks and begins with the ICS attendance and then visiting two / three spine surgery centres in different parts of India. The registration fee and local hospitality for ICS for the selected fellows is borne by the local organizers of ICS. Each A.S.S.I. travelling fellow receives actual payments for travel (by 2nd AC / Air whichever is cheaper) and stay (arranged by local organizers) on receipt of a written report of the fellowship from the selected fellow.

The travel to the ICS meeting and thereafter to the two/ three centres in India and back home as well as local subsistence including stay and travel is arranged by the selected fellows in co-ordination with local organisers. The local organizers offer organizational support.

The applicant has to be a life member of the A.S.S.I. Three copies of curriculum vitae with an application stating what the expectation from this fellowship were to be sent for consideration for the award by Tuesday, December 31, 2013 to the Secretariat.

#### A.S.S.I. - DARTMOUTH SPINE FELLOWSHIP - 2014:

A.S.S.I. offers an annual fellowship in spine surgery in collaboration with the Dartmouth Medical School, New Hampshire, USA. The selected fellow works in the spine surgery unit of the Department of Orthopaedics of the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in May – June 2014 for a period of 4-6 weeks.

Though the fellowship has no stipend, the selected fellow receives travel and stay allowance from the Dartmouth – Hitchcock Medical Center.

##### Requirements:

1. A.S.S.I. life member
2. Age less than 45 years at the time of application
3. Applicant must have a US visa valid for at least a year from date of travel

##### Application must indicate:

1. Current professional position
2. Current work profile including percentage of spine work in practice
3. Special spine interests
4. Contribution to A.S.S.I. as regards conferences attended, papers/posters presented, meetings organized etc
5. Contribution to academics as regards international/ national/ regional papers/ publications/ podium presentations etc
6. Specific expectations from the Dartmouth fellowship (in 50 words)

The applicants would be assessed based on the following criteria:

#### DARTMOUTH FELLOWSHIP POINT SYSTEM

##### (A) A.S.S.I. related achievements:

1. Research award / publication award: 6 pts
2. Best paper award: 5 pts
3. Traveling fellowship: 4 pts
4. Organized ASSICON/ ICS (org sec or org chairman only): 4 pts
5. Paper read at best paper session: 2 pts
6. Paper read: 1 pt
7. Poster: half pt
8. Each ASSICON/ICS attended: 1 pt

##### (B) Publications:

1. International (A grade): 3 pts
2. International (B grade): 2 pts
3. Indian A grade: 1 pt

(D) Age:- 35-40yrs : 1 pt

(E) Extras:

1. International recognitions/awards (spine related): 3 pts
2. Other national spine awards (non A.S.S.I.): 2 pts

Three copies of the complete report of the project finished in 2013, including the treatise, yet unpublished, were to be submitted for the award by Tuesday, December 31, 2013 to the Secretariat. Applications are invited from interested A.S.S.I. life members for the 2014 fellowship.

## A.S.S.I. - Long Term Fellowship Guidelines for Applicants & Centres

### Reference Centers & Fellowships of ASSI - Streamlining Guidelines & Processes

#### Current scenario of Reference Centers & Fellowship

Current guidelines exist only for eligibility of a candidate for ASSI Spine fellowship. Further guidelines are required for eligibility of a Center for becoming a Reference Center, eligibility of a Reference center for renewal of Reference Centre status and Fellowship.

The processes required for designating a center as a Reference Center include advertisement / information dissemination, application by a Centre for becoming a Reference Centre, review process, monitoring performance and extension of Reference Center status

The processes required for selecting a candidate for ASSI spine Fellowship include advertising / information dissemination, application, selection process and exit evaluation.

## Guidelines

### I. Reference Centre

#### a) Eligibility for becoming a Reference Centre

Such Centres should be recognized for competence in spine surgery, preferably recognized for provision of a standardised training programme in spine surgery, have an empanelled ASSI member recognized for his training skills and preferably have provision for accommodation to the trainees.

The Centres should have the possibility to provide hands on training. It should have both Orthopaedics and Neurosurgeon consultant level surgeons working together and enough registrar level and resident level staff. Post graduate teaching institutions will be preferred. All pathologies should be addressed (Trauma/ Tumor/ Infection/ Deformity/ Degenerative and Metabolic disorders).

In house critical care, physiotherapy, rehabilitation, radiology (CT, MRI, X rays), pathology services should be available. In house theatre facility with C Arm, neuro monitoring, Operating Microscope, Burrs should be there.

Case load should be at least 500 cases per year (spine alone). Library/ Internet access/ Journals access on line should be available in center.

Dedicated training time; teaching and research time should be built in the system. Research output, publications and presentations should be emphasized.

#### b) Advertisement/Information Dissemination inviting applications for Reference Centres

ASSI should advertise in a renowned national journal (like Indian Journal of Orthopaedics) & also on its website in this regard. Mass mailers should also be sent to all ASSI members.

#### c) Designating a Center as a Reference Center

Interested centers should apply using the application form as enclosed in Annexure A. The centre should apply to Secretary, ASSI. ASSI will designate an expert to evaluate if all eligibility criteria are met. The



expert report, Education Committee / Secretary would recommend suitable Centers to the Executive and General Body of ASSI for final approval.

**d) Renewal of Reference Centre Status**

Reference Centre status would be provided for a period of three years at a time. Reference centre should apply for renewal at least three months before expiry of term. Education Committee / Secretary would designate a suitable inspector to review. If the Centre still fulfills eligibility criteria, inspector would submit a report within 2 months. On the basis of Inspector's report, Education committee / Secretary would recommend renewal to the Executive and General Body of ASSI for final approval.

## II. Fellowship

**a) Eligibility of a candidate for ASSI Spine fellowship**

The candidate must be of age between 28-40 years and a paid member of ASSI since at least 6 months, must be a MS/DNB/FRCs/equivalent in Orthopedics or MCh/DNB in Neurosurgery, should have active interest in developing spine as a full time specialty & must have permanent registration with the MCI (Medical Council of India). He / she should have strong emphasis on publications and presentation. A fellow will have to maintain and submit complete logbook and final evaluation form. He / she will have to meet the requisite criteria of minimum 2 paper presentation at a national conference and one publication in peer reviewed journal during his fellowship.

An ASSI Spine fellowship is granted at the discretion of ASSI, based upon the fellow's application form, degree of experience vis a vis requirements, and availability.

**b) Fellowship Duration**

Duration would be 2 Years.

**c) Advertisement / information dissemination**

ASSI should advertise in a renowned national journal (like Indian Journal of Orthopaedics) & also on its website in this regard. Mass mailers should also be sent to all ASSI members.

**d) Selecting a candidate for ASSI Spine Fellowship**

Interested candidates should apply by sending the filled application form (the same as that of ASSI Spine Fellowship as enclosed at Annexure B) to Secretary ASSI after posts are announced through website / advertisement/mailler. Secretary would review the eligibility criteria. Candidate for Fellowship would be selected based on an interview by the Education Committee / a panel selected by the Executive. The approval for Fellowship would be subject to acceptance of the candidate by the Reference Centre (as preferred by the fellow).

**e) Exit Evaluation**

Exit evaluation would be conducted at a designated centre by Examiners selected by Executive of ASSI.

**f) Other details of the fellowship**

*Confirmation:* ASSI must receive confirmation of acceptance within one month after the fellowship has been granted through a letter addressed to Secretary & copy marked to in charge of the reference centre. If no response is received within that period, ASSI will be free to assign the place to another candidate.

*Working hours:* The fellow is expected to follow the daily routine of the centre and should be available for emergencies at night and on weekends.

*Leave of absence:* Maximum of 20 casual leaves will be given to the candidate in one academic year. Leave will not be the right of candidate and will be given at the discretion of head of fellowship Centre. Paternity leave of 7 days will be given to the candidate. Maternity leave of three months will be given to the candidate but candidate has to work for extra three months after her fellowship tenure to compensate for her academic loss and to be eligible for fellowship exit examination. If, for some reason, the fellow wishes to change the placement or leave before completion of the allotted period, permission must be sought from the Head of the Fellowship Centre and Education Committee / Secretary.

## Report of A.S.S.I.-Dartmouth Spine Fellowship for 2013

### Report of the Dartmouth Hitchcock Travelling Fellowship - Dr Gururaj

#### Journey

I would like to start my report by thanking ASSI and Dr Dilip Sengupta without whom this prestigious fellowship wouldn't have been possible. All the preparation for the fellowship started from the day I got selected for the fellowship in Kochi 2013. Dr H S Chhabra sir without delay forwarded my name to Dr Sengupta and made sure that the things go in the right direction. Dr Sengupta and Ms. Tracy Pope made sure that all the formalities and paper works were done well in advance. Dr Sengupta took personal interest in our travel itinerary and he picked myself and Dr Z S Kundu (IDA fellow) from New York in his car and drove us to his home after showing important landmarks of New York. His home is amidst the beautiful nature and is spacious. Although things are different in USA, he made us feel very comfortable and explained everything in detail.

#### General Orientation

Next Day the 11th of November, we started our fellowship at 6:00 am with morning academic discussions after getting introduced to all the faculty members and residents. After the class Dr Sengupta personally took us around the hospital. The highlight of the day was comprehensive orientation program which was conducted for all the new joiners of the hospital. It included history of the hospital, HIPPA, parking, security, patient safety drill, hospital record maintaining system called EPIC and photo session for preparing ID cards. They took our feedback in the end to improve their program.

#### OPD

I did observe good number of cases in OPD with Dr Sengupta and was really impressed with the system of collection of data. Before meeting doctor patient would have already filled in the self-assessment questionnaire, result of which will be automatically available with the doctor for his reference. The patients who are confused in taking decision about their surgery are sent to Shared Decision making department where they are shown a comprehensive video about their problem and options available for the treatment.

#### Function restoration program

This is unique program in which patients are rehabilitated and undergo comprehensive physiotherapy to get back to their Daily routine activities and work. The program is customized to individual persons need and work.

#### Surgeries

I did assist Dr Sengupta in many surgical cases like correction of kyphosis in ankylosing spondylitis, cervical kyphosis correction, ACDF, ACCE, TLIF, Cervical Laminectomies, Discectomy. I did learn a unique way of harvesting bone graft from PSIS. I also learnt about iliac crest screws which are different from other pelvic screws I have seen and done till now. He is also doing biomechanical testing of these screws.

#### Pain Medicine

I also followed some pain physicians and learnt about radiofrequency ablation of medial bundle branch at cervical and lumbar levels. I also observed lumbar sympathetic blocks and cervical root blocks which were new to me. I would like to thank all the pain physicians who were very cooperative and taught things in between their busy schedule.

#### Presentation and academic work

We did present our research work in a special grand round meeting and was appreciated by each and everybody. I helped Dr Sengupta in updating the chapter on inflammatory disease of cervical spine chapter for a textbook.

#### Visits

Dr Sengupta also helped us in planning our Boston visit. We were thrilled to see the Ether Dome where first Ether anesthesia demonstration was done at Mass general hospital. We did visit Harvard and MIT museum. The Thanks giving party and Black Friday shopping made our stay at Dartmouth more memorable.

#### Cervical spine research society annual meeting-CSRS 2013

My last part of the journey was spent in Beverly hills, Los Angeles where I attended Cervical spine research society annual meeting. This conference was very good combination of knowledge and entertainment. All in all the one month spent was really worth it. It added lot of things to our academic knowledge and personality.

I am very much thankful to Dr Sengupta for taking all the pains to organize this fellowship and having us at his home making us feel at home.





## | Report of A.S.S.I. Travelling Fellowship for 2013

We started our travelling fellowship at Park Clinic, Kolkata. It started with a busy monday where we could observe total 4 cases in a row viz. 2 PLFs, 1 microdiscectomy and 1 OLF. Dr. Saumyajit Basu made us familiar with the working environment of the hospital in the evening with ward rounds & OPD.

We were amazed by the excellent method of record keeping and data retrieval that Dr. Basu has online; which saves his precious time and space. Specific protocols for follow up and dedicated maintenance of scoring of the cases were particularly noted. Another very important activity that Park Clinic runs regularly is the academics. We had the opportunity to attend the weekly clinical meeting where fellows presented the cases in front of orthopedic and neuro-spine surgeons.

During one week fellowship; we observed 2 scoliosis (1AIS & 1 Hemivertebra), 1 ankylosing spondylitis, 2 OLFs, and other cases such as TLIF, PLF etc. We had the privilege to meet and attend the cases of Dr. Chatterjee and Dr. Bhattacharya; both eminent neurosurgeons from Kolkata.

Out of the hospital, we had some fun time and visited few places in Kolkata and had best sea food and sweets.

Our second visit was at New Delhi hosted by Prof. Jayaswal and Dr. Chhabra. It started with WENMISS 2013 which enabled us to know the basics as well as tips and tricks of minimally invasive spine surgery. It was followed by visit to Indian Spinal Injury Centre where our day started with academic session with Dr. Chhabra followed by grand rounds with him. We had the opportunity to visit the rehabilitation unit in Indian Spinal Injury Centre for paraplegics and quadriplegics which is the best in India. Dr. Chhabra made us acquainted with different subspecialties of rehabilitation like physiotherapy, hydrotherapy etc. we could attend total 4 cases in OT that day viz. 3 trauma (including 1 in ankylosing spondylitis) and one discectomy.

Next two days, we were at AIIMS and at trauma centre of AIIMS (JPNATC) where we were with Prof. Jayaswal and Dr.Kamran respectively. That day we could see AIS (Lenke 1b) being operated by Prof. Jayaswal in which he did selective thoracic fusion. Next day we attended his very busy 'Scoliosis Clinic' where we could learn his approach towards scoliosis of different etiologies.

Next day we were at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital with Dr. Shankaracharya where we saw TLIF done for isthemic spondylolisthesis. We also attended the cases of Dr. Kalra and Dr. Chahal that day. In later half of the day we were at AIIMS where we attended high grade listhesis case operated by Prof. Jayaswal done by anterior and posterior approach.

All in all, we were humbled by Prof. Jayaswal and Dr. Saumyajit Basu and had had a very good mixture of hospitality and academics during our stay in New Delhi and Kolkata. We are very thankful to them for the tips and tricks that they have given us out of their experience. We are also immensely grateful to the A.S.S.I. for giving us this opportunity.



## Awards / Achievements / Prestigious Positions of ASSI Members

### Awards

#### International

- **Dr. Harshwardhan Hegde** - Award given by Mr. Flayih Swadi, Inspector General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Iraq for treatment of Iraqi nationals.
- **Dr. Harvinder Singh Chhabra** - Awarded the Society Medal for the Year 2013 at the International Spinal Cord Society's annual scientific meeting in Istanbul. The medal is awarded each year to one expert "who has made an outstanding contribution to the prevention or treatment of spinal cord injury or to research related to spinal cord injury".
- **Dr. Naresh Kumar** - Kostuik Innovation Award at International Society for Advancement of Spine Surgery (ISASS13) Tier 1 Spine meeting in Vancouver, Canada, April 3-5, 2013 for Conference presentation on "Eliminating Tumour Cells from the Cell Saver (CS) in Metastatic Spine Tumour Surgery Using a Leucocyte Depletion Filter (LDF): Dispelling an Old Myth.

#### National

- **Dr. Abhilash N. Dhruv** - Best Poster Award (Silver) at ICS 2013.
- **Dr. A Navaladi Shankar** - Best doctor award by DR MGR UNIVERSITY TAMILNADU STATE
- **Dr. Bhavuk Garg** - Delhi Orthopaedic Associations' best author award (under 40 years) for year 2013.
- **Dr. DK Taneja** - Dr B N Sinha meritorious award by IOA at Agra on 5th Dec 2013.
- **Dr. Gururaj Sangonidimath** - ASSI's Young Investigator Award for the year 2013.
- **Dr. Harvinder Singh Chhabra**
  - T P Jhunjhunwala Foundation's XXIII National Excellence Award for 2013 on January 25, 2013.
  - ASSI Clinical Research Award 2013.
- **Dr. J Naresh Babu** - "SP Mandal Gold Medal Award" by Indian Orthopaedic Association for Innovative Orthopaedics.
- **Dr. Sanjay Yadav** - Best Poster Award (Gold) at ICS 2013.

### Achievements

#### International

- **Dr. DK Taneja** - Invited by Pakistan Orthopaedic Assoc in Nov 2014 and delivered two guest lectures.
- **Dr. HS Chhabra** - Appointed Chief Editor of "International Spinal Cord Society (ISCoS) Textbook on Comprehensive Management of Spinal Cord Injuries" being published by Lippincott Williams & Wilkins and to be launched globally during ISCoS 2015 Annual Meeting in Montreal.

#### National

- **Dr. DK Taneja** - Delivered prestigious eponymous lecture in IOA conference.
- **Dr. Suresh Pillai** - Written a book on "Spine" in Malayalam for the general public. Published by "Kerala Bhasha Institute" and to be released on 29th Dec 2013.

### Prestigious Positions

#### International

- **Dr. Arvind Jayaswal**
  - Chairman, Asia Pacific Spine Society (APSS) 2013-2015.
  - President, The World Society for Endoscopic, Navigated & Minimally Invasive Spine Surgery (WENMISS).
- **Dr. Harvinder Singh Chhabra**
  - Chairman - Prevention Committee and Council Member, International Spinal Cord Society (ISCoS)
  - Board Member - International Group for Advancement in spinal Science (IGASS)
  - Executive Member, Asian Spinal Cord Network (ASCoN).
- **Dr. J Naresh Babu** - Committee member, Scoliosis Research Society for "Awards and scholarship committee".
- **Dr. S. Rajasekaran** - Treasurer General and Member Board of Directors of International Society of Orthopaedic Surgery and Traumatology (SIOT).

- Dr Sarvdeep S. Dhatt - Executive Committee Member, EUROSPINE, in the capacity of member of the 'International Relations Committee'.
- Dr. Suresh Pillai - Treasurer, Singapore Orthopaedic Association (2012 till 2014).

#### National

- Dr. Abhay Nene - Research-Office, AOSpine India
- Dr. Ajoy Shetty - Community Development-Office, AOSpine India
- Dr. Bharat Dave - Education Officer (Ortho), AOSpine India
- Dr. Harvinder Singh Chhabra - Secretary, Spinal Cord Society
- Dr. Prashant Kekre - Chairman, AOSpine India

### Agenda

#### Notice of Annual General Body Meeting of the A.S.S.I.

The Annual General Body Meeting (A.G.B.M.) of the Association of Spine Surgeons of India will be held on Saturday, January 25, 2014 at 18.00 hrs. at Hyatt Regency, Kolkata. All members of the A.S.S.I. are requested to attend.

#### The following matters are on the agenda:

1. Condolences
2. Passing the minutes of A.G.B.M. - New Delhi and E.G.B.M. - Kodaikanal
3. Secretarial Report
4. Accounts & Income Tax Status: Dr. H S Chhabra
5. A.S.S.I. Oration
6. ICS - 2014 - Udaipur: Dates, Venue, Theme: Dr. Rushama Tandon
7. ASSICON - 2015 - Pune: Dr. Amol Rege
8. ICS - 2015: Proposal for Dates, Venue & Theme
9. ASSICON - 2016: Proposal for Dates, Venue (Supporting letter of local Spine body)
10. Utilization of Surplus Funds of ASSI
11. Ratification of New members
12. Compensation for Medical Negligence
13. ASSI Travelling Fellowship
14. Any other matter with the permission of the chair

Dr. HS Chhabra  
Secretary, A.S.S.I.  
December, 2013



ASSI



**ASSICON 2014**  
KOLKATA

27th Annual Conference  
of Association of Spine Surgeons of India

&



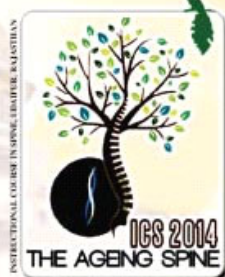
**SRS World Wide**  
Conference

**23rd to 26th**  
**January, 2014**

**HOSTED BY**  
Spine Society of  
West Bengal (SSWB)

**VENUE**  
Hotel Hyatt Regency  
JA-1, Sector-III  
Salt Lake City  
Kolkata-700 098  
India

[www.assicon2014.com](http://www.assicon2014.com)



Hosted by : SPINE SOCIETY DELHI CHAPTER  
Co-Host : UDAIPUR ORTHOPAEDIC SOCIETY

THEME : "THE AGEING SPINE"

Date : 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> August 2014  
Fateh Prakash Palace - UDAIPUR

Conference Secretariat :

256/2A, Railway Officers Enclave, Opp. Railway Hospital,  
Panchsukon Road, New Delhi-110001 • Mob. : +91-9871576849  
Website : [www.ics2014.in](http://www.ics2014.in) • E-mail : [ics2014udaipur@gmail.com](mailto:ics2014udaipur@gmail.com)

## WELCOME TO ICS 2014

Date : 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> August 2014  
Fateh Prakash Palace - UDAIPUR

### Invitation

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Spine Society Delhi Chapter, I would like to welcome you all to ICS 2014 at Udaipur. We will be offering you a good interactive academic programme. The venue offers a lot by itself, the ambience and surroundings speak for themselves.

We will be having a mix of workshops, didactic lectures, debates, question and answer sessions and case presentations. We will also be having three senior faculty from AO Spine who along with our own eminent colleagues will take the academic programme to greater heights. The Spine Society Delhi Chapter has the experience of conducting many National and International meetings like SRS, ASSCON and WENMISS. Many of our members are experienced and internationally acclaimed faculty themselves. Of course, every academic programme is judged by its participants, and I am sure we will not be disappointed and hope to see you in large numbers.

There is a lot for the family to do and see in Udaipur and its surrounding areas. I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all of you with your families.

So register at the earliest and help us make this meet a grand success!

With regards,

Dr. Shankar Acharya  
Organizing Secretary  
ICS 2014

Dr. Rushama Tandon  
Secy., Delhi Spine Society  
Organizing Secy., ICS 2014



Organizing Chairman  
Dr. Shankar Acharya



Organizing Secretary  
Dr. Rushama Tandon

## Spine conferences in 2014 Save The Dates

Month	Dates	Conference	Society	City	Website
January	23rd – 26th 2014	27th Annual Conference of Association of Spine Surgeons of India (ASSICON)	Association of Spine Surgeons of India (ASSI)	Kolkata, India	<a href="http://www.assicon2014.com">www.assicon2014.com</a>
March	20th – 22nd 2014	International Minimally Invasive Spine (MIS) Congress	World Endoscopic Spine Society	Shangri-La Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	<a href="http://www.mss.org.my">www.mss.org.my</a>
April	1st – 4th 2014	BritSpine 2014	The British Association of Spine Surgeons (BASS)	Warwick Arts Centre, The University of Warwick	<a href="http://www.britspine.com">www.britspine.com</a>
June	11th – 14th 2014	IV World Congress of Minimally Invasive Spine Surgery and Techniques (WCMISST)	World Federation of Minimally Invasive Spine Surgery	Paris	<a href="http://www.spineparis2014.com">www.spineparis2014.com</a>
July	16th – 19th 2014	The 21st International Meeting on Advanced Spine Techniques (IMAST)	Scoliosis Research Society (SRS)	Valencia, Spain	<a href="http://www.srs.org/imast/2014">www.srs.org/imast/2014</a>
August	15th – 17th 2014	Instructional course in Spine (ICS)	Association of Spine Surgeons of India (ASSI)	Udaipur, Rajasthan, India	<a href="http://www.ics2014.in">www.ics2014.in</a>
September	2nd – 4th 2014	53rd Annual Scientific Meeting of International Spinal Cord Society (ISCOs)	International Spinal Cord Society (ISCOs)	Maastricht, The Netherlands	<a href="http://www.iscos.org.uk">www.iscos.org.uk</a>
	10th – 13th 2014	49th Annual Meeting & Course	Scoliosis Research Society (SRS)	Anchorage, Alaska	<a href="http://www.srs.org/professionals/meetings/am14">www.srs.org/professionals/meetings/am14</a>
October	1st – 3rd 2014	Euro Spine	The Spine Society of Europe: EuroSpine	Lyon, France	<a href="http://www.eurospine2014.eu">www.eurospine2014.eu</a>
November	6th – 10th 2014	The JOINT CONGRESS of 3rd Asian Congress of Minimally Invasive Spine Surgery & Techniques Fall Symposium - Endoscopic Approaches & 7th ISMISS Turkey Congress 2014	International Society for Minimal Intervention in Spinal Surgery (ISMIS)	Antalya, Turkey	<a href="http://www.acmisst2014.org">www.acmisst2014.org</a>
	12th – 15th 2014	29th Annual Meeting North American Spine Society (NASS)	North American Spine Society (NASS)	San Francisco, CA	<a href="http://www.nassannualmeeting.org">www.nassannualmeeting.org</a>
	13th – 15th 2014	8th Asia Pacific Cervical Spine Society Conference (APCSS)	Asia-Pacific Cervical Spine Society	Barbaros Point hotel, Istanbul, Turkey	<a href="http://apcss2014.org">http://apcss2014.org</a>
December	4th – 6th 2014	Cervical Spine Research Society Annual Meet	Cervical Spine Research Society	Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress, Orlando, FL	<a href="http://www.crsr.org/web/meetings">www.crsr.org/web/meetings</a>
January	23rd – 25th 2015	28th Annual Conference of Association of Spine Surgeons of India (ASSICON)	Association of Spine Surgeons of India (ASSI)	JW Marriott Hotel, Pune	<a href="http://www.assicon2015.com">www.assicon2015.com</a>

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Concept, Design and Layout - Miss Ishika Ahluwalia