**Report to the isirv Board**

**May 2018**

The School of Respiratory Viruses in its 4th edition took place at the American University in Beirut between May 7 and 11. Seventy four students attended the course. Half of the attendees were from Lebanon, while the rest came from 20 countries from within the Eastern Mediterranean Region, Europe, Latin America, Africa and South-East Asia. Over the course of 5 days, 21 speakers including local, regional, and international scientists provided a comprehensive understanding of various topics and recent breakthroughs related to influenza and MERS-CoV including their epidemiology, genetics, virology, diagnosis, prevention and management. In addition, 9 students presented their projects during the School. The School provided an opportunity for junior scientists from diverse countries to network and interact with senior scientists. Vibrant and lively discussions took place throughout the School activities. The students also participated in a popular pandemic preparedness exercise and a lab rotations that covered basic techniques used in influenza virus research. The School’s programme was also accredited by the European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (EACCME).

**Feedback on the School**

The feedback from speakers and attendees was very positive and a summary of the feedback from attendees is attached as an annex. Overall 88% of the students found the talks either useful or extremely useful. The most popular talks were those on vaccines, including immune responses and vaccination strategy; new approaches to vaccines; pandemic planning, especially the role-playing exercise; and the two keynote talks by Ab Osterhaus. In their more detailed comments, the best aspects of the School were having good international speakers and a good programme and many commented that the pandemic planning exercise was fun and very informative.

**Accreditation**

The School’s programme received 31 European CME credits (ECMEC) by the EACCME. EACCME aims at encouraging the highest standards in the development, delivery and harmonization of CME and CPD and provides accreditation of international CME in Europe. The credits are also recognised outside Europe. The School offered the platform to acquaint isirv with the requirements, process and timeframe required to obtain this accreditation for an educational event but also highlighted important aspects of the design and delivery of isirv educational events, some of which are shared in the recommendations below.

**Finances**

Fundraising proposals were prepared and submitted to the GSK UK Independent Medical Education fund and the Wellcome Trust (WT). WT provided funding (US$7,500) for travel awards of four students and four further students were supported by the Lars Haaheim Travel Fellowship.

Moreover, the School was an opportunity to work closely with WHO country and regional offices (EMRO and SEAO) who showed great interest in sponsoring their own personnel as well as scientists from their region.

A sponsorship document targeted to the local pharmaceutical industry for the non-educational elements of the School was not successful due to existing planning schedules of the industry that require this sort of applications to be made well in advance of the event.

The consolidated financial report is under preparation and will be circulated separately when it is ready before the Board meeting

**Preliminary assessment and recommendations**

As this was the first time that the School had been taken ‘on the road’, it was rewarding to see the enthusiasm and gratitude of the students. This thoroughly justified the decision to visit the Eastern Mediterranean Region. There were a few travel-related problems, especially in relation to visas, which we need to take account of for future Schools. It was disappointing, but understandable that two of the planned speakers didn’t travel to Beirut and although we were grateful for them delivering their lectures by Skype, some of the students commented that it was difficult for them to concentrate when the speaker was not there in person.

In the future the design of the School needs to consider specifying learning objectives and outcomes for the target audience and in view of those then consider the length, format and number of lectures to be offered. CME/CPD accreditation systems require clear learning objectives and each session to allow sufficient time for discussion and Q&As as part of the learning process. The School’s programme was rich but several participants highlighted the very long days and the need for more time for discussions. In that respect a good balance between standard lectures and innovative elements such as the role playing and preparedness exercise which were found really useful- could consolidate a good one week educational package. We now have a clear idea of the processes, information and reporting requirements and tools isirv requires to offering accredited events as a mark of the high standard of education offered. For future Schools, we should continue the practice of allowing time for students to present their work. The Beirut School faculty members agreed that this was one of the highlights of the Beirut School. The students presented good science with a lot of confidence and they will have gained much from the experience.

The School enabled closer interaction with the WHO offices in the region and with top level scientists that can be expected to develop into stronger partnerships in the future.

The School’s planning process should allow ample time to identify funders, prepare proposals, seek sponsorship, accreditation and take care of key logistical aspects –including travel and visa arrangements especially for students from developing countries- to use isirv resources effectively.

**Annex. Summary of quantitative evaluation’s results**

1. **Quality of the event:**

How useful for your professional activity did you find this event?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Extremely useful** | **Useful** | **Fairly useful** | **Not useful** |
| 59% | 36% | 5% | 0% |

What was your overall impression of this event?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Excellent** | **Good** | **Fairly good** | **Poor** | **Very poor** | **No answer** |
| **Programme** | 62 % | 33% | 3% |  |  | 2% |
| **Organisation** | 72% | 28% |  |  |  |  |
| **Networking** | 54% | 33% | 10% | 2% |  | 2% |

1. **Relevance of the event**

Did the event fulfill your educational goals and expected learning outcomes?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Very much** | **Somewhat** | **Not much** | **Not at all** | **Undecided** |
| 71% | 26% | 3% | 0% | 0% |

Was the presented information well balanced and consistently supported by a valid scientific evidence base?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Very much** | **Somewhat** | **Not much** | **Not at all** | **Undecided** |
| 88% | 10% | 2% |  |  |

How useful to you personally was each session?

For this summary we only present the daily averages. We have scores for each individual talk and these will be part of the more detailed report for the Scientific Committee.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Day 1** | **Day 2** | **Day 3** | **Day 4** | **Day 5** | **Average** |
| **Extremely useful** | 49% | 50% | 51% | 60% | 60% | 54% |
| **Useful** | 38% | 38% | 40% | 28% | 24% | 34% |
| **Fairly useful** | 12% | 9% | 7% | 6% | 5% | 8% |
| **Not useful** | 1% | 0% | 0% | 1% | 0% | 1% |
| **Undecided** | 0% | 0% | 0% | 2% | 2% | 1% |
| **Does not answer** | 1% | 1% | 1% | 3% | 9% | 3% |

1. **Suitability of formats used during the event**

Was there adequate time available for discussions, questions & answers and learner engagement?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Yes,**  **always/almost**  **always** | **Yes, sometimes** | **Only rarely** | **Never** | **Undecided** | **No answer** |
| 82% | 16% |  |  |  | 2% |

1. **Ways the School affects clinical practice/research work**

Will the information you learnt be implemented in your practice/research?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Very much** | **Somewhat** | **Not much** | **Not at all** | **Undecided** | **No answer** |
| 52% | 34% | 7% |  | 2% | 5% |

1. **Commercial bias**

Did all the faculty members provide their potential conflict of interest declaration as a second slide of their presentation?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Yes, all** | **Yes, for the**  **Majority** | **Yes, but only**  **a small part** | **No** | **Undecided/**  **don’t know** |
| 73% | 18 % | 2% | 5% | 2% |

Do you agree that the information was overall free of commercial and other bias?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Strongly agree** | **Rather agree** | **Rather disagree** | **Strongly**  **disagree** | **Undecided/**  **don’t know** |
| 85% | 15% |  |  |  |

1. **Origin of participants**

Lebanon 58%

Europe 18%

Middle East and North African participants 12%

Asia 7%

Latin America 3%

Africa 1%

USA 1%