



Lumsden, M. A. (2017) My aspirations for the IMS. *Climacteric*, 20(1), pp. 1-2.

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Deposited on: 27 April 2017

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My aspirations for the IMS

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I am a Professor of Medical Education and Gynaecology at the University of Glasgow and Honorary Consultant Gynaecologist at Glasgow's Royal Infirmary, posts that I have held for 23 years. I am very honored to have been elected as the 13th President of the International Menopause Society (IMS). I am the first female President but I follow on from a line of very distinguished male Presidents. My predecessor, Rod Baber, has achieved all his aspirations during his time as President and I hope that I will be equally effective. It has been a very happy 2.5 years under his leadership which started with the very successful congress in Cancun and ended with the arguably even more successful meeting in Prague.

For what am I aiming over the next 2 years? I feel that one of the most important things is to join with others working in the same area rather than competing with them. Together with other national societies around the world, I feel that we can achieve more than if we are all acting separately. In 2017, I will be visiting Colombia, Singapore, India and China on behalf of the IMS, to share the knowledge and expertise that I have acquired here in the UK and previous excursions overseas. I am lucky to work for the University of Glasgow, since Glasgow is a very vibrant city in Scotland, where I see women and their partners from all backgrounds but who need help to deal with the issues that threaten to diminish the quality of their lives.

I have worked with and learnt from many throughout the world. However, not all health professionals have the opportunity of having specialized advice but still need to be able to help the women in midlife who are seen by them in their clinics. My aim is to help more health-care professionals and doctors in more specialties and in more countries to take seriously the problems with which our patients present and to help them to find a solution. To this end, I will be encouraging the educational arm of the IMS to develop even further since education is one of the main aims of the IMS. This may be at the biennial World Congress and the Regional Meetings or in the very valuable information we produce, from leaflets to YouTube videos. Our educational initiatives are headed up by Dr Duru Shah from Mumbai and Professor Amos Pines from Tel Aviv. Duru has set up several new initiatives, including webinars, and several of these have taken place over the last year. She has also been responsible for obtaining a grant to develop an accreditation system for menopause experts around the world and you will hear more about this very exciting initiative as the year progresses.

The care of women in midlife is the reason why this society is in existence. This does not just include issues related to declining hormone levels but also the impact of aging and chronic disease on women who may spend one-third of their lives in the postmenopause. All women become

menopausal unless they die during the reproductive years. Many women will be leading full and active lives and so need to be able to fulfil all their aspirations. It is for this reason that we concern ourselves with all aspects of healthy aging and prevention of disease. This is also the aim of other national colleges of Obstetrics and Gynecology and the specialist societies in women's health. I have the privilege of also being the Senior Vice President of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists in London, another organization that has the care of women in midlife within its larger remit. Older women are often forgotten in the struggle to lower pregnancy-related mortality and morbidity. We must keep reminding policymakers, funders and the public in general of the importance of older women and the potential opportunity to involve them in health education and screening. I feel that the opportunity should not be missed of using all that these organizations have to offer to work to a common end.

The managerial aspects of the IMS are watched over very carefully by Lee Tomkins, our CEO, and her assistant Martin Derbyshire. Both are very dedicated to the IMS and its security and both are always readily available to help with problems and queries as well as to share the successes. Lee has also helped Victor Henderson, our previous General Secretary, from the US, who took on the very important task of reviewing many aspects of the Society's governance, to make sure we work in the way that befits our charity status. He has now been succeeded by Tommaso Simoncini from Pisa who, I am sure, will contribute to this post and the Society as a whole.

Rod Baber's aim was to work towards financial stability and I think this has been achieved. We have moved our account from one bank to another more suited to our requirements and are currently able to achieve a better return at lower cost. This, of course, may change over the next few months but, in the longer term, we anticipate that our reserves will be safe. Our finances will be helped by the fact that the Prague Congress was a tremendous success. It was a high-quality meeting with a good attendance, excellent presentations and good networking. The Scientific Program Committee was chaired by Professor Susan Davis, a senior academic from Melbourne in Australia, whose support as President-Elect I look forward to enjoying in the next 18 months.

We have already started to plan for the Vancouver Congress in 2018 with invitations going out already to a number of plenary speakers. Dr Nick Panay, Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, London, will be at the helm of the Scientific Committee planning the program, which will be different and exciting. This meeting will focus more on younger menopausal women including those with premature ovarian insufficiency and in the perimenopause. We will talk about the common issues affecting women at this stage of life, with plenty of practical advice to guide clinicians' practice in the future. All of us on the Board of Trustees hope that we will see you in Vancouver. It is a truly beautiful city and the program promises to be excellent. We will emphasize the contributions of young researchers working in the field, with development of projects to make sure all are aware of the excellent research many of them undertake. They are the IMS of the future and we need to value them.

Visiting those involved in the care of women in midlife is an important aspect of our work. Over the next year, accompanied by other Board members, I will be visiting Columbia, Singapore, India and

China on behalf of the IMS. We will be holding our next Regional meeting in Belgrade, Serbia in 2017 and this promises to be an exciting meeting. The Regional meeting in Taiwan in 2015 was very successful and introduced many of the Board members attending to a new and attentive audience. As an international society, it is most important that we do reach out to those less familiar with menopausal medicine throughout the world.

We are keen that the Society continues to grow and to attract new and committed members. The IMS now has a new category of Associate member, aimed at the young and those living in developing countries with less accessible wealth. We hope that this will encourage individuals and groups to be involved in the Society and that they will then go on to become full members. The Membership Working Party was led by Steve Goldstein from New York; he is now our Treasurer and will continue to work towards developing initiatives to ensure a steady increase in those interested in the IMS.

The Executive Officers and the Board of Trustees are drawn from around the world and include representatives of all the major national societies in menopause medicine as well as other national organizations. This is a wonderful opportunity to work with others to achieve our aim of improving midlife women's health around the world.