



## International Clearinghouse for Birth Defects Surveillance and Research Monthly Newsletter

May 2020

Issue 2020-05

### UPDATE ON 2020 ICBDSR ANNUAL MEETING

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the 47<sup>th</sup> ICBDSR Annual Meeting was postponed to **May 2021**. The final dates will be released as soon as possible. The meeting venue will be the Relais Bellaria Hotel & Congressi in Bologna (Italy), as already planned. Updates on the annual meeting will be posted to the [ICBDSR website](#).

### NEWS AND UPDATE ON COVID-19

COVID-19 is an emerging, rapidly evolving situation.

Get the latest public health information from CDC: <https://www.coronavirus.gov>

Get the latest research from NIH: <https://www.nih.gov/coronavirus>.

### WHO Health Workforce Department

The Human Resources for Health Policies & Standards of the WHO Health Workforce Department is offering first access to the **WHO Academy's new COVID-19 mobile learning app** that is targeted specifically to health workers. WHO has not made a formal announcement, but wanted interested individuals to be able to download the app now and share with colleagues and health workers globally. It is available in the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.who.WHOA>

With content in six languages, the app delivers mobile access to a wealth of COVID-19 knowledge resources developed by WHO, including up-to-the-minute guidance, tools, training, and virtual workshops to support health workers in caring for patients infected by COVID-19 and protect themselves as they do their critical work. The app was created in direct response to an online survey of health workers conducted by the WHO Academy in March and April 2020, to which more than 20,000 responses were received. It provides detailed information and tools addressing key areas of concerns for health workers responding to the outbreak:

- Infection prevention control
- Case management
- Use of personal protective equipment
- Staff safety and health
- Risk communication & community engagement

### Palliative Treatment for Children (Patch) South Africa – PatchSA

Parents of babies, children or young people with complex medical conditions and palliative care needs may be especially concerned about COVID-19. To learn more about COVID-19 and children's palliative care, visit <http://patchsa.org/covid-19qa/>



**World Birth Defects Day – WBDD, March 3**

Thanks to all the participants in the WBDD on March 3, 2020 and to the WBDD Partners who organized an event/activity to observe the Day. Please, share with us your activity by email at [centre@icbdsr.org](mailto:centre@icbdsr.org)

### **Join the WBDD as a Partner Organization**

by completing the online application form on the WBDD website  
<https://www.worldbirthdefectsday.org/application-form/>.

Follow @worldbdday on Twitter <https://twitter.com/WorldBDDay> and  
Instagram worldbdday <https://www.instagram.com/worldbdday/>

Join WBDD page on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/WBDDay/>  
Visit WBDD website <https://www.worldbirthdefectsday.org/>

### **What's Going on Regarding Birth Defects: initiatives and announcements**

*All readers are kindly invited to contribute to this section of the Newsletter, sending their suggestions to [centre@icbdsr.org](mailto:centre@icbdsr.org) by the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month.*

In honor of **Cleft Lip and Palate Awareness Week**, please visit the popular parenting blog, **Mummy Matters**. <https://deepinmummymatters.com/cleft-lip-and-palate-causes-symptoms-treatments/> The blog, titled '**Cleft Lip and Palate: Causes, Symptoms, Treatments**' features expert commentary and highlights key facts about cleft lip and/or palate, and how Smile Train helps babies born with clefts by providing training, funding, and education for medical professionals.

### **Online Self-Paced Course on Birth Defect Surveillance and Prevention**

The online course remains available for interested professionals. The course has been developed by the International Centre on Birth Defects (ICBD Centre) and supported, in part, by funding from the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, through Agreement 2016-2017 with the Task Force for Global Health. The course is designed for clinicians, epidemiologists, public health professionals, and anyone interested in understanding birth defects and improving their prevention and care. The course includes videos, quizzes, a discussion forum, and publications/resources. It is available in English and Spanish. To date, **318 trainees** from **57 countries** have participated in the course. Additional information is available at <http://www.icbdsr.org/online-self-paced-course-on-birth-defect-surveillance-and-prevention/>.

The registration form is available at [www.icbdsr.org/course-registration](http://www.icbdsr.org/course-registration). Once registered, you will receive an email with guidance on how to register by yourself in the course platform [www.icbdsrtraining.org](http://www.icbdsrtraining.org) and how to self-enroll in the self-paced course in either English or Spanish.

### **What's Going on Regarding Birth Defects: A Selection from the Recent Literature**

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## Meetings and Conferences

### 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for Birth Defects Research and Prevention

The Society for Birth Defects Research and Prevention 60th Annual Meeting is going virtual. Please see the invitation below from BDRP President:

*I am pleased to invite you to attend the 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for Birth Defects Research and Prevention, taking place VIRTUALLY this June and July! The theme for this year's meeting is "Honoring Teratology's Roots, Growing a Healthier Future." This will be an exciting meeting as we celebrate both our history under the Teratology Society name and the important scientific advances symbolized by our new name and logo.*

*The Program Committee, chaired by Elise Madison Lewis, has put together an outstanding program around this theme, including a special session on **COVID-19's effects** on pregnant women and their babies. Our keynote speaker will be **NICHD Director Dr. Diana Bianchi**, and recently **retired NIEHS Director Dr. Linda Birnbaum** will deliver the Warkany Lecture.*

*The program offers an exciting variety of scientific sessions on topics including:*

- *Coronavirus (COVID-19) and pregnancy (free pre-meeting session on Thursday, June 11th)*
- *Investigation of a potential outbreak of birth defects*
- *Gene therapy, CRISPR/Cas9 technology, breakthroughs, and ethical challenges*
- *Opioid use in pregnancy*
- *Embryogenesis at high-resolution*
- *Perinatal and postnatal exposures to environmental chemicals*
- *Obesity and metabolic disorders*
- *Assessing pregnancy risk of immunomodulators*

*Additionally, the meeting will include 34 platform presentations, including the **Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Fellow Platform** and the **Innovator Award Finalists Platform**, and attended poster sessions. Once again, the best trainee platform and poster presentations will be recognized with special awards.*

*Our virtual meeting will also include two special social events for attendees to catch up and network with friends and colleagues. The first will be a special Presidents' Welcome Reception Zoom Social hosted by myself and our Past Presidents who are participating in the virtual meeting. The second will be a special Warkany Tea Zoom Social in honor of our 60th Anniversary.*

*The Education Committee, chaired by Caren Villano, has developed three exciting **Education Courses** pertaining to immune system development, juvenile toxicology, and ovarian assessment. The Education Courses will take place on Thursdays throughout the month of July.*

*Please visit the Annual Meeting website for complete program and registration details:*

<https://www.birthdefectsresearch.org/meetings/2020/>

*If you registered for the face-to-face Annual Meeting and/or Education Courses before the Annual Meeting went virtual, you have automatically been registered for the same events in virtual format and may be due a partial credit. You will receive an email from BDRP HQ by May 15 with details.*

*Thank you to our Annual Meeting Sponsors for their continued support of our meeting in its new virtual format. Their financial support has allowed us to use the best available technology for an enhanced, interactive meeting while keeping registration fees manageable for all participants. Additionally, I would like to thank our Sustaining Members for their continued support of the year-round operations of the Society.*

*Our Annual Meeting provides us with the opportunity to promote our shared vision and scientific identity as researchers focused on the causes, manifestations, intervention, and prevention of birth defects, both structural and functional. It is also a celebration of our scientific diversity as a Society of clinicians, scientists, and science policy regulators from academic, industrial, and government sectors, and an opportunity to bring a truly multidisciplinary perspective to important and emerging scientific issues. We hope you will join us online for what promises to be an informative and engaging virtual meeting, and please consider inviting those who would have been unable to travel to Charleston due to budget restrictions!*

*Sincerely,  
Christine Perdan Curran, PhD,  
BDRP President*

**EUROCAT Registry Leader Meeting and 15<sup>th</sup> European Symposium on Congenital Anomalies.**

Considering the development of the epidemic in Europe, after thoughtful deliberations, a decision was made to postpone the EUROCAT Scientific Symposium scheduled to take place on July 2, 2020 in Valencia, Spain. Information about a new date will be available as soon as possible. For any questions, please contact: [JRC-EUROCAT@ec.europa.eu](mailto:JRC-EUROCAT@ec.europa.eu)

**World Congress of Epidemiology WCE 2020** on “Methodological Innovations in Epidemiology”, September 13-16, 2020, Melbourne, Australia. <https://wce2020.org/> has been postponed until 2021

**8<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Gynaecology and Obstetrics (ICGO-2020)**, November 11-13, 2020, Dubai, UAE <https://www.bitcongress.com/icgo2020/>