

Epilepsy Knowledge Hub

Access the latest ILAE Guidelines webinars on demand



The Epilepsy Knowledge Hub is intended to provide health care professionals with the latest research and tools to aid in the diagnosis, classification, and subsequent treatment for patients with epilepsy syndromes at various ages.

This resource has been created in coordination with Epilepsia, a peer-reviewed journal published by Wiley on behalf of the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE). Previous webinars are available on-demand on this site for CME credits.

[Visit now](#)

Access the hub for free access to:



Videos



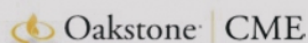
Infographics



Articles

[Access now](#)

This educational resource has been supported by Zogenix International Limited, now a part of UCB. Zogenix International Limited has had no influence over the content or selection of the Editorial Panel.



Jointly Provided by Oakstone Publishing and John Wiley and Sons Limited

This activity was planned and implemented in accordance with the accreditation requirements and policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) through the joint providership of Oakstone Publishing and John Wiley and Sons Limited, Oakstone Publishing is accredited by the ACCME to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

Oakstone Publishing designates this recording activity for a maximum of 1.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

Editorial

A Message from the President of the International League Against Epilepsy

I am very grateful to the officers and members of the Chapters of the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE) for the great honor bestowed on me through the global election process. Such an honor carries with it considerable responsibilities and challenges. Before discussing the future, however, I would like to pay tribute to the outgoing members of the ILAE Executive Committee.

Particular gratitude is due to the immediate Past-President, Professor Harry Meinardi. The initials H.M. stand in his country and mine for His/Her Majesty. If anyone ever deserved the title of King of Epileptology, it is Harry Meinardi. His is a unique record of service over many years to both the League and the Bureau. I very much doubt whether anyone will ever emulate his achievement of serving as Secretary-General and Executive Director of the Bureau (Epilepsy International) and then as Secretary-General and President of the League! I am very pleased that I will have his support as Past-President in the new Executive Committee where he will provide continuity and a stabilizing influence in an otherwise relatively new team.

None of this diminishes the very valuable contributions of Dr. Fritz Dreifuss, outgoing Past-President; Roger Porter, Secretary-General; Masakazu Seino, Treasurer; and Paulo de Bittencourt, first Vice-President. Having served with them all for the last 4 years, I can testify to their enormous commitment to the League, which deserves your appreciation and thanks.

At this time of renewal of the 4-year cycle of the League, it is appropriate to remind ourselves of the objectives of the League since it was established in 1909, to review how we have performed in relation to these objectives, and to look to the future. In summary, our Constitution demands that we advance and disseminate knowledge about epilepsy; promote research, education, and training; and improve services and care for patients, especially by prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.

As I contemplate the present scene, I can see one

bright spot. Knowledge is advancing. This is an exciting time in the development of new drug treatments, new surgical treatments, and in our awareness and understanding of the behavioral associations and social consequences of epilepsy, although there is still a very long way to go.

In relation to our other objectives, however, the picture is much less satisfactory. Education and training at all levels and for all professional groups is very poor. I know, as recent Chairman of the League's Commission on Education, that what the Commission achieved seemed but a drop in the ocean. This, among other experiences, has prompted me and my colleagues in London to establish the world's first university-based academic Institute for Epileptology linked to King's College, University of London. Services for patients with epilepsy are also poor and unevenly distributed, even in relatively more affluent Western countries and despite the admirable efforts of some individuals and special centers. Very few departments of health give much or any consideration to the problems of epileptic patients. In my own country, a recent much-trumpeted strategy document for the "Health of the Nation" did not even mention epilepsy.

What can the League do to improve services, education, training, and research? One thing is certain—it can do much more collectively than individually, either nationally or internationally. At the international level, the Executive Committee could do more to encourage strong highly organized chapters and to support them in their efforts to address the problems of epileptic patients and their families, based on their own local political and economic circumstances and knowledge. However, to accomplish this, we must overcome another problem, that of inadequate communication within the League itself. Communication is a two-way process between the Executive Committee and the Chapters, but the Executive Committee must take the lead in improving lines of communication. The Executive Committee should know who the Officers and members of the individual Chapters are. Many Chapters do not know or take serious steps to determine who their members are or to recruit new members.

With these problems and objectives in mind, the

* Based on Dr. Reynolds' address to the General Assembly, Oslo, July 1993.

new Executive Committee is undertaking two new major initiatives. For the first time, it is establishing an administrative office in conjunction with the office of the Secretary-General. The office will therefore be based in Bielefeld, Germany, and will serve as communication center for the League, a process facilitated by the linguistic skills of the administrative secretary, Irene Kujah, who speaks four languages—English, German, French, and Spanish. Second, we plan a newsletter, with Dr. Simon Shorvon as editor, to be distributed free to all League members worldwide, as is the newsletter of the World Federation of Neurology. If we succeed in obtaining the necessary sponsorship, we hope to distribute two newsletters each year. This will increase awareness and facilitate participation in the activities of the League, nationally and internationally, by all our members. If you wish to receive the newsletter, please make sure you are on your national mailing list, as well as that of Professor Peter Wolf, Secretary-General, and Dr. Simon Shorvon, Editor.

These new initiatives will also assist the Executive Committee in identifying the League's members, including those with special interests and expertise who are willing to further the objectives of the League, either nationally or internationally. Neither the President nor the Executive Committee can be aware of all the available talent. The former Executive Committee made considerable progress through the special Commissions established by my predecessor, Harry Meinardi, and I will consult widely in building on these achievements when renewing or initiating Commissions.

A third, more difficult, initiative that I have in mind is the establishment of a Library and Archives for the League. Many documents dating back to 1909 are either scattered or lost, but Harry Meinardi has preserved more recent documents in The Netherlands. The Executive Committee therefore agrees that it would be appropriate to set up a Library and Archives under his care in that country. The practical aspects are now being explored. So much information in circulation about the activities of the

League and about epilepsy in general never reaches all who need it and could use it. The establishment of a central repository for all such documents and information, available to all members, will further assist the achievement of ILAE objectives.

The recent ILAE elections have resulted in a strong new Executive Committee, comprising colleagues with a proven track record of dedication to understanding epilepsy and caring for persons with epilepsy. This augurs well for the future of the League. In addressing the challenges I have identified, I am very pleased to have the support and collaboration of Drs. Peter Wolf, Secretary General; Jerome Engel, Jr., Treasurer; Guiliano Avanzini, first Vice-President; and Simon Shorvon, second Vice-President. Furthermore, I would like to welcome the new editor of the ILAE journal *Epilepsia*, Dr. Timothy A. Pedley, whose wide-ranging experience in the field of epileptology and in publishing qualify him admirably for the post. I also wish to add my thanks to the foregoing Editor's message and that of both the outgoing and new Executives to Dr. James J. Cereghino for his considerable achievements in reinforcing *Epilepsia* as the premier journal in the field of Epilepsy in the last 8 years.

Finally, the new Executive Committee is sensitive to the fact that it is responsible to an expanding global network of 46 Chapters, including seven new Chapters admitted at the General Assembly in Oslo, i.e., Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, India, Russia, Slovenia, Taiwan, and Turkey. It is my wish to see the widest possible involvement of the membership of all Chapters in the activities of the League, nationally and internationally, as well as to stimulate the development of Chapters in countries that do not yet have one. Only in this way will the objectives of the League be realized.

Address correspondence to Dr. E. H. Reynolds at Institute of Epileptology, King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS, U.K.

Dr. E. H. Reynolds