



NEWS

March 6, 2020



CORONAVIRUS AND THE ASA MEETING

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As of today, the American Society of Andrology (ASA) 2020 Annual Meeting will take place as planned 25 – 28 April in Philadelphia, PA.

ASA leadership and management are monitoring the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak and its potential impact on international and national travel to Philadelphia. At present, the Loews Philadelphia Hotel is operating as usual. The Philadelphia International Airport and regional public transportation systems are running normally. In addition, there are no known cases in the Greater Philadelphia Metropolitan Area (Pennsylvania and Delaware have no reported cases and there has only been one unconfirmed case in northern New Jersey). If there are any changes to the hotel operating status, transportation, or public health situation in the region, we will notify all registered meeting attendees and post the information on our meeting website. If the evolving situation affects your attendance plans, please contact us by phone (847-752-5355) or e-mail (info@andrologysociety.org).

Current information regarding the virus, can be obtained from the following regional, national, and international websites:

[City of Philadelphia Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) page](#)

[Pennsylvania Department of Health coronavirus resources](#)

[U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website](#)

[World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#)

If you are coming from outside of the United States, please check the [US Department of State website](#) for travel restrictions.

ASA:

- Will rely on guidance from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as well as the policies of the Philadelphia and Pennsylvania public health departments;
- Will provide a list of local emergency care facilities that can care for attendees that may require treatment;
- Will alert onsite staff and meeting attendees in case of an incident.
- The ASA is also developing additional protocols to minimize risk to registrants, exhibitors and onsite personnel.

We will endeavor to provide a safe and healthy environment for all attendees and look forward to seeing you here in Philadelphia in April!



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The Need to Feel Safe and Included in Our Society

Carolina Jorgez, Ph.D.

Scientific meetings can be unique experiences designed to exchange ideas, foster new collaborations, and provide opportunities to reconnect with existing colleagues. However, not all scientists have these positive experiences when attending these scientific meetings. Some members are left out (intentionally or otherwise); others feel isolated in meetings when they do not see others who look like them or share a common background; some are bully after giving a presentation especially trainees, and some are targets of harassment and assault at meetings especially in poster sections or social events.

In a society full of bias, change is necessary to make everybody feel welcomed. A trend seen in most scientific meetings is to create environments in which all participants feel safe and included in order to learn, share, and innovate. Striving to achieve this goal scientific societies are implementing safety officers to create meeting environments which are inclusive, safe, and welcoming. Safety officers play an important role in annual meetings. They receive any complaints and ensure that necessary actions are taken. They are available at any formal or informal social event to guarantee that everyone feels safe. They work to promote diversity and inclusion throughout the meeting. They provide guidelines for moderators and presenters to provide inclusion and to deal with aggressive commentary from the audience. They also provide guidelines to the program committee to make sure that sections are inclusive and contain the presence of diversity speakers. At the end of the meeting, they prepare a final report of complaints that it will be included in the annual report.

This type of initiative has had a great response in different societies since its members have felt that it creates a transparent mechanism to report any incidences. We as a society need to evolve to ensure that the ASA is inclusive, diverse, and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect. It's not only the moral thing to do, it also is good for business to improve the quality of our annual meeting, and to strengthen our reputation not only to retain our members but also to attract new members. We need to be actively working to create an inclusive and respectful society and that will be our mission for our next annual meeting.

Carolina Jorgez, PhD
Assistant professor at Baylor College of Medicine
ASA Co-Chair of Diversity Committee
ASA Executive Council Member



Have **NEWS** or **FEEDBACK** that you would like to share with the ASA?
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