

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The ILAE is a unique organization for many reasons. With a rich tapestry of National Chapters from over 110 countries, it is firmly patient-centred, as shown by its coalition with the International Bureau for Epilepsy. It also maintains strong partnerships with the World Health Organization – a rare privilege among professional organizations. The ILAE is also seen as the world authority in epilepsy-related concepts. But most importantly, the ILAE has the enviable legacy of 107 years of commitment and hard work from the most talented professionals in epilepsy in the world. This is what makes the ILAE what it is today.

And this is why I consider it such an honour to postulate my candidacy for President of the ILAE, and aspire to work shoulder to shoulder with you on five priority areas. These five broad goals have been informed by my clinical work in the trenches of epilepsy care, by my experience in the ILAE executive as Secretary General and as Treasurer, and through consultation with leaders and colleagues from around the world.

Improving Access to Care: This remains a core value of our organization. The ILAE has made great gains in supporting sustainable access to care through a number of global and regional initiatives. We will continue to champion every opportunity to eliminate the many barriers to optimum and sustainable epilepsy care.

Knowledge Creation: As top academics and professionals engage in ILAE enterprises, we are well positioned to foster knowledge creation and innovation, ranging from population health to precision medicine. Building on the excellent work of our members, it will be essential to support the development of methodologically sound preclinical work and translational activities that link to clinically relevant questions, leading to faster discovery of anti-seizure and antiepileptogenic therapies. Big Data, data science and analytics are integral to knowledge creation in all areas, and they will need to be embraced and developed further in epilepsy.

Knowledge Translation and Education: One of the greatest barriers to epilepsy care is the lack of education and access to authoritative knowledge. Getting the best information to those who need it most, using the most appropriate media, will be a primary objective of my presidency. Building on existing efforts, such as Epilepsia-Open and Wikipedia, we will foster a culture of open access and open innovation. We will consolidate our educational activities into structured Curricula, using widely applicable, educationally valid, measureable, and cost-effective educational methods. Education in Primary Care is of crucial importance and it will be supported at regional and local levels. Based on our initial work on ILAE Guidelines we will support the creation of high-priority clinical practice parameters, care maps, and evidence based reviews, paying attention to the potential for adapting them to different socioeconomic and cultural environments.

Financial sustainability and growth: As treasurer of the ILAE I have helped steer the organization through challenging financial landscapes. The development of an endowed fund coupled with sound financial advice has served us well. I believe that investing in our mission and maintaining a sustainable economic model are equally important, and these two principles will guide our activities. We will continue to exercise careful allocation of resources, transparency and fiscal responsibility, while seeking new opportunities for revenue.

Expanding boundaries: This is an extremely important aspect of the work of the ILAE. In an age of open access and shared information, we need to increase our openness to partnerships and collaborations with a wide range of organizations for the purpose of education, research and access to care. We will also seek to meaningfully engage the new generations of epilepsy professionals and tap into their energy and creativity.

Respectfully yours



Samuel Wiebe