

Dear friends and colleagues

It has been an enormous privilege to serve as Treasurer, and prior to this Secretary General, of the ILAE. I have become aware of both the exciting opportunities and the significant challenges facing the global epilepsy community. The mission of the ILAE, to ensure that all individuals world-wide have the educational and research resources that are essential to understand, diagnose and treat persons with epilepsy, is integral to the vision we set in moving forward.

Over the past 8 years, we as an Executive Committee have achieved our targets with regard to financial sustainability, and have expanded our publication portfolio. We have also reviewed our overall organizational structure, establishing core councils and appointing an Executive Director to ensure that momentum of progress is maintained.

Specifically, I have co-led the establishment of the Young Epilepsy Section (YES), fostering growth in participation of junior colleagues invested in ensuring excellent epilepsy care and research. I have also developed the Mentor-Mentee programme at congresses, engaging emerging researchers with established leaders, and have contributed to our educational platform, with paediatric epilepsy training courses now in most continents of the world.

I have identified some key priorities for the next term.

1. **Epilepsy at a local level:** We should determine the needs of our chapters, specifically our membership at a local level, and provide strong advocacy for improved awareness and services. We are a global organisation, currently boasting 123 country chapters. We need to listen to the needs of existing and potential chapters and construct realistic solutions to the issues identified.
2. **Continued inclusivity and diversity:** The Young Epilepsy Section (YES) is our future – its continued growth remains imperative, but we also need to meet the needs of other professionals; in many regions of world people with epilepsy are served by non-medically trained personnel. We need to reach widely, acknowledging the diversity of language and need for translation where possible.
3. **Expanding education:** Over recent years we have expanded our educational portfolio with detailed curriculum, and planned certification. We should continue to expand, review progress and diversify where required to ensure a wide reach but also to secure our financial future. This will include development of our publication portfolio to adapt to the changing landscape.
4. **Review of our Congresses:** These have traditionally been our main networking events, and one of our main sources of income. In the light of current financial and carbon challenges we need to develop innovative models of networking to ensure sustainability, meeting international as well as regional needs.
5. **Our partner organisations:** The ILAE is the major international body advocating for professionals managing persons with epilepsy. Equally important however are the patients and families themselves. We need to maintain our partnership with the International Bureau for Epilepsy, as well as work jointly with other international organisations such as WHO, WFN and ICNA to identify key priorities and optimize our global reach and impact.

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