

EKS AND ICJR PARTNERSHIP

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SUMMARY

Background: The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted traditional orthopedic educational forums, necessitating a shift in the dissemination of surgical knowledge. To address the requirement for continuous global education in reconstructive surgery, the International Congress for Joint Reconstruction (ICJR) and the European Knee Society (EKS) established the World Arthroplasty Conference (WAC). This initiative followed a series of international meetings organized by the ICJR since 2008, aimed at consolidating expertise in hip and knee replacement through a collaborative international framework.

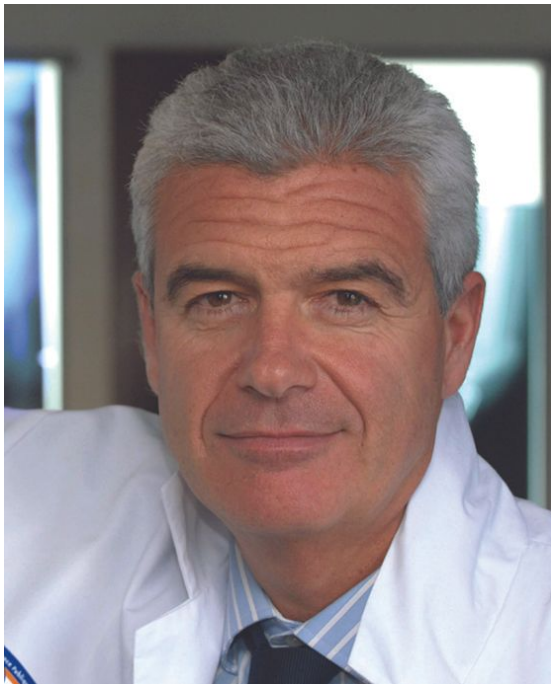
Objective: This report describes the evolution of the WAC, focusing on its mission to provide a triennial scientific platform for hip and knee arthroplasty and its adaptation to a virtual format during the 2021 global health crisis.

Key Points: The WAC framework incorporates a scientific program featuring podium and poster presentations, with a faculty of approximately 80 international experts. The inaugural 2015 meeting in Paris and the 2018 meeting in Rome each attracted over 1,000 participants from more than 68 countries. The 2021 conference transitioned to a virtual environment, receiving over 600 abstract submissions. The curriculum emphasizes global advances in arthroplasty, clinical guidelines for specialized and general orthopedic surgeons, and case-based debates. Industry partnerships remain integrated through virtual workshops and innovation showcases. The triennial schedule is designed to maintain educational momentum while allowing for the presentation of significant longitudinal data and technical developments in joint reconstruction.

Conclusion: The transition to a virtual platform has allowed the WAC to maintain its educational objectives despite pandemic-related travel restrictions. This model ensures the continued dissemination of clinical guidelines and surgical innovations in hip and knee arthroplasty until the resumption of in-person meetings.

KEYWORDS

Arthroplasty, Replacement, Knee; Arthroplasty, Replacement, Hip; Congresses as Topic; Education, Medical, Continuing; COVID-19



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The COVID-19 Worldwide Pandemic has destroyed so many successful educational opportunities but not the World Arthroplasty Conference (WAC)! The leaders were confronted with a devastating problem but similar to many successful enterprises, rose to the occasion. The virtual world has begun and, in fact, will probably supplement all future educational opportunities. WAC has made sure that the educational future of all arthroplasty will not be defeated by a pathogen!

The International Congress for Joint Reconstruction (ICJR) conceptually began in 2007 and had its first course in Orlando, Florida in 2008. Prior to the first WAC in Paris, 2015, ICJR had engaged in 14 international meetings (Hawaii, Australia, India, COA, CAOS, COA, Japan, Southeast Asia and Saudi Arabia among others). To date, ICJR is close to 30 international meetings even with the COVID-19 shutdowns. It became obvious (since 2010) to the leadership of ICJR that worldwide arthroplasty education desired a worldwide meeting and thus the partnerships of European Knee Society (EKS) and ICJR in the development of WAC.

In Vienna, on Thursday, November 24, 2011 the Founding Members of the future European Knee Society had a dinner meeting, hosted by Siegi Hofmann, with the President of ICJR and developed the principles for the creation of the world arthroplasty conference. These leaders appreciated the need and opportunity because of their own successes throughout Europe, USA and other aforementioned countries. The task was daunting but the goal was worth the effort. Welcome Paris in 2015, Rome, 2018 and now Munich, 2021. Not even COVID-19 could stop us.

The concept of the course was to include a scientific program with podium and poster sessions featuring global advances in hip and knee arthroplasty. The faculty approximates 80 worldwide orthopedic experts in hip and knee arthroplasty as well as the best rated abstracts from more than 500 submissions. This unique combination has led to a dynamic three-day agenda expanding global understanding of key issues in arthroplasty. A three-year rotation between each WAC meeting was considered the best interval in order to bring innovative ideas while keeping the momentum of the concept. The attendees, specialized knee and hip arthroplasty surgeons, general orthopedic surgeons, and young trainees could expect clear guidelines for their current knee and hip practice. Additionally, new developments will be presented and debated with world-leading arthroplasty surgeons in specific case discussions. Workshops will be also organized in cooperation with the industry.

The first inaugural World Arthroplasty Congress held in Paris in April 2015 was a great success with approximately 1,200 attendees representing over 68 countries throughout Africa, Asia, Europe, Middle East, North America, Oceania, Russia and South America. The second World Arthroplasty Congress took place in Rome in April 2018 featuring a 3-day agenda with international faculty and including podium and e-Poster presentations from the best abstract submissions, with more than 1000 attendees from all over the globe and welcoming more new countries. The 3rd WAC has been taking place virtually in April 2021, respecting the three-year interval agenda but taking into consideration the necessary sanitary conditions. More than 600 abstract submissions have been received leading to the largest number of podium and poster presentations, combined with the faculty presentations, and live panel discussions. The industry partnership is present as in the previous meetings but adapted virtually. The process will allow each participant to connect directly with the innovations of each sponsor.

We trust all faculty and attendees will enjoy and benefit from the 2021 virtual WAC!

We look forward to seeing everyone in person in 2024!