Moving forward to the PANLAR 2022 vision

The 2016-2022 Development Plan establishes that we must become the main supplier of education and science, practice standards and rheumatology referents in Latin America. We have taken important steps in this sense during the past two years. We created the PANLAR education program, PANLAREdu, the major element of which have been its monthly online sessions. Twelve sessions have been conducted, three for every geographical region, with the scientific associations of 12 countries participating in selecting the speakers. This effort has been recognized with conferences free of charge on the third Wednesday of each month, resulting in an important audience in our community. During this year, 5374 persons (an average of 448 per session) were registered as audience. Of this number, 2257 attended live webcasts (118 per session on average) and 1282 (106,8 on average) did so on-demand, for a total of 3539 people who have watched the PANLAR sessions at some point. Our audience hails from all countries in the American continent, with Colombia, Mexico and Argentina standing out, followed by Peru and Venezuela. It is important to note that 578 questions (an average of 48) have been made per session, clear evidence of the high level of commitment of the audience in the monthly sessions. Rheumatologists (40%), residents (14.7%) and non-rheumatologist physicians (17.7%) form the main audience. Although the purpose behind the monthly session was simply to have a regular meeting, it achieved something of greater importance: to test knowledge of the subject by professionals selected by their respective associations, as well as the usefulness and relevance of sessions focusing both on the global context and local realities.

Significant effort was placed into developing academic products in each PANLAR event. This is something that began with the I PANLAR Review Course, when an entire supplement was published, sponsored by PANLAR, covering many of the issues discussed during the course. On this occasion, we held the Chikungunya Consensus and other viral arthropathies under the coordination of Dr. Pablo Monge, during the I PANLAR-ACCAR Regional Course, as well as the Consensus on Biosimilars, under the general coordination of Dr. Claudio Galarza and the scientific coordination of Dr. Sergio Kowalsky, who met in person during the II PANLAR Review Course. Both consensuses are soon to be published and advances shall be presented during the XX Pan-American Congress.

The first consensus under the PANLAR name dates from the year 2006, with the publication of the
"First Latin American position paper on the pharmacological treatment of rheumatoid arthritis" (see Photo 2), a seminal work in this type of projects, a result of the effort of the Latin American Group of Rheumatoid Arthritis (GLADAR). Since then, 21 documents have been produced under the PANLAR umbrella, not only in rheumatoid arthritis but also in degenerative arthritis, ultrasound, lupus and pediatrics, as a result of the different study groups within PANLAR since their creation in the year 2002.

After a great effort, we have finally reorganized study groups to be more effective. To this end, we agreed on a set of rules and created calls for group and project updates, ensuring that those in line with the Development Plan may be directly supported. Indeed, the Executive Committee proceeded to approve for this period, for the first time in PANLARs history, direct funds for Study Groups. We have also provided continued support to the different awards (PANLAR, Innovation, Schumacher) as well as other education projects (grants, education support) totaling over 250 thousand dollars for this period.

We have thus spurred tangible accomplishments in line with the vision set forth in the Development Plan, which shall include support to other guides and projects such as the Centers of Excellence in Rheumatoid Arthritis, as well as other types of academic products (textbooks and publications) that reflect the reality of healthcare systems, patients and doctors in the countries in which we operate. We expect these products, just as the monthly session has done, proves that we are prepared to contribute to provide rheumatology a truly global perspective.

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