

ISCOS Virtual Conference: 2020 & World SCI Day

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What was the virtual conference like? Here's a sneak peak from Kholofelo Mashola

The ISCoS 2020 was virtual and once logged in you are directed to the Lobby with the following options available:

- The exhibition hall where the sponsors displayed their products.
- The video vault where delegates could view uploaded videos by different companies showcasing their work.
- The auditorium with three tracks (separate 'rooms') where the sessions took place.

The sessions were either Plenary talks, Instructional Courses, Workshops, Oral presentations or Talking posters. These were available as pre-recorded videos that included both the visual of the presenter as well as the power point slides. Pre-recording videos of power points were only available at specific allocated times.

Once opened, the delegates could view the presentations with the presenters available via the chat box to answer questions and comments.

Live Zoom sessions followed the pre-recorded video presentations where the presenters could discuss and answer further questions via the Zoom chat box.

The Poster Hall with a wide range of electronic posters (pdf formats) with topics such as; spine surgery, physical activity and exercise, as well as psychosocial outcomes after spinal cord injury to name a few.

The ISCoS Lounge where you could network with delegates (and you could see the delegates who were in attendance by simply clicking on the delegates tab from the lobby).

It was incredible to be part of the ISCoS 2020 virtual congress. It far exceeded my expectations and the scavenger hunt was a delightful addition. I did not feel short-changed at all and I am happy to have been part of such as successful virtual congress.

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“There is overall some positive indication of effect of cannabis on pain (as well as spasticity) in people with spinal cord injury”.

An ISCOS lecture on the use of Cannabis for pain in SCI...

An instructional course on: “Promising treatment options for pain among people with spinal cord injury: a complementary and integrative medicine perspective”

MPH Jennifer Coker, Craigs Hospital USA
Prof Marcel Post, De Hoogstraat Rehabilitation, Netherlands
Dr Janneke Stolwijk, De Hoogstraat Rehabilitation, Netherlands

This instructional course included alternative ap-

proaches in treating neuropathic pain such as cannabis and topical analgesics; complementary healthcare; and use of non-pharmacological treatments of neuropathic pain after spinal cord injury.

What fascinated me was that cannabis was found to have significant effect on pain, with up to 70% of pain relief in an American study (Drossel, 2017). Fatigue and decreased motivation were the side-effects noted by Hawley (2018) in USA and short-term psychological ef-

fects (v Beek, 2018) in the Netherlands. There is overall some positive indication of effect of cannabis on pain (as well as spasticity) in people with spinal cord injury. The use of cannabis is restricted to personal and residential use in South Africa, with no known South African studies on this topic. This is a good path to investigate in gearing the South African spinal cord population to as pain-free as possible.

-Kholofelo Mashola

Feedback from ISCOS conference: Sleep Apnoea in Quadriplegics

**Research presented by:
Prof David Berlowitz
Plenary lecture
University of Melbourne
Chair of Physiotherapy
(clinical)**

- The interesting fact is that cervical cord injury should not affect the upper airway muscles, which are controlled by cranial nerves. But it does. And the reason is still not clear. MRI studies have shown that upper airways do not actually collapse.
- Research has shown that up to 60% of Quadriplegics initially have sleep apnoea, and this increases to 80 % after 3 months.
- Nasal mucosa is very vascular and Quadriplegics have massively increased nasal resistance which impairs breathing.
- Innate Melatonin production is disrupted, and Quadriplegics feel “jet lagged” all the time. Some research has shown that some patients benefit from Melatonin at night instead of regularly prescribed hypnotics.
- CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure with a mask worn at night) has shown to improve day time sleepiness. Many Quads find it hard to tolerate the mask for more than 4 hours per night. Sleep apnoea impairs attention and information processing.
- Quadriplegia also causes random leg movement.
- Sleep apnoea does improve over time.....and it is still unknown what causes it.
- More research is needed with patients reporting their sleep experience immediately post injury, as well as research into nasal resistance.
- In an ideal world all Quadriplegics should have a sleep study whilst in acute rehabilitation

Nurses caring for quadriplegics in acute rehab need to be fully educated to monitor all their patients for sleep apnoea.

-Virginia Wilson

World SCI day— 5 September 2020

**Below are some photos of Western Cape Rehab
Centre celebrating World Spinal Day 2020!**



Netcare Rehabilitation Hospital:

An online Webinar was organized by Netcare Rehabilitation Hospital on Thursday 10th September with the topic of COVID-19 AND STAYING WELL in order to raise awareness of SCI. In addition to this, Dale Guthrie presented an online adapted Yoga session for our spinal patients— thank you very much Dale from Holism Health.



Congratulations to Muelmed hospital (Rita Henn & Partners) and Netcare Rehab Hospital (Rita Henn & Partners) who won 4th and 5th prize for the ISCOS poster competition!

Muelmed Clinic Poster (4th place)



Netcare Rehab Poster— 5th place





SAVE THE DATE!

3 - 6 November 2021

Protea Hotel Technopark **STELLENBOSCH**



14th Biennial Southern African
Spinal Cord Association (**SASCA**) Congress

Theme: Spinal Cord Care: The Next Decade

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

The SASCA organising committee has decided after thorough evaluation of the latest developments with regards to COVID-19 to postpone the conference to **3 - 6 November 2021**, to be held at the same venue in Stellenbosch, South Africa.

We will keep you updated with further developments.

Visit website on <http://www.sasca2021.co.za>

Any feedback or suggestions?

Please send an email to us:
sascanewsletter@gmail.com!