



INTERNATIONAL ECZEMA COUNCIL

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Letter from the IEC President



As you read this, we are closing in on both the end of 2023 and my term of service as president of the IEC. When I've completed my third year as president at our symposium at the American Academy of Dermatology Annual Meeting on March 7, 2024, I'll transfer the duties of the presidency to **IEC President-Elect Alan Irvine, MD DSc**.

Rest assured, I'll continue my commitment and involvement by serving on the board, as immediate past president, so I can continue to offer input and leadership just as **Dr. Emma Guttman** did when I became president. Alan is ready to take the lead on the IEC.

We've been meeting on a regular basis to ensure a smooth transition, and Alan played a key role in the creation of the next IEC strategic plan, which we look forward to sharing with you in Q1 of 2024.

The timing of my term of service meant I led the IEC through some unique challenges (such as our switch to virtual education during the pandemic) and opportunities (like our search for a new CEO when our executive director stepped down). Through it all, the IEC grew, both in terms of the experts who comprise our Council and the educational offerings we presented around the world. We welcomed 9 new Councilors or Associates, and an existing IEC Associate became a Councilor. Through our new Councilors, we now have representation in 30 countries around the world.

2023 IEC Educational Symposia by the Numbers



This is a record for educational symposia presented by the IEC in a single year, and all 7 were live events.



This year saw the IEC present a record number of hours of live education at our symposia (24.25 hours).



Our symposia locations spanned 4 continents, another record, thanks to meetings in Japan and South America.



Each IEC symposium featured multiple experts to increase engagement at live events and ensure a variety of views.



Our speakers practice in 15 countries on five continents, providing breadth and depth of expertise.

2023 Milestones

This year, the IEC achieved much. Some of our “firsts” include:

- Welcoming our first allergist as a Councilor, Ioana Agache, MD PhD, of Transylvania University in Braşov, Romania.
- Presenting a symposium at the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (AAAAI) Annual Meeting for the first time.
- Presenting in person in South America for the first time, at Reunión Anual de Dermatólogos Latinoamericanos in Brazil. (We presented at RADLA in 2022, but the entire meeting was held virtually.)
- Launching our first Canada-based Fellowship program, a year after the launch of the IEC Fellowship in the US.
- Publishing **three new manuscripts** in major journals.

New Councilors and Associates

Welcomed to the Council in 2023 were:

- **Xu Yao**, China, *Councilor*
- **Yik Weng Yew**, Singapore, *Councilor* (Dr. Yew initially joined the IEC as an Associate.)
- **Sahana M. Srinivas**, India, *Associate*
- **Ioana Agache**, Romania, *Councilor*
- **Sonja C. Molin**, Canada, *Councilor*
- **Angela Maria Londoño Garcia**, Colombia, *Councilor*
- **Shawn G. Kwatra**, United States, *Councilor*
- **Sarah S. Chisolm**, United States, *Associate*
- **Alexander Zink**, Germany, *Councilor*
- **Maria Fernanda Ordóñez Rubiano**, Colombia, *Associate*

We now have Councilors and Associates in 30 countries. This increased from 28 with the addition of Councilors from Colombia and Romania in 2023. Adding representation from more countries increases the diversity of experience on the Council, so we're very pleased to have grown so much since the IEC became operational in 2015.

I'm appreciative of our collective vision, which was necessary to bring us to today, when the IEC is experiencing record growth and producing important educational content for healthcare providers and researchers around the world.

I thank our entire Council, from President-Elect Alan Irvine to our newest Councilors and Associates, for their continued interest and involvement in the IEC, their ambassadorship on behalf of our organization, and their contributions to our continued growth.

We're putting the finishing touches on an exemplary year of educational offerings through which we've shared the cutting-edge research findings and clinical insight that our Councilors and Associates are privileged to experience. Through our [on-demand recordings](#) of our educational programs, we ensure that everyone, everywhere, who has an interest in the management of atopic dermatitis can learn the latest from the best. In fact, since the previous newsletter was sent, we've added two new symposia recordings: [Research Techniques in Atopic Dermatitis](#) and [Pruritis in Patients with Atopic Dermatitis](#).

This letter represents not the end of 2023 or my presidency but another new beginning. Our 2024 schedule of symposia has been announced, and you can read the details below or on the [IEC Symposia page](#). I invite you to join us at these live events—and to find additional mechanisms to contribute your own expertise to upcoming presentations, manuscripts, and other ways the IEC shares your expertise with the world.

Robert Bissonnette, MD MSc FRCPC
IEC President

IEC to Present 6 Symposia in Conjunction with World Meetings in 2024

Consistent with our mission to “Improve patient care by promoting research, education and best practices in treatment for atopic dermatitis in people worldwide,” the IEC has an exciting slate of educational symposia planned for 2024.



Topicals in the Pipeline: New and Emerging Therapies

At the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) Annual Meeting
March 7, 2024 | 2-5 PM PT
San Diego Convention Center
San Diego, CA



Infections and Immunization in Patients with Atopic Dermatitis

At the Reunión Anual de Dermatólogos Latinoamericanos (RADLA)

May 7, 2024 | Time to be determined

Lima, Peru



What's New in Pathogenesis & Mechanisms?

At the Society for Investigative Dermatology (SID) annual meeting

May 15, 2024 | 8 am - Noon (12 pm)

Dallas, Texas, USA



The Safety of JAK Inhibitors

At the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI)

Date and time to be determined

(EAACI is May 31-June 3)

Valencia, Spain



Biomarkers, Endophenotyping, and Precision Medicine

Presented jointly with the International Psoriasis Council at the European Society for Dermatological Research (ESDR) Annual Meeting

Date and time to be determined

(ESDR is September 4-7)

Lisbon, Portugal



Chronic Hand Eczema

At the European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology (EADV) Congress

Date and time to be determined

(EADV is September 25-28)

Amsterdam, Netherlands

Plan to attend the events held in conjunction with meetings you'll attend in 2024 to learn, network, and support the IEC!

[View the IEC Symposia Page](#)

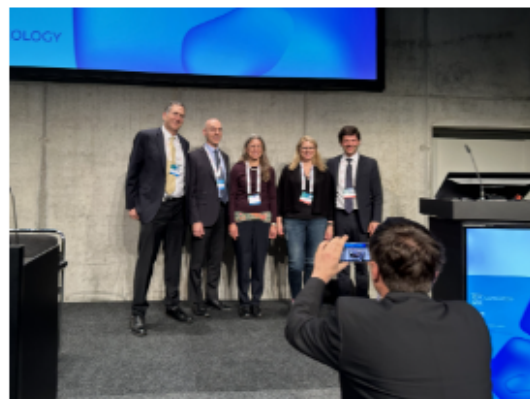
Greetings from Berlin: The IEC Presents at the EADV Congress



Mette Deleuran speaks at the podium, with Sonja Ständer, Gil Yosipovitch, and Robert Bissonnette seated on stage.



Kenji Kabashima details a question he has for Sonja Ständer during the symposium.



IEC CEO Alan Stiles talks with IEC Director Valeria Aoki at the EADV Congress. Dr. Aoki was there to support the IEC symposium and to present "Topical and Conventional Systemic Treatment for Atopic Dermatitis" as part of the larger EADV meeting.

Speakers Gil Yosipovitch, Robert Bissonnette, Mette Deleuran, Sonja Ständer, and Alexander Zink pose for a photo before the session begins.

The IEC attended the European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology (EADV) Congress in October in Berlin, Germany, to present our symposium, **Pruritus in Patients with Atopic Dermatitis**. If you missed the symposium, the recordings are now available for on-demand viewing.

[View the EADV Symposium Recordings](#)

Meet the Associate: Carolyn Jack, MDCM PhD FRCPC

This issue's 'Meet the Associate' features **Carolyn Jack, MDCM PhD FRCPC**.



Dr. Jack is an assistant professor of dermatology at McGill University and a junior scientist in the Infectious Diseases and Immunity in Global Health Program of the Research Institute of the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) in Montréal, Québec, Canada.

In 2018, Dr. Jack founded the MUHC Center of Excellence for Atopic Dermatitis, the first tertiary care centre in Canada dedicated to adult atopic dermatitis. Her clinic has been recognized both nationally and internationally for its patient engagement platform, and she is the cofounder of EczemaQ, an award-winning mobile health application. As an FRQS Clinical Research Scholar, her research goal is to identify disease-modifying interventions in chronic atopic dermatitis.

Dr. Jack was a program co-chair for the IEC symposia “Pathophysiological Insights into AD and New Therapeutic Developments” May 10 at the International Society for Investigative Dermatology Meeting 2023 (ISID) in Tokyo, Japan. As part of the symposium, she presented a flash talk, “High-Dimensional Analysis Identifies Variably Persistent Activated Skin-Homing Th2/Tc2 Populations in AD Patients on Dupilumab.”

Earlier this year, she presented “Infections in Atopic Dermatitis and Implications for Therapy” as part of the IEC symposium “New Developments in Atopic Dermatitis and Implications for the Atopic March” February 23 prior to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (AAAAI) 2023 Annual Meeting in San Antonio, TX. She also is co-lead author of an upcoming IEC manuscript.

What is your proudest accomplishment in the atopic dermatitis (AD) space?

Even though I am a fundamental immunologist, I am most proud to have initiated a patient-oriented research platform. I work hand in hand with adults who suffer from atopic dermatitis as partners in my lab’s work, and this has both reshaped my approach and driven more innovation, such as our mHealth application, EczemaQ.

What do you value most about being involved with the IEC?

The inspiration that can only be gained by interacting with global experts. The IEC is a magnet for collaboration and has the means to curate knowledge into durable and accessible formats. The impact and complexity of atopic dermatitis pulls in top scientists and engages the most passionate clinicians; it is an honor to learn from them. Tangible solutions can be accelerated when fostered within IEC meetings and working groups.

Based on your experience in atopic dermatitis, what do you think will garner the most attention over the coming year in atopic dermatitis research or care?

Interactions between the nervous system and the inflammation of atopic dermatitis hold great interest, especially as we get closer to understanding cellular culprits and their skin-specific circuitry. Although it may take more time, studies are underway that test for capacity to halt atopy progression early in life. If we can identify immunologic windows for inducing tolerance, this may be key to prevention, the “holy grail” of our life's work.

What do you see as the biggest need among patients who have atopic dermatitis?

At the physiologic level, itch extermination. Interconnected as it is within our immune and organ systems, itch drives the misery and consequences of this disease. In practice, patients need adequate information exchange about these connections and more support to filter through misinformation for effective activation and decision making. Globally, we need tailored solutions for vulnerable populations and more collaboration to address mental health.

IEC Councilors Connect at the World Congress of Itch in Miami, FL, USA



When you go to important meetings related to atopic dermatitis, expect to find IEC representatives in attendance!

IEC Councilor/Cofounder Amy S. Paller, MD and **IEC Councilor and Board Member Valeria Aoki, MD PhD** met up at the 12th World Congress on Itch (WCI), held November 5-7 in Miami, Florida, USA. The WCI is a biennial meeting of the International Forum of the Study of Itch (IFSI) the leading authority on itch and the largest multidisciplinary association in the field of itch.

The event was chaired by **IEC Councilor Gil Yosipovitch, MD**. Dr. Paller presented “Challenges in Managing Itch in Pediatric Skin Diseases” at the congress.

Both Dr. Paller and Dr. Aoki are university-based clinician scientists—Dr. Paller in Chicago, IL, USA, and Dr. Aoki in São Paulo, Brazil. Both have held IEC leadership positions. Dr. Paller is an IEC cofounder and past president, and Dr. Aoki serves on the IEC Board of Directors and as co-chair of the IEC Education Committee.

Journal Publishes Results of IEC Fellowship Project on Atopic Dermatitis

The first IEC Clinical Fellow has published an article on atopic dermatitis in a major journal as a result of her fellowship. **IEC Clinical Fellow Antonia Reimer-Taschenbrecker, MD**, is the first author of **[Do Socioeconomic Factors Impact Atopic Dermatitis Outcome? A Single-Center Study](#)**, which was published as an open access article October 10, 2023, ahead of inclusion in an issue of Wiley’s *Pediatric Dermatology*.

Additional authors are Moriel Daniel, BS MPH; Stephanie M. Rangel, PhD, and **Amy S. Paller, MD**. Dr. Paller was Dr. Reimer-Taschenbrecker’s mentor for the yearlong IEC Clinical Fellowship. Dr. Paller runs a lab in the Department of Dermatology, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago, Illinois, USA. Dr. Reimer-Taschenbrecker started her clinical fellowship there in November 2022 with 1 month of training in person followed by an 11-month remote mentorship.



Dr. Reimer-Taschenbrecker's fellowship research project is the basis for [the article](#). It “looks at the impact of socioeconomic factors on AD severity and patient-oriented outcome measures in the Midwest US,” she said, specifically patients of the pediatric dermatology and allergy clinics at the Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago. The study sought any correlations between pediatric patients' atopic dermatitis severity with socioeconomic factors, including deprivation index score, race, ethnicity, income, education, or insurance type.

One of the requirements of the IEC Fellows is that, following their fellowship, they deliver a presentation at a major conference or submit an abstract or manuscript for publication in a national or international dermatology journal. To date, Dr. Reimer-Taschenbrecker has been an author of six journal articles.

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The IEC Fellowship Program in the United States is made possible, in part, by [Abbvie](#), one of the [IEC's corporate partners](#). Abbvie is a member of IEC's President's Council. The IEC thanks Abbvie for its support of our mission.

[Read the Journal Article](#)

Letter on vIGA-AD Anniversary Is IEC's Third Journal Publication in 2023

The IEC shares our experts' knowledge through a variety of media, including publishing in major journals.

The organization's third publication in 2023 was printed in November in the *Journal of European Academy of Dermatology & Venereology*. [vIGA-AD Scale for Atopic Dermatitis: Uptake in the Past Five Years and Position of the International Eczema Council](#) is a letter to the editor that examines how clinical trials and published studies are using the vIGA-AD™ scale 5 years after creation of the validated global assessment scale for atopic dermatitis. IEC President Robert Bissonnette is the lead author on this letter.

It follows the September publication of [Treat-To-Target in Dermatology: A Scoping Review and International Eczema Council Survey on the Approach in Atopic-Dermatitis](#), also by the *Journal of European Academy of Dermatology & Venereology*, and the October publication of the results of [Antonia Reimer-Taschenbrecker's IEC Clinical Fellowship project](#).

- Bissonnette R, Simpson E, Eichenfield LF, et al. The vIGA-AD scale for atopic dermatitis: Uptake in the past 5 years and position of the International Eczema Council. *J Eur Acad Dermatol Venereol*. Published online November 9, 2023.

Coming in 2024: New Ways to Connect with the IEC & a Website Refresh

The IEC is taking steps in 2024 to build our online community.

- **The IEC's social media accounts will debut in 2024.** Expect to be invited to connect with us on Facebook, X, and LinkedIn. Through these platforms, we'll share updates on our work, thought leadership, and ways to engage and learn with us.
- **The IEC website will undergo a refresh.** Keeping with the times, our website at EczemaCouncil.org will be refreshed in 2024 to be up to date and even more visually appealing. We'll streamline some navigation and content, based on users' needs, to provide a better experience. After the launch, you'll still be able to find resources quickly and easily, because the navigation will be similar and branding will be consistent.

These are two of the ways the IEC continue to improve and upgrade how we fulfill our mission as the Council grows and evolves.

Global Atopic Dermatitis Atlas (GADA) Awarded Grant to Fund Work



The [Global Atopic Dermatitis Atlas \(GADA\)](#) recently announced that it had received a DKK 10 million grant (approximately \$1.4 million USD) from the LEO Foundation in support of work to consolidate and analyze comprehensive data on atopic dermatitis burden around the world.

A pioneering international initiative dedicated to advancing our understanding of atopic dermatitis, GADA is led by **IEC Director and Councilor Carsten Flohr**, MA MSc PhD FRCP FRCPC. In October 2022, GADA launched the first *Global Report on Atopic Dermatitis*.

GADA is an initiative of the of the International League of Dermatological Societies (ILDS) in collaboration with the:

- **International Eczema Council (IEC)**
- International Society of Atopic Dermatitis (ISAD)
- European Taskforce for Atopic Dermatitis (ETFAD)
- International Alliance of Dermatology Patient Organizations (GlobalSkin)

[Learn More about GADA](#)



About the IEC

The International Eczema Council (IEC) is a global nonprofit organization led by experts on atopic dermatitis (AD). The IEC is dedicated to increasing the understanding of AD and promoting its optimal management through research, education and patient/family care. The IEC comprises 132 Councilors and Associates from 30 countries who contribute their expertise to support the IEC's research, programs, events, and education. The Council's mission is furthered by the support of our valued corporate partners.