

Memorandum of Understanding – AASLD/APASL Relationship

Rationale: The American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD) and the Asian Pacific Association for the Study of the Liver (APASL) are both leading Societies focused on advancing the science and practice of Hepatology. As such, the two societies share many goals, objectives and interests. Indeed, many individuals are members of both societies and attend each others' Annual meetings. The two Societies also have many similar educational platforms aimed at improving the standard of care, implementing change in practice guidelines and advancing the science of Hepatology. Given common missions, the leadership of APASL and AASLD agree that a more structured relationship would create synergy, avoid unnecessary overlap of efforts, coordinate activities and maximize achievement of common goals. The two international societies are also aware that they operate within a larger and growing global environment, which increasingly facilitates interactions between its leaders and constituencies.

Purpose: *this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) serves as a foundation to formalize a mutually beneficial relationship.*

The over-arching principles of this MOU are to provide a collegial document to frame our interactions. The MOU is only a framework, and specific details will be addressed in annual leadership meetings between the two Societies. It is understood that the document represents a strategic alliance rather than a privileged relationship. It is also recognized that each society's primary obligation is to its own membership and where interests diverge there is no obligation to force a relationship.

The following paragraphs define this MOU.

- AASLD recognizes and respects APASL as the premier Association in the Asian-Pacific Region dedicated to the science and practice of Hepatology
- The President, President-Elect or Senior Councilor of the Governing Board of the AASLD will attend the annual APASL meeting and meet individually with the APASL Council to formally discuss shared interactions and plans. Likewise, when possible, the President or his/her designee from APASL / Chairman or members of the International Liaison will attend the annual AASLD meeting for a similar interaction. Minutes of each meeting will be recorded to ensure a written record of discussion. All communication will be in English. These official attendees representing their respective societies at the partner association's meeting will have complimentary registration if not already a member. Each society will bear the travel costs of its own representatives, unless they are sponsored for another purpose, for example as an invited speaker.
- Both societies have significant interest in facilitating informative exchange and promoting well-designed clinical trials that have legitimate endpoints. To obtain this goal, the societies may co-sponsor conferences designed to define disease and disease-related complications, criteria for entry into trials, and meaningful clinical endpoints, provided they meet each society's criteria for co-sponsorship and that there is funding available.
- It is understood that each Society will offer exhibition space to the other at its major annual meeting free of charge. The exhibition space will be situated to promote visibility and exposure to attendees. Acceptance of this offer is anticipated but not mandatory.

- Both societies will make each other aware of planned educational conferences and programs in a timely manner. This communication will permit coordination of efforts to minimize overlap or maximize synergy as appropriate or desired.
- Additional forms of interaction could include sponsorship of fellowship exchange programs, joint professional publications and common membership ventures. Each new concept would require further deliberation, including but not restricted to examination of the return on investment and overall fiscal impact on each society. In addition, joint responses to and other programs with other existing liver societies may be developed and fostered by the AASLD/APASL alliance.
- Both societies have their own Journals and will respect and support the educational and scientific publications of each society.
- Both societies will evaluate and collaborate in the development of Joint Guidelines/recommendations as appropriate. An attempt will be made for representatives of the respective societies to contribute to Single Topic Conferences and Consensus guidelines development when appropriate
- Both societies will encourage and acknowledge participation by trainees and young faculty in each others' meetings.
- When appropriate, the societies will align lobbying strategies to promote funding for liver disease research and to advance public policy for liver health.

The undersigned represent their respective societies and have the respective authority to agree to and support this Memorandum of Understanding.



George KK Lau, M.D.
President, APASL



Scott L. Friedman, M.D.
President, AASLD

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