On March 8-9, 2021, GARD hosted a two-half day virtual meetings. The webinar on March 8th was titled “Chronic Respiratory Diseases in the COVID era”, with 204 individuals registered to attend. The 2-hour webinar consisted presentations from 3 renowned speakers (Drs Bin Cao, Soumya Swaminathan and Paudula Siribaddana) and a 7-member discussion panel (Drs Digambar Behera, Sandra Gonzalez Diaz, Yuanlin Song, Lan Le Thi Tuyet, Arunas Valiulis, Siân Williams). The webinar was moderated by Dr Arzu Yorgancioğlu. For those who missed the webinar, you can view the recording following this link: https://bit.ly/3vvdl6Y

The webinar continued on March 9th with 4 breakout group discussions on: surveillance, research, environmental health; management, innovation, primary health & pediatrics; advocacy and partnerships, patient groups; and country support (Portuguese speaking countries). The breakout groups were led by GARD members and the overall meeting was moderated by Dr Sarah Rylance.

Important Announcement
Mark your calendar – GARD Annual General Meeting Virtual, Oct 2021, details TBD

Upcoming National/International Conferences
16 June 2021 13.00-14.30 CEST, A WHO and IPCRG Webinar - The importance of tobacco cessation in primary care (https://www.ipcrg.org/conferences/the-importance-of-tobacco-cessation-in-primary-care)

10-12 July 2021, Madrid and Krakow (Hybrid)
Annual Congress of the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI) (https://www.eaaci.org/eaaci-congresses/eaaci-2021)

4-8 September 2021, Barcelona, Spain
The ERS Annual Congress (https://erscongress.org/)

19-22 October 2021, virtual

24 – 27 Oct 2021, Vancouver, Canada
CHEST Annual Meeting (https://www.chestmeeting.chestnet.org/)

30 Oct – 1 Nov 2021, Centre des Congrès Avignon, France
XXV World Congress of Asthma (https://interasma.org/interasma-congresses/)


WHO Scientific Brief: Asthma and COVID-19
This WHO scientific brief summarized the results of a rapid review of evidence on COVID-19 and asthma on the following questions:

- Is asthma associated with increased risk of acquiring SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 disease?
- Is asthma associated with hospitalization with COVID-19?
- Is asthma associated with the severity of COVID-19 outcomes?

https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/who-2019-nocov-sci-brief-asthma-2021.1

The WHO Package of Essential Noncommunicable Disease Interventions (WHO PEN)
In May, the WHO launched the WHOPEN application, which is developed as a tool to facilitate the implementation of essential Non communicable diseases (NCD) interventions for primary health care. This is intended to be used by a health provider and not by individuals. It contains materials from the WHO package of essential noncommunicable (PEN) disease interventions for primary health care. Geneva, World Health Organization; 2020. The WHOPEN App brings together the guidelines and protocols that are adaptable to local settings and able to empower primary care physicians, as well as allied health workers, to contribute to NCD management. WHOPEN is not meant to be exhaustive or prescriptive, but rather to be an important first step for integration of NCD management into primary health care. Tools for adapting the package to primary health care and capacity building materials such as slides, and posters are also included. The app can be downloaded from Play Store (search WHOPEN) https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.who.WHOPEN

IPCRG May Newsletter:
https://mailchi.mp/4148d8299f7d/ipcrg-may-2021-newsletter
For more details, contact Nicola Connor at businessmanager@ipcrg.org

Breathing Games:

- **Validation of a portable game controller to assess peak expiratory flow against conventional spirometry in children.** Chelabi K, Balli F, Bransi M, Gervais Y, Marthe C, Tse SM. Canadian Respiratory Conference; 2021 Apr 9; Ottawa, Canada.
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ht2sVoU6gXo


Researchers interested to join the Breathing Games international pilot research, please contact Fabio Balli (info@fabioballi.net).
Dr. Digambar Behera – The American Thoracic Society has awarded the ATS Public Service Award to Professor Digambar Behera, Senior Professor and Head, Department of Pulmonary Medicine at Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, India. This award recognizes contributions to public health related improvement of indoor and outdoor air quality, eradication of tobacco usage, prevention of lung disease, improved management of communicable respiratory diseases or improvement in the ethical delivery, and access to healthcare in areas related lung diseases, sleep disorders and critical care.

EVENTS/ACTIVITIES IN GARD COUNTRIES

UPCOMING EVENTS AND IMPORTANT DATES:

- 12 July 11:00 – 12:00 CET, Virtual: EAACI - GARD Sister Society Session - Chronic respiratory diseases in COVID-19 era (http://scientific.eaaci.org/site/programme/?a=eaaci2021#!)
- 17 November, World COPD Day 2021 - https://goldcopd.org/world-copd-day-2021/

PAST ACTIVITIES:

The Romanian Society of Pneumology together with the Section of Somnology and Non-Invasive Ventilation, the Association for Sleep Disorders in Children and Adolescents, the Medical Association for Prevention through Healthy Lifestyle, University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Carol Davila and the Medical Students’ Society of Bucharest organized on 19th of March 2021 an event for World Sleep Day. This year’s slogan was “Regular sleep, healthy future”

GARD-Italy - In April 2021, the 9th General Assembly of GARD-Italy was held in Rome, under the coordination of the Italian Ministry of Health. The Assembly adopted the new Strategy of the National Alliance and the programmatic lines proposed for the two-year period 2022-2024. The Strategy document is in line with the nine voluntary objectives of the WHO "Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs 2013-2020" to reduce the mortality of NCDs and with the aim to support the 17 “Sustainable developing goals-SDGs”, adopted by the UN in 2015 with the 2030 Agenda. Preventing and reducing the burden of NCDs, including respiratory diseases, represents a challenge for Italy and requires intersectoral strategies, according to the principles of "Health in all policies". Use this link to see more details: https://drive.google.com/file/GARD-Italy-Newsletter

GARD-CPLP (Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries) held a webinar on May 28, 2021 entitled “COVID and respiratory chronic diseases: preparing for the future”. The overall objective of the webinar was to reduce inequalities in the provision of health care. Specifically, the webinar aimed to assess the impact of COVID-19 in CRD in Portuguese-speaking countries, and also optimize the recovery of COVID-19 in terms of the prevention and treatment of respiratory diseases in future. Use this link to view the webinar (in Portuguese): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=byCBX5F EWQ
GARD-Angola partnered with the Angolan Society of Pulmonology (SAPN) hosted the first International Asthma Symposium, Luanda, Angola on May 29, 2021, where experts and researchers from Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique and Portugal participated. The aim of the Symposium was to bring together national and international experts and researchers with experience to work on overcoming challenges of providing and standardizing best practices of asthma and to help Angolans understand the problem of asthma in Angola. The topics covered in the symposium included: epidemiological studies of asthma; guidelines: are they necessary; asthma diagnosis and treatment; and asthma in the emergency room. See details at https://sapn.ao/


GARD Executive Committee, Planning & Regional Groups wish you and your loved ones a very pleasant summer

https://gard-breathefreely.org/  @GARDbreathe  GARDbreathefreely

Contact us at: gardbreathe@gmail.com