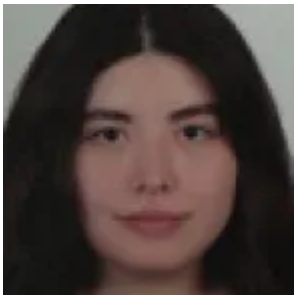


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In many ways, 2021 felt like an encore of 2020, as COVID-19 continued to dominate every part of our lives. The hope that the vaccine rollout brought us was overshadowed by news of the delta variant in the summer, and omicron in November.

For the EBMT’s Education and Events Department, 2021 started with virtual editions of our two largest events. In February, we organized the third edition of the

European CAR T-Cell Meeting, a joint project with the European Hematology Association. This meeting has quickly become one of the most important events in the field of CAR T-cell therapies, and draws an international audience.

In a WHO press conference held on the 5th of February, it was announced that the number of vaccinations has overtaken number of reported infections, which was promising, although more than three quarters of those vaccinations occurred in only ten countries. Most countries had yet to see a single dose.

In March, the EBMT held the second virtual edition of our Annual Meeting. It was agreed that this was the most sensible decision as a medical organization, as reported cases continued to rise, hitting 150 million in April of 2021.

In the summer, we held the EBMT Summit on COVID-19, a virtual event covering the impact of SARS-CoV-2 on HSCT patients. It was the first event of its kind, a multidisciplinary endeavor organized by the EBMT's Infectious Diseases Working Party, in collaboration with the Transplant Complications Working Party, Autoimmune Diseases Working Party, Nurses Group, Donor Outcomes Team and JACIE.

Over the summer, despite the increase in vaccinations in Europe, fears of the delta variant caused most of our Working Parties to decide that their educational events in the fall will once again be held virtually.

The EBMT did hold the first two face-to-face events since the CAR T-Cell Meeting in February of 2020. The Inborn Errors Working Party hosted their Annual Conference in Milan, Italy, in September; and the Lymphoma Working Party hosted their Educational Course in Münster, Germany, in October. Safety measures were followed by all participants, and the events were a great success. The meetings were a short return to normalcy before the rise of the omicron variant, and the increase in restrictions.

In 2020, in order to make knowledge more accessible to all healthcare professionals, the EBMT launched the e-learning platform with great success. In 2021, the project grew, and is now a cornerstone of our educational strategy.

The e-learning unit has organized more than twenty e-courses in 2021, and many webinars as well. The EBMT also launched the EBMT Exam, a personal qualification for physicians to assess their knowledge on HSCT and cellular therapies.

In 2021, we have continued to face the new reality of the COVID-19 pandemic, but despite these challenges, the Education and Events Department has remained committed to provide the highest quality of education to the scientific community, and will continue doing so in the years to come.

In 2020, the Education and Events Department had to organize and re-organize the Annual Meeting a total of three times. But the Annual Meeting was not the only challenge of course; there were also two mid-size events – The Midterm Focus Meeting on Non-Malignant Diseases and the International Transplant Course – to convert to the virtual format. The Midterm Focus Meeting was in fact our first virtual event, taking place in July 2020, in which there were many learnings to be taken away and applied in the near future.

Additional to the Annual Meeting and mid-size events, were all of the already planned Working Party Educational Meetings. Some meetings were postponed to 2021, while the majority decided to also transition to the virtual format. Despite the ongoing pandemic, the objective of EBMT with regards to education remained unchanged – to share leading cutting-edge science and to provide the highest quality of education in the field of stem cell transplantation and cellular therapy.

Another important development in EBMT Education in 2020 was the launch of the e-learning platform. The e-learning unit at EBMT was in its early days at the beginning of the year, with some activities started and an e-learning taskforce laying out the strategy for the advancement of online education. The pandemic proved to swiftly propel the activities of the e-learning unit, with plentiful COVID-19 webinars in the Spring, followed by an increased demand for all types of online learning. Now the e-learning department has a multitude of resources which are available for free to all EBMT Members, such as webinars, e-courses, forums, exams and more.

Over the past year EBMT has adroitly adapted to the changing global demands and circumstances produced by an unexpected pandemic, while still building on the robust foundation of one of our Society’s main pillars – Education.