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Letter from the IEC President



It's only August yet I'm already proud of how much the IEC has done this year—a year defined by growth, innovation, and renewed commitment to our mission. What began a decade ago as a vision to unite global experts in atopic dermatitis has evolved into a thriving, forward-looking organization, one that continues to expand its reach and impact.

This year, we've welcomed a new category of members: PhD-holders whose research expertise enriches our Council's scientific depth and collaborative potential. Our outreach to connect with these potential members has already been productive, and we've already welcomed PhD-holders to the Council. I expect that number to grow quickly.

One of the ways we share news like the Council's decision to welcome PhD holders is through social media. We only recently began using social media, and now our use has surged, connecting us with thousands of professionals and patients worldwide through [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#), and [X](#).

Yes, that's right, we're on Instagram now, too! Find us [@international_eczemacouncil](#). That account is very new, so we'd love to have your support on that platform.

Social media isn't the only technology we're using right now to expand our reach and influence. One new IEC effort uses AI to generate high-level summaries of our symposia, to share on our [new IEC blog](#)—designed to attract social media audiences and guide them toward our extensive educational resources.

As always, our education has been a focal point this year. We continue to produce high-quality symposia in conjunction with major world meetings—educating live audiences as well as people worldwide who also can learn from our experts by watching our free symposia recordings in our [IEC YouTube Learning Center](#).

We've delivered four live symposia already, and two more will be presented this fall. See the details below or check our [Symposia page](#) to ensure you're attending our events to support your colleagues and the Council while learning from one another.

I'm also pleased to share that six manuscripts are currently in development, each designed to disseminate our experts' insights to a global audience. [We encourage you to submit manuscript ideas](#)—your voice and expertise are vital to our shared mission.

Looking Forward to Connecting In Person

Looking ahead, I hope you plan to join us at the IEC Councilor, Associate, and Industry Liaison Meeting on Friday, September 19, during the 2025 European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology (EADV) Congress in Paris, France. Invitations have been sent via email, and registration links are included. The meeting will take place from 7:15–8:30 AM CEST, so please plan your flights accordingly. Attendees will enjoy breakfast and networking, followed by an IEC update I'll present and a brief presentation on the recent low disease activity (LDA) consensus initiative from IEC Councilor Joseph Merola, MD MMSc FAAD FACR. This important work seeks to define low disease activity levels and feeds into another project that was recently funded that we'll discuss later in this newsletter.

Then, the next day, join us for our new IEC symposium, [Atopic Dermatitis versus Cutaneous T-Cell Lymphoma: Challenges and Novel Insights](#). Another new symposium, [Atopic Dermatitis and Alopecia Areata: Nuances of Clinical Trial Design and Recruitment](#), will be presented in November in New York City, NY, USA, at the Inflammatory Skin Disease Summit (ISDS).

Though we're celebrating our 10th anniversary, it's clear we're not resting on our laurels. The IEC continues to grow, evolve, and build on our accomplishments—and we're grateful to have you with us on this journey.

Alan Irvine, MD DSc
IEC President

IEC Receives a New Grant to Fund Study of Physicians' and Patients' Perceptions of Disease Activity Levels

The IEC is pleased to announce that the Council has received a grant from Eli Lilly to conduct a comprehensive survey aimed at aligning patient and physician perspectives on defining disease states of low disease activity (LDA), very low disease activity (vLDA), on-drug complete control, and off-drug remission in atopic dermatitis (AD). The results will be published to ensure these insights benefit patients and physicians worldwide.

This project will use a collaboratively developed survey to gather patient perspectives on LDA, vLDA, on-drug complete control, and off-drug remission for comparison to physician views. The IEC is partnering with the Pediatric Dermatology Research Alliance (PeDRA) and Global Parents for Eczema Research (GPER) to enable us to survey patients, dermatologists, and allergists.

In a separate project that this new work can build upon, the IEC recently sought consensus from IEC membership to define low disease activity (LDA), very low disease activity (vLDA), and remission, with results expected to be submitted for publication soon. IEC Councilor Dr Joseph Merola is leading this initiative in collaboration with Lucid Group, a research partner specializing in data collection and analysis. A multidisciplinary IEC Steering Committee is further guiding the project—from survey development through data interpretation and dissemination.

When published, it's expected that the results of both these studies will help physicians and patients communicate better with one another to facilitate shared decision-making, develop patient-centered clinical endpoints, personalize patient-centered treatments, and more.

IEC Welcomes 13 New Members and Promotes 2 to Councilor

Our growth continues following new-member approvals and promotions at the July IEC Board Meeting. The IEC now has **[174 members in 34 countries](#)**.

Welcome, New Councilors:

- **Mark Boguniewicz, MD**, United States
- **Silvia Mariel Ferrucci, MD**, Italy
- **Leon H. Kircik, MD FAAD**, United States
- **Chih-Hung (Abel) Lee, MD PhD**, Taiwan
- **Dong Hun Lee, MD PhD MBA**, South Korea
- **Reiko J. Tanaka, PhD**, United Kingdom

Welcome, New Associates:

- **Marcella R. Aquino, MD**, United States
- **Francesca Barei, MD**, Italy
- **Danuta Gutowska-Owsiak, MD PhD DSc**, Poland
- **Daniel Lorenzini, MD**, Brazil
- **Caroline Marie Thérèse Mann, MD**, Germany
- **Constanza Riquelme Mc Loughlin, MD PhD**, Spain
- **Margarita Maria Velasquez Lopera, MD DrSC**, Colombia

Congratulations, Newly Promoted Councilors:

- **Zelma C. Chiesa Fuxench, MD MSCE**, United States
- **Raj Chovatiya, MD PhD MSCI FAAD**, United States

View our roster of **[Councilors](#)** and **[Associates](#)** or learn more about **[how to join us](#)**.

Six Manuscripts Are in Progress from IEC Scholars

In just 10 years, **[the IEC has published 23 manuscripts](#)** to share our research and knowledge about atopic dermatitis with the world.

That number will soon grow, because our experts have six manuscripts in development to help improve patient care. They include manuscripts on:

- **Low disease activity levels and remission:** Two distinct projects with planned articles seek consensus on definitions among physicians and patients. The first of the two projects is nearly ready to be submitted for publication, and initial work has just launched on the second (as discussed above).
- **Standard of care in China:** This manuscript is based on Chinese dermatologists' experiences, offering insights into local diagnostic and treatment methodologies for atopic dermatitis.
- **Systemic Therapy:** The IEC last published an extensive look at systemic therapies in 2017's [When Does Atopic Dermatitis Warrant Systemic Therapy? Recommendations from an Expert Panel of the International Eczema Council](#). The new article will capture the extensive changes prompted by research and treatment advances in the intervening 8 years and aims to add the patient voice/perspective.
- **Using AI to Reduce Variability and Bias:** IEC Fellow Vijaytha Muralidharan's manuscript explores whether artificial intelligence can be used to improve clinical assessments' consistency and accuracy.
- **Allergists' Management of Atopic Dermatitis:** Allergist Marie Tauber is leading the effort to evaluate how allergists manage atopic dermatitis (AD) patients in hospital and private practice settings.

We look forward to sharing these articles with you as they are published. We will share links with you and post them to the [IEC Publications page](#). If you have an [idea for a manuscript the IEC could research and write](#), please submit your ideas for consideration.

[Visit the IEC Publications Page](#)

[Submit a Manuscript Idea](#)



IEC Councilor Katrina Abuabara, MD MA MSCE, and her new IEC Fellow Carlos Eduardo Forero Ángel, MD, smile at the start of his fellowship.

IEC Fellowship Update: Welcome, Carlos Eduardo Forero Ángel

The IEC is proud to welcome **Carlos Eduardo Forero Ángel, MD**, of Colombia as our newest IEC Research Fellow. He will work under the mentorship of US-based IEC Councilor **Katrina Abuabara, MD MA MSCE**, at the University of California San Francisco, where he will receive clinical research training and attend a major dermatology congress.

Forero Ángel is a dermatologist whose clinical and research work focuses on atopic dermatitis (AD), especially within Latin American populations. He completed his medical training at Universidad Militar Nueva Granada and his dermatology residency at Hospital Militar Central in Bogotá, where he was recognized for both academic excellence and compassionate care.

At Cayre IPS, Forero Ángel works within a multidisciplinary team managing moderate to severe AD cases. His approach integrates dermatology with psychology, nutrition, and pharmaceutical sciences to provide holistic care.

Dr. Forero Ángel has presented nationally, including a prize-winning talk at the Colombian Dermatology Congress, and his thesis explored IL-33 levels in AD and psoriasis.

As part of his fellowship, Dr. Forero Ángel is conducting a multicenter retrospective study to quantify neuropsychiatric comorbidities in Latin American AD patients—including depression, anxiety, ADHD, and sleep disorders. His work aims to improve diagnosis and care in underserved regions and raise awareness of the broader impacts of AD. His fellowship concludes in July 2026.

Meet the Councilor: Amy Paller, MD



Dr. Amy Paller is the IEC's inaugural president and co-founder in addition to being the Walter J. Hamlin Professor and Chair of Dermatology, professor of pediatrics, and principal investigator of the NIH-funded Skin Disease Research Center at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago, IL, USA.

Dr. Paller is president of the American Dermatological Association and has been president of the Society for Pediatric Dermatology, Society for Investigative Dermatology, Women's Dermatologic Society, and International Society for Pediatric Dermatology.

She co-authors *Hurwitz Clinical Pediatric Dermatology* and has edited the *Journal of Investigative Dermatology*, among other journals.

She was the inaugural co-chair of the Pediatric Dermatology Research Alliance and has served on the Board of Directors of the American Academy of Dermatology, Society for Investigative Dermatology, Society for Pediatric Dermatology, Women's Dermatologic Society, American Board of Dermatology, and American Dermatological Association.

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

IEC is a group of colleagues who all care deeply about helping patients and families with atopic dermatitis and are actively working towards the goals of increasing our understanding about AD and our treatment options. This combination leads to tremendous opportunities for global brainstorming, networking, and collaborations.

What do you think will garner the most attention over the coming year (and/or beyond) in this field?

I am intrigued right now by the potential for disease modification by early aggressive management—both the natural course of the AD itself and the risk/severity of other atopic and non-atopic comorbidities. As a pediatric dermatologist, I am particularly hopeful that our growing arsenal of systemic medications for young children with more severe AD, who are at the highest risks, will have a better long-term life quality because we can intervene early with safe, effective medications.

What do you see as the biggest need among AD patients?

The biggest need for so many is access to the medications that they need. While this is certainly true globally, where so many patients with AD who could benefit from the many new topical and systemic therapies do not have the opportunity to try them, especially in lower- and middle-income countries, even in the United States, we struggle often to get some of the best medications for our patients—and socioeconomic factors play a major role in the ability to have transformational treatment. Also, I am a huge fan of biologics for AD, given their efficacy and safety. However, the requirement for painful injections remains an impediment for children and their families; even if it is feasible to give the medication with the required dosing schedule, many families describe the emotional impact on the child and themselves of the stressful administration event. Figuring out a way to better reduce pain but target the type 2 immune pathway would be a huge advancement.

Describe a professional experience that you won't forget because of how it impacted your specialty or the way you practice.

I have had so many experiences with patients with AD or rare genetic disorders throughout the years in which an idea that is “outside the box” has changed their lives—and then can be implemented in practices throughout the world. For AD, though, it is really the medications that have emerged during the past decade that have been life-altering and have transformed my pediatric dermatology practice. I have been fortunate to have been an early adopter of new medications by being a research site, and thus seeing early on the impact of these biologics and JAK inhibitors that we have now for AD. Children with moderate to severe AD routinely consumed my practice time and were “frequent flyers,” in my office week after week with infections and misery. Now, so many of these patients come to see me once year or even “visit” through telemedicine because they are clear or virtually clear with their use of medication.

I also have to mention how fortunate I am to have colleagues who share my visions and have been able to run with ideas to make the world a better place for children. I have been involved in planting the seed as president at the start of or during a period of transformation for several organizations—with a group of incredible peers who helped to “water the garden” and make the ideas blossom. Examples are starting the IEC with Emma Guttman that now is making a difference around the world; generating the Pediatric Dermatology Research Alliance (PeDRA) with a small group of fellow pediatric dermatologists that now includes >1,000 members, has given more than \$3 million in grants and fellowships, and has been instrumental in the publication of almost 140 manuscripts; and taking Antonio Torrelo's vision that the International Society for Pediatric Dermatology do more than cosponsor an every 4 year meeting and grow it into a now 1,600-member, vibrant organization that delivers education about care of children with skin disorders globally. What a privilege to have been involved in these transformative organizations.

What's the most recent good place you've visited?

Getting on a plane with my husband, two of my sons, and two of my grandchildren for a family trip to San Diego. I have been to San Diego a dozen times for meetings, but the fun and the sites during a family vacation make it so much more magical.

Get to know other Councilors and Associates by reading [**past Meet the Councilor features**](#).

IEC Members in the News

IEC Director Earns International Leadership Award from ILDS

IEC Director Valeria Aoki, MD PhD, was recently honored as one of 22 recipients worldwide of an International League of Dermatological Societies (ILDS) 2025 Certificate of Appreciation Award. These annual awards recognize those in the field of dermatological care who have made an outstanding contribution in International Leadership or Humanitarian Dermatology.



The IEC is a member of the ILDS, a unique umbrella organization for professional dermatology organizations of all sizes, which has official relations status with the World Health Organization (WHO) to champion dermatology and skin health in global health policy.

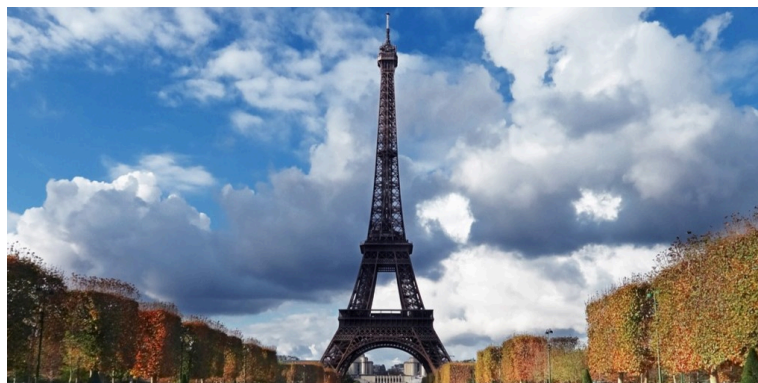
Dr. Aoki was recognized in the International Leadership category for leaders who have made significant contributions to furthering international dermatology, having demonstrated international leadership which has had an impact on global health policies and practices, furthering cross-border research, education and empowerment of dermatologists, their societies, and the public.

She was nominated by the Brazilian Society of Dermatology for her work in Latin America.

"Receiving this prestigious ILDS Certificate of Appreciation in International Leadership represents a great honor and seals the recognition of inspirational teamwork," Dr. Aoki said. "Such an achievement would not be possible without the support of exceptional colleagues and scientific mentors in dermatology. ... May this recognition ignite the new generations of dermatologists, embracing their specialty with dedication and passion, always seeking accessible and innovative solutions for our patients.

Dr. Aoki thanked the Brazilian Society of Dermatology and the healthcare professionals involved in the Cooperative Group on Fogo Selvagem Research, which was founded in 1984 by Luis A. Diaz and Sebastião Sampaio, both of whom have previously been recognized by the ILDS with this award.

Join us in Paris and New York City for the Final IEC Symposia of 2025



Atopic Dermatitis vs. Cutaneous T-Cell Lymphoma: Challenges and Novel Insights

September 20 at EADV
Paris, France

[Register for the Symposium at EADV](#)

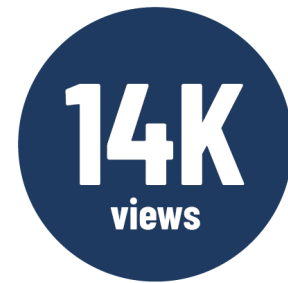


Atopic Dermatitis and Alopecia Areata: Nuances of Clinical Trial Design and Recruitment

November 12 at ISDS
New York City, NY, USA

[Register for the Symposium at ISDS](#)

Leveraging 10 Years of Symposia to Extend Global Learning Opportunities



Subscribe to the IEC YouTube channel to be notified when new content is available:

youtube.com/@internationaleczemacouncil4126

Thanks to our amazing members, the IEC has presented 45 educational events, including live symposia, virtual events, and courses, in just 10 years. Thousands of people learned directly from those presentations, and the IEC is leveraging their content to ensure even more people can learn from our experts.

Nearly 140 videos from IEC events comprising more than 100 hours of viewing are posted for free access in the [IEC YouTube Learning Center](#). The 14,000 views of these recordings prove their value as an easily accessible way for clinicians and researchers to take a deep dive into specific elements of atopic dermatitis or get up to date on the latest in research and treatment. [Subscribe to our channel](#) to be notified when new videos are added.

To help make more learners aware of this important resource, the Council recently began posting quick, scannable summaries of symposium content in the [IEC blog](#). Physicians and PhDs searching for content related to atopic dermatitis may find the IEC through these posts, then have the option to learn more by watching the full symposia recording and visiting our [IEC YouTube Learning Center](#).

This is just another way that the IEC seeks to extend the reach of the education our experts provide so that we can help improve the care of patients with atopic dermatitis worldwide.

[Go to the IEC's YouTube Learning Center](#)

Thank You, Corporate Members, and Welcome, New Partners

The IEC is grateful for our [valued industry partners](#) whose support fuels our mission to advance care for people living with atopic dermatitis worldwide. Our corporate members' commitment enables us to deliver impactful education, foster global collaboration, and drive forward the research that shapes tomorrow's treatments.

We are pleased to announce that we recently welcomed 2 new corporate members: [Kymera](#) and [Organon](#). We thank them for joining us.

We are proud to be supported by 13 [partner companies](#).

As we continue to grow, we invite companies working in the atopic dermatitis space to join the IEC as corporate members. Your partnership connects you with global leaders in dermatology and allergy, offers

opportunities to engage in exclusive symposia and professional forums, and positions your organization at the forefront of innovation and advocacy in eczema care.

[Learn more about the ways IEC membership](#) can benefit your company, then [contact CEO Alan Stiles](#) to discuss partnerships.

Together, we can accelerate progress, improve patient outcomes, and reduce the burden of atopic dermatitis across the globe. Join us so that we can help each other advance our shared mission.

When you become an IEC corporate member, you'll join these valued companies:

The IEC Thanks Our Corporate Sponsors for their Support

President's Council





Executive Council

Director's Council



Councilor's Council



[Learn How to Partner with the IEC](#)



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 174 Councilors and Associates from 34 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](#).

Connect with the IEC on social media

