



The International Bariatric Club – A Worldwide Web Educational Network for Bariatric Professionals

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Introduction

The International Bariatric Club (IBC) is a free, non-profit-making organization open to all bariatric surgery/medicine professionals with the primary aim of education. The IBC is easily accessible through a dedicated website (www.ibcclub.org) which was launched in March 2012. The IBC was conceived by Tomasz Rogula, Assistant Professor of Surgery and Philip Schauer, Professor of Surgery from the Cleveland Clinic Foundation, USA in 2008. Initially, the club consisted simply of a monthly seminar broadcast over the internet with the help of WebEx (web conferencing), based at the Cleveland Clinic campuses in Ohio and Florida. These 1-hour talks were built within the curricula of the Fellowship in Advanced Laparoscopy/Bariatric Surgery of both institutions. The

combined, monthly webinar was established to consolidate the Cleveland Clinic Foundation Fellowship education program. Fellows would present a concise review of 1–2 recently published bariatric papers from reputable journals. These webinars initially attracted a small on-line audience and allowed questions to be put to the speaker regarding the presentation from on-line attendees. The aims of the IBC are summarized in Table 1.

Global Expansion

Since 2010 the IBC has rapidly expanded into a powerful medium for the exchange of bariatric knowledge globally. Indeed, it has grown significantly in membership and range of activities and now has over 880 members. In November 2010, the social media vehicle, Facebook, was used to promote IBC to the global bariatric professional community. In addition, further educational innovations of the IBC have evolved, including the IBC Newsletter and IBC TV. Planning is already in progress for showcasing of the latest innovations in bariatric surgery through IBC Innovations (headed by Manoel Galvao Neto).

IBC Webinar Activities

WebEx Conferencing (courtesy of Cisco Systems, Santa Clara, California) is the platform for the IBC webinars which take place every 1–2 months. All IBC members are able to access the webinar free of charge through a link emailed to all members. Access to the live webinar can be either from a computer with a webcam (PC or Mac) or using a smart-phone/tablet (iPhone, Android, Blackberry, iPad). The presentations have been consistently of a high standard and are often given by global leaders in bariatric surgery. They are also interactive

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Table 1 Aims of the International Bariatric Club

- 1 Promotion and exchange of knowledge, ideas and experiences related to preoperative, intraoperative and postoperative care of the bariatric patient by bariatric professionals globally
- 2 Sharing videos related to operations, management of complications, and emerging technologies
- 3 Daily requests by members for opinions on questions and challenging problems which arise
- 4 Presentations of the monthly Webinar coordinated by the Cleveland Clinic in association with WebEx
- 5 Presentations at national and international bariatric meetings

with all online attendees having the opportunity to ask the speaker questions in real-time. All webinars are recorded and uploaded on to the IBC website where they can be accessed by clicking on the IBC Webinar tab (<http://www.ibcclub.org>).

Table 2 lists the presentations from 2011–12, which all provided opportunity for interactive on-line discussion.

IBC Facebook Page

The IBC Facebook site is the most active bariatric surgery social media site in the world. Daily discussions take place, focusing on controversial issues, advice about dealing with

difficult clinical scenarios, promotion of national and international meetings, and discussion of emerging technologies. The Facebook page has been a global catalyst for expansion of the IBC, such that as of July 28th, 2013 there are 880 members from Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, North and South America.

IBC Website

The IBC Committee established the IBC website (www.ibcclub.org) in March 2012. The website facilitates registration to the IBC and allows quick access to the IBC Newsletter, IBC TV and previous IBC Webinars.

IBC Symposia

The inaugural non-virtual IBC Meeting took place at the XVI World Congress of the International Federation for the Surgery of Obesity and Metabolic Disorders (IFSO) in Hamburg in September 2011. The IBC Meeting attracted a large audience and a large international viewership for the talks shown in Table 2. The IBC Meeting at IFSO Barcelona and IFSO New Delhi similarly had

Table 2 IBC Webinars and Symposia in 2012

Date	Presenter	Title of Presentation
Jan 28th, 2012	Jacques Himpens (Belgium)	Revisional surgery after laparoscopic adjustable gastric banding
Mar 28th, 2012	Pradeep Chowbey (India)	Metabolic benefits of bariatric surgery in patients with low BMI
Apr 26th, 2012	IBC at IFSO-EC (Barcelona, Spain)	
	Haris Khwaja (UK)	When BPD-DS fails
	Keith Kim (USA)	22nd century fixation
	Joan Pujol Rafols (Spain)	When band fails
	Ariel Ortiz (Mexico)	When plication fails
	Andres Sanchez Pernaute (Spain)	When sleeve fails
May 26th, 2012	MAL Fobi (USA)	Why gastric bypass should be banded
Sept 14th, 2012	IBC at IFSO-WC (New Delhi, India)	
	Pradeep Chowbey (India)	Why the Indian Population is at Greater Risk of Metabolic Syndrome
	Rudolph Weiner (Germany)	Why Sleeve Gastrectomy Remains the Best Restrictive Procedure
	MAL Fobi (USA)	Why Roux-en-Y Gastric Bypass should be Banded
	Henry Buchwald (USA)	How to Write High Quality Bariatric Papers
	John Dixon (Australia) vs Nicola Scopinaro (Italy)	Debate - Metabolic Surgery is not superior to medical treatment for Type 2 Diabetes
	Karl Miller (Austria) vs Martin Fried (Czech Republic)	Debate - Is Gastric Plication ready for Prime-time?
Dec 15th 2012	IBC at Romanian Surgery Congress (Bucharest)	
	Manoel Galvao Neto (Brazil)	Endoscopic Bariatric Procedures
	Tomasz Rogula (USA)	Robotic Roux-en-Y Gastric Bypass
	MAL Fobi (USA)	Banded Gastric Bypass
	Catalin Copaescu (Romania)	Laparoscopic Sleeve Gastrectomy
	Francesco Papadia (Italy)	Laparoscopic Biliopancreatic Diversion
	Robert Rutledge (USA)	Laparoscopic Mini-Gastric Bypass
	Ariel Ortiz (Mexico)	Laparoscopic Gastric Plication
Dec. 19th, 2012	Francesco Rubino (USA) vs John Dixon (Australia)	Transcontinental Debate – Surgical vs Medical Treatment of Type 2 Diabetes

considerable discussion in the ‘Expert Forum’ section of the symposium. The format addressed controversies in bariatric surgery through state-of-the-art lectures and emotive debates. A major non-virtual IBC symposium involving world-renowned authorities on ‘cutting edge’ obesity topics has been arranged for the IFSO-Istanbul World Congress in August 2013.

IBC Newsletter

The inaugural IBC Newsletter, edited by Haris Khwaja, was produced for the IBC-IFSO Barcelona meeting and is available on the IBC website (<http://www.ibcclub.org/newsletter-april-2012/>). The Newsletter focuses on articles relevant to bariatric surgery, discussion of controversial issues, a section on high quality Fellowship programs, and a ‘Symposium Snapshot’ section reviewing recent international symposia. The IBC-IFSO New Delhi Newsletter is also

available on the IBC website (<http://www.ibcclub.org/newsletter-september-2012/>).

IBC TV

IBC TV was launched in May 2012 under the directorship of Ariel Ortiz, and includes interviews with bariatric experts on topical issues, meeting reviews, and interviews to showcase bariatric innovation (<http://www.bariatric.tv/channel/international-bariatric-club-television/>). IBC TV is an important medium to promote global education.

IBC Membership

Membership to the IBC can be obtained free via the IBC website (www.ibcclub.org). Membership to the IBC Facebook Discussion Page can be obtained by emailing Tomasz Rogula at tomrogula@ibcclub.org