

MEDICAL WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

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# MWIA



# Update

No. 74 June 2018

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**MEDICAL WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION**

**THEME OF THE 2016-2019 TRIENNIUM**

**“MEDICAL WOMEN: AMBASSADORS OF CHANGE”  
MEDICAL WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION**

## **1. PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

**Professor Dr. Dr. Bettina Pfleiderer, Germany**

Time flies and in about 13 months MWIA will be celebrating its centennial congress in New York. I am looking forward to receiving many interesting contributions to the scientific program highlighting the projects and achievements of all of you! **Submissions for oral presentations and posters** for the centennial congress in New York are now open and will **close September 1, 2018**. Registration for the centennial congress in New York will open on 30th June.

**Congress website: <https://amwa-doc.org/mwia100>**

We have received beautiful entries for our MWIA scarf design competition from our membership. The MWIA executive with input from the Centennial PR committee and an artist will choose the winning design. **The winner will be notified on 31st August 2018.**

Also you should have received an email from the chair of the centennial publication committee, Dr. Helen Goodyear. She has asked for more pictures for our *centennial book "100 years on 100 pages"*. This publication will be an amazing document of our centennial history. Ten posters on MWIA's history- one per decade- are completed already. You will love them! These activities are part of our MWIA centennial package at the congress.

**Updated information about our centennial activities can be found on [http://mwia.net/centennial\\_congress/](http://mwia.net/centennial_congress/)**

The MWIA executive, as the decision-making body of the organization has had a heavy work load in the last few months. In many debates we had to search for the best way on how to advance MWIA, optimize our governance processes and reach our goals. We had not only two skype meetings in the last 3 months, but about 20 briefs to discuss and an endless flurry of emails to read. As you may know everyone on the executive (with the exception of the Secretary General who receives some remuneration for carrying out the administrative tasks of the association) works on a voluntary basis and MWIA is deeply indebted to them. They give freely of their time for MWIA business, in addition to their day-job, and at times even contribute personal funds to serve the MWIA membership well!

For your information, the MWIA executive, in close collaboration with the Ethics and Resolution committee, is working on the very important task of **modernizing and updating our MWIA Statutes and by-laws**. A draft of the overhauled document will be sent to the membership, at the latest 6 months prior to our centennial congress. The executive will discuss the best way of involving the membership in the discussions prior to voting on them. We will keep you posted on this!

As one outcome from the last Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York in March we have been able to widen our network. **MWIA is now partnering** with the NGO *"Women in War"* (<https://womeninwar.org/wordpress/>). Women in War brings together scholars and activists from all over the world. They are interested in exploring all aspects of gender and armed conflict through discussions, online seminars, publications, conferences and counselling. MWIA will bring a medical perspective to the table.



Also, we are very proud to be admitted as a **new associated organization member of CPME- the Standing Committee of European doctors**. I was in Brussels (Belgium) in April to introduce MWIA to the delegates from 32 European countries. MWIA's membership application received an approval rate of 100 %. MWIA is looking forward to working with CPME on behalf of women and children.

On a personal note, I have had the honor representing MWIA at many other occasions in the last 3 months.

After being in Brussels, I went to **the council meeting of the German Medical Association in Erfurt (Germany) representing MWIA as an international guest**. One of the topics was the increasing violence towards (often female) physicians in Germany. Medical doctors are even attacked when working in the emergency room. MWIA has received similar reports e.g. from Nigeria and Italy. The MWIA Scientific Committee is currently discussing how to address this issue globally.



I also had the privilege of travelling to Palermo in Sicily (Italy) to attend the fantastic MWIA Southern European regional meeting 27-29th of April. Thank you to the Italian Medical Women's organization (AIDM) and its president Dr. Caterina Ermio and the MWIA VP of Southern Europe Dr. Antonella Vezzani for the organization of this event in a spectacular setting in an old Palazzo. Our Italian colleagues were great hosts and welcomed colleagues from the US, Australia, Brazil, UK, Germany, Korea and Hong Kong. A detailed report

can be found later in this update.

My next journey led me to Helsinki (Finland) in May. I had the wonderful opportunity to **meet some members of the Finnish Medical Women's Association** for lunch. It was a great opportunity to discuss many topics of importance to medical women in Finland and globally. The president of the Finnish Medical Women's Association Dr. Eeva Leppävuori together with MWIA VP of Northern Europe Dr. Tuula Saarela showed me the touristic highlights of Helsinki as well. They were wonderful hosts! Medical women's networks at their best!

Last, but not least I was elected **to the board of the European Women's Lobby (EWL) in Brussels for 2 years** in June. Dr. Antonella Vezzani, MWIA Vice president for Southern Europe is my alternate. We are very proud to represent MWIA and its European regions in the EWL. I am following Dr. Edith Schratzberger-Vecsei, who was our MWIA rep for 6 years (4 years on the executive as Vice president and 2 years as EWL president). Edith represented MWIA very

well and her work is highly valued. Many thanks to Edith for her hard work, her passion, commitment and the time she put into the fight for women rights in Europe.

I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the European Women's Forum kick-off at the European Parliament: Women (re)-shaping Power. The campaign 50:50 Women for Europe, Europe for Women was launched. The aim is to have 50 % women in parliament and not only 37%. It was inspiring to meet over 100 leading women's rights activists from the EWL membership across Europe.



2 more regional meetings are coming up - in Bangkok (Central Asia) and Nairobi (Africa and Near East). I will be attending both and I am very much looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible!

As a reminder, we launched a new Facebook page in December 2017. Please follow us to receive updates on women's health, MWIA news and information about the upcoming congress.

<https://www.facebook.com/mwia.network>

## **2. REQUESTS FROM THE SECRETARY- GENERAL**

**Dr. Shelley Ross, Canada**

It is just over a year before we will be gathering in New York City for our Centennial Congress from July 25-28, 2019. Registration will be open starting June 30<sup>th</sup> at [www.amwa-doc.org/mwia100/](http://www.amwa-doc.org/mwia100/). The room rate at the Brooklyn Bridge Marriott is better than what you often can find in New York, so please take advantage of the convenience of staying in the same hotel where the congress will take place.

The **MWIA website** now has a heading on the home page for activities associated with the Centennial Congress. Please be reminded about the Centennial **scarf competition** which closes July 1<sup>st</sup> and the **fabric collage** project, both of which are explained on the website. [www.mwia.net](http://www.mwia.net)

The **Second Special Update** for the Centennial Congress will go out to all national associations and individual members in July. This will include the call for triennial reports from all national associations and a call for resolutions.

There are two **remaining regional meetings** planned for 2018. The first is the Central Asian Regional Meeting to be held in Bangkok, Thailand, in September 6-8, 2018 ([carc2018.com](http://carc2018.com)) and the second is the Near East and Africa Regional Congress in Nairobi, Kenya, November 11-15, 2018 (<http://www.kmwa.or.ke/mwia-near-east-and-africa-regional-meeting/>).

MWIA had a large delegation to the **World Health Assembly** in Geneva, Switzerland, held from May 21-25, 2018. The delegation had the opportunity to meet with staff at WHO with whom we have a workplan. A wonderful opportunity arose to comment on the upcoming document on

**Virginity Testing**, soon to be released. Thank you again to the MWIA members who reviewed various chapters in the **Female Genital Mutilation Handbook** recently released by WHO.

In response to the invitation found in the March 2018 Update from Dr. Vivien Brown of the Federation of Medical Women of Canada to join with Canada in spreading its very successful **HPV Prevention Week**, I am pleased to say that AMWA has now organized their USAvsHPV week for the week of January 22, 2019. Canada's CANADAvsHPV will start October 1<sup>st</sup>. The materials are available for your use, should you wish to join in.

As a reminder to National Coordinators, it is anticipated that you will circulate this newsletter to your membership. In addition, if you have not accessed the **secure site for NCs** please let the Secretariat know. The Updated **MWIA Flyer** is available in English, Spanish and Portuguese to National Coordinator's on the NC secure site at [www.mwia.net](http://www.mwia.net).

Contact information for MWIA:

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Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/mwia.network>

Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/mwia.network>

yMWIA facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/youngMWIA/>

### 3. 2016-2019 EXECUTIVE with email addresses:

President	Prof Bettina Pfleiderer, Germany	president@mwia.net
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VP North America	Dr. Padmini Murthy, USA	VP_northamerica@mwia.net
VP Latin America	Dr. Maite Sevillano, Brazil	VP_latinamerica@mwia.net
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VP Western Pacific	Dr. Cissy Yu, Hong Kong	VP_westernpacific@mwia.net



The Medical Women's International Association Executive 2016-2019  
Front row left to right Kyung Ah Park, Clarissa Fabre, Bettina Pfleiderer, Shelley Ross  
Back row left to right: Piyanetr Sikhu, Mabel Aboah, Padmini Murthy, Maite Sevillano, Cissy Yu, Khatuna Kaladze, Tuula Saarela, Antonella Vezzani (absent: Gail Beck)

#### **4. Message from the Treasurer**

##### **Dr. Gail Beck, Canada**

With gender discussions so much in the media, I wrote a blog to raise awareness of the new approach to gender in a clinical setting.

<https://drgailbeck.com/2018/04/30/a-primer-on-gender/>

#### **5. NEWS FROM AROUND THE REGIONS**

##### **Australia**

- yAFMW closed Facebook group: 170 members; much better engagement via social media
- Constitutional review is ongoing
- Have done a few presentations on the #Metoo movement for ANU and for IWD and recommend some of the international work eg that of the North Americans (US and Canada) – with the #MedToo
- AFMW members attended the CSW event
- AFMW members are attending the World Health Event

##### **ACT & Region MWS**

-We have had responses regarding support for breastfeeding from our 2 hospitals and 1 university. Medical mothers have seen these, and some have informed the information is useful & they will let us know if any issues.

- Putting together a team to participate in Mother's Day Classic "fun run" in May
- The Juggle May 15 – speakers currently being approached; audience = medical students
- Fundraising event July 27
- Annual ski trip in August
- Celebration dinner September 19
- We have reviewed our policy on "Bullying and Harassment of doctors and medical students"

### NSW MWS

- Dinner meeting: 31<sup>st</sup> May; 6:30pm --
- CV/Interview workshop: Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June; 2pm – 5pm
- November Dinner -
- Website: We are looking forward to being a part of the AFMW website upgrade.

### QMWS

- May meeting, as artist **Kathryn Brimblecombe-Fox's** describe "**Journeying Through Landscape – Real and Unreal**", transports us from land to sky and into space.
- 25 May 2018 will be the launch of the exhibition of "**Pioneering Medical Women of the Outback**", curated by Mr Andy Reed from the **Marks-Hirschfeld Museum of Medical History**

### VMWS

- ‘I don't know how she does it’ - 20/3/2018 - Presentation well attended by resident doctors and students
- Meeting with Greens representative Senator Janet Rice to discuss financial support for students who are parents
- International Women's Day cemetery walk was held
- International Women's Day casual evening dinner catch at pub - open to members & non members
- Hospital liaison representative appointed to provide conduit between VMWS & female doctors' hospital jobs/ training
- Strengthening our alliances with other female medical organisations
- Received an invitation to attend joint Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Women in General Practice & National Faculty of Sexual Health June 15/16 at Novotel in St Kilda
- Website development in progress
- Planned Literary Lunch for Saturday July 21.
- AGM VMWS on Saturday September 15.

### Brazil

**Scientific Sessions:** April 19: "The Outsourced Child" and May 17: "Challenges and Benefits of the Treatment of Obesity"

#### **Activities of our directors and associates:**

- 1) Dr Prof Magda Carneiro Sampaio, Prof of Pediatrics of São Paulo University Medical School and President of ABMM- Section São Paulo was in Vancouver, in April, as the



only attendee from Latin America to the Women Pioneers of Immunology in the Americas. Her subject is Pediatric Immunology.

2) Dr Elisa Maria Moreira Garcez presented a speech in May about Gender Medicine at International Federation of Medical Students- Brazil. Her presentation was a success.

3) Dr Ana Regina Vlainich, one of our directors and an ophthalmologist presented “Management in Health” at a International Congress on cataracts in São Paulo. The ophthalmology clinics are being targets of investors in Brazil.

4) Dr Sonia Maria Rosa Lima one of our directors and a professor of Gynecology at Santa Casa Medical School of SP had many activities in May and June: during the Brazilian Congress on Climaterium and Menopause she made a presentation about “Non Hormonal Therapies for Menopause Complaints” In June she organized a symposium at Santa Casa about “Integral Attention to Woman’s Health.” During this symposium Dr Elizabeth Giunco Alexandre, President Elect of ABMM, a cardiologist, presented “Precocious Identification of Women with Cardiovascular Risk.” Dr Sonia in June participated in Vancouver, at the Congress of the International Menopause Society.

5) Dr Nelci Collange, a new director of ABMM and a Pediatric Neurosurgeon, in April presented a speech about “Women in Neurosurgery in Brazil and Latin America” during the On Line Symposium: “Women in Neurosurgery”

6) Dr Mariza Kobata, a colo-proctologist, participated in a round table of Sexually Transmitted Diseases during the Brazilian Congress on Colo-Proctology in June.

**Gender Medicine Department of ABMM:** Dr Marilene Melo, vice president of ABMM, is doing a brilliant work with the support of APM ( Medical Association of SP) spreading the concept of Gender Medicine among lay population in all state of São Paulo presenting talks and distributing leaflets about the subject., using the title “Diseases that are different between Men and Women”

The Department of Gender Medicine produced a text about Gender Medicine in the Curricula of Medical Schools of various countries to serve as basis for a proposal of law to introduce Gender Medicine in the curricula of Medical Schools of the State of São Paulo. Dr Marilene Melo presented the text to state senator Ulysses Tassinari, who is a medical doctor, who made the proposal of this law which was approved last week at the State Senate of São Paulo State.

May 19, there was a presentation at UNISA (University of Santo Amaro), organized by Anna Maria Martits and presented by Marilene Melo and Elizabeth Alexandre for students of the Medical School of this University about “Diseases which are different among men and women” as an introduction to the concept of gender medicine for medical students. The executive of UNISA was very enthusiastic with the presentation and the introduction of the subject in the curriculum.

In June during the administrative meeting of ABMM, there was a presentation by Flavia Goulart who is a pre-candidate for the **House of Representatives** at the general elections in October/2018. She graduated with a BA and has a Masters from Harvard, Kennedy School of Government. ABMM wants to elect more woman representatives.

## **Hong Kong**

The Academic and Education Committee held three academic lunch symposiums from December 2017 to June 2018. Endocrinologist, Dr. Michele

Yuen, Respiratory Medicine specialist, Dr Wong King Ying, and Clinical Oncologist, Dr Patricia Poon, gave talks on Osteoporosis and Obesity, Living Well with Small Airway Diseases, and Treatment of BRCA Positive Female Cancers respectively.

In January, 2018, HKWDA was invited by the Shenzhen Medical Women's Association to a one day Shenzhen Fellowship and Professional Event. HKWDA members took the special opportunity to tour different parts of Shenzhen, including Beijing Genomics Institute.

Meanwhile, HKWDA continued to uphold regular community service duties. The most recent event involved arranging a health talk on fatty liver disease and individual health checks for ethnic minorities, which took place at the beginning of March 2018.

## **India**

Dr. Vandana Walvekar, President of the Association of Medical Women in India, has started some workshops for Members in the three Branches - Mumbai, Kolkata and Nagpur. This year's theme is "Adolescence to Adulthood."

The Kolkata branch is hosting the Annual Conference on 17/18 November, 2018

The May issue of the Journal which has just come out is very interesting and informative.

## **Japan**

On May 20<sup>th</sup>, Japan Medical Women's Association (JMWA) held its 63rd general meeting in Shinjyuku-ku, Tokyo. Election of officers was held with Assistant Professor Yoshiko Maeda being re-elected as President and National Coordinator of the JMWA. Dr. Michiko Suwa and Dr. Akiko Baba were elected to the Vice President of the JMWA.

We renewed a website of JMWA (<http://www.jmwa.or.jp>). It is only in Japanese but there is a plan to make it available in English as well.

## **The Netherlands**

Professor Angela Maas, one of the outstanding members of the Dutch Medical Women's Association, (VNVA) recently published an article in the New England Journal of Medicine, entitled, Recognizing Blind Spots- A remedy for Gender Bias in Medicine

<https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp1802228>

## **Sweden**

The Swedish Medical Women's Society has been deeply involved in the #MeToo movement which hit Sweden in October-November last year. It resulted in a page long statement against sexual harassment on the workplace that 10400 Swedish female doctors signed online, making it the biggest national petition.

The accounts of sexual harassments and sexual assaults on female (above all junior level) doctors were numerous and the petition was published in one of the biggest daily morning newspapers in Sweden.

The media coverage was big and we have been seen in National Television and interviewed in several papers since.

Our facebook group has now over 7000 members, some of whom have joined the Swedish Medical Women's Association.

We will continue on the theme sexual harassment and our spring meeting on the 21st of April is about sexualized violence - what is the doctor's role.

### **Switzerland**

Last year's motto was "Öffnung" (Opening). This began with the annual conference in March 2017 with workshops to gain a better insight into the activities of general practitioner, chief physician, researcher and medical director. Then network events were held, i.e. excursions to institutions/exhibitions that were of interest from a gender and/or medical point of view, participation was gratifyingly good. We also took part in a so-called "docday"-fair, where student councils and associations introduce themselves to the medical students, so that they are aware of potentially relevant groups they may want to join after completing their training. In addition, we opened our association for dentists and founded an U40 regulars' table, which was very well attended. Finally, I would like to mention that the "Steigbügel"-project we have supported (already reported on it) for female re-entrants has been successful to the extent that four female doctors have already been included. With a view to the future, we are conducting a survey of female management physicians regarding their position (how they came about), professional hurdles as well as future and career ideas.

### **United Kingdom**

The Medical Women's Federation have invited their members to volunteer to be interviewed in the study on the Gender Pay Gap that is commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Care.

### **North American Region**

#### **Dr. Padmini Murthy, VP**

The two members of the North American region are the Federation of Medical Women of Canada and the American Medical Women's Association.

### **Canada**

The Federation of Medical Women of Canada is gearing up for the second year of CANADA vs HPV. The week will start with a call to action with an event on Parliament Hill October 1st and carry on with media events across the country. There are many partners including the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada.

Following on the success of last year's HPV Prevention Week, Dr. Vivien Brown wrote an article in the March Update to share Canada's material. The American Medical Women have embraced this invitation and are having their USA vs HPV week beginning January 22nd. A week of webinars is planned that can be shared internationally.

The Federation also has a Peace and Security Committee as the Federation became a corporate member of the Canada Peace and Security Network.

The Federation of offering conjoint membership with the Women in Medicine group who are focusing on women physician wellness.

The Federation is pleased to announce that AMWA and its partners are joining in HPV Prevention Week as USAvsHPV, theirs to be held in January.

### **United States of America**

April - American Medical Women's Association, Laura W. Bush Institute for Women's Health, Mayo Clinic, and the University of Utah co-hosted the 2018 Sex and Gender Health Education Summit: Advancing Curricula through a Multidisciplinary Lens, held at the University of Utah. [sghesummit2018.com](https://sghesummit2018.com) Sign up to view the program webcast here: <https://form.jotform.com/80990740166158>. Join the Sex and Gender Health Collaborative: [amwa-doc.org/sghc.2](http://amwa-doc.org/sghc.2)

AMWA hosted a Mentorship Webinar: Leading Through Change: Being Decisively Collaborative. Dr. Connie Newman, AMWA President, attended the MWIA regional conference in Italy. Dr. Padmini Murthy, MWIA VP North America, presented at the Women's Economic Forum in New Delhi, India. AMWA Participates in Climate & Health Solutions for Our Future Conference <http://ms2ch.org/live-stream/>

**May** -AMWA organized a presentation on Human Trafficking: A Call to Action for Health Care Professionals in Florida which was well attended. Presenters included Dr. Suzanne Harrison, AMWA past president.

AMWA Participated in a Blockchain and AI Innovation Venture Summit on May 18, 2018 hosted by One Traction. AMWA Executive Director, Dr. Eliza Chin participated on the HealthTech Disruption Panel.

AMWA recognized over 482 women graduates with the Rubin Glasgow award. This award is given to the women medical students who graduated in the top 10% of their class from medical schools across the country.

**June** -AMWA members will be presenters at the 2018 Own the Bone Fragility Fracture Symposium and Workshop organized by the American Orthopedic Association in Boston.

Dr. Padmini Murthy attended a conference in Taiwan and she met the members of the Taiwanese medical association and conveyed her greetings and extended a personal invitation on behalf of AMWA and MWIA to attend the upcoming MWIA centennial in New York in July 2019.

AMWA leaders continue to speak out against gun violence.

AMWA Leaders Contribute to Society of Women's Health Research (SWHR) Paper: Understanding the Impact of Sex and Gender in Alzheimer's Disease: A Call to Action

The local organizing committee of AMWA members are working on the upcoming MWIA centennial.

#### Advocacy efforts of AMWA from April- June 2018

April 3, 2018 – AMWA signs onto letter supporting FY19 funding of the Title V Maternal and Child (MCH) Services Block Grant

April 18, 2018 – AMWA signs onto letter supporting legislation that would help address the substance use disorder (SUD) treatment workforce shortage

April 24, 2018 – AMWA signs onto letters to the House and Senate supporting inclusion of sufficient funding for Alzheimer’s Disease research and programs in Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19) appropriation bills

April 25, 2018 – AMWA signs onto letter thanking Rep Peters (Peters Letter) for co-sponsoring the 340B PAUSE Act and letters encouraging his colleagues Rep Paul Ruiz (Ruiz Letter), Rep. Mimi Walters (Walters Letter) and Rep. Tony Cardenas (Cardenas Letter) to co-sponsor this legislation

May 23, 2018 – AMWA signs onto letter supporting H.R.3378, the Ensuring Access to Air Ambulance Services Act

May 25, 2018 – AMWA Opposes Proposed Rule on Title X Funding

June 14, 2018 – AMWA joined other LEAD Coalition member organizations who signed onto letters to Congress in support of the Concentrating on High-Value Alzheimer’s Needs to Get to an End (CHANGE) Act. [S. 2387 | Senate Letter | H.R.4957 | House Letter]

June 14, 2018 – AMWA Sends Letter of Support for AB 2601 that requires sex education in charter schools in California

June 25, 2018 - AMWA Writes Letter Denouncing Policy of Separation of Children From their Families at Southern Border

#### **Southern European Region**

**Dr. Antonella Vezzani, VP**

It is my pleasure to give you an abbreviated report on the MWIA Southern European Regional and AIDM (Associazione Italiana Donne Medico) Meeting

**The theme Multidisciplinary Approach to Chronic Disease and Gender Differences**

About three hundred Italian women doctors and medical women from various parts of the world attended the **MWIA Southern European Regional** organized by the Italian Women's Medical Association in Palermo (Italy), from 27 to 28th April.

MWIA president, Prof. Dr. Dr. Bettina Pfleiderer opened the AIDM Congress officially and gave an overview on sex/gender sensitive medicine and how this will change the face of medicine in the future. Patients are no longer to be perceived as a homogenous population and biological and social factors are to be taken into account in order to allow for a better individual diagnosis, treatment and outcome. She said that unfortunately, knowledge on sex and gender aspects has still not been integrated in the treatment of patients or in clinical trials- therefore disadvantage patients and in particular women.

To facilitate knowledge transfer and stimulate research this needs to be integrated at the medical curriculum at med schools as well. She and her team at the medical faculty in Münster, Germany developed an educational exchange platform on topics relating to sex and gender aspects in medicine “GenderMed-Wiki”. The English version of the platform was officially launched in Palermo.

The Vice-President of Southern Europe, Dr. Antonella Vezzani, highlighted in her opening remarks the commitment of the Italian association of medical women in the international field. Being a MWIA member means taking part in a broader intellectual exchange on e.g. challenges professional and medical women's are facing, gender violence and how to create and maintain a high interest in gender. AIDM has been working on the topic of Gender sensitive Medicine for several years. Therefore it was decided at the regional meeting to submit a resolution entitled “Implementation and dissemination of a Sex and Gender Sensitive Medicine for the MWIA general assembly to be held in NY in 2019.

MWIA’s President-Elect, Dr. Clarissa Fabre, showed the results from the MWIA online survey conducted last year to assess its members’ future priorities. Results were presented on job satisfaction, discrimination on grounds of sex/gender, sexual harassment and bullying, work-related stress and burnout, and were broken down by age, and by region (e.g. Europe vs North America). Information was sought on paid/unpaid maternity and parental leave. Work-life balance emerged as the top priority along with violence against women and girls, closely followed by leadership and mentoring.

Prof. Jan Coles from Australia, lead of the Survey Sexual Harassment of MWIA Women showed the results of the Survey Sexual Harassment of MWIA Women in Medicine Today: #medtoo. Participants described a spectrum of experiences that seemed strongly rooted in the cultural fabric of their community, organisations and of the profession. Sexual harassment was gendered and participants identified patients and senior colleagues as common perpetrators. While their perpetrators often evaded punishment, participants faced enduring consequences in their personal and professional lives. This international study of sexual harassment in the medical workplace confirms its gendered nature and its pervasiveness in current medical practice.

“Stress management of women doctors” was the title of the lecture presented by immediate MWIA past president, Prof. Kyung Ah Park from Korea. The suicidal rate of Korean women doctors are 4 times higher than average. Kyung Ah Park suggested some solutions or tips for stress management of women doctors.

The Mattarella hall of the Palazzo dei Normanni, Enesco heritage, was the spectacular setting for the first day of the conference with talks on the relationship between patient and female doctors, the quality of life of women, impact of sex and gender on learning and memory and sex/gender differences in neurosciences.

The second day took place in the heart of historic Palermo, in the hall of honor and in the hall of mirrors of the Circolo dell’Esercito. The meeting continued by addressing the impact of gender medicine in the various fields of medicine: from heart disease to oncology, from rheumatic diseases to gynaecology, from pharmacology to new strategies for widespread well-being that takes into account the gender difference as an important element in determining the health of men and women

A photo gallery of the event is available here:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/donnemedico/with/41923172501/>



Left: MWIA President Bettina Pfleiderer with Caterina Ermio, President AIDM  
 Right: Bettina Pfleiderer with MWIA Southern Europe VP Antonella Vezzani and AIDM NC Laura Lanza

## **Western Pacific Region**

### **Dr. Cissy Yu, VP**

Dr Cissy Yu, Vice President of Western Pacific Region, was very much delighted to attend the NGO CSW62 Forum in New York from 11 – 23 March 2018 and the Southern European Regional Meeting of MWIA in Palermo, Italy from 27 – 28 April 2018.

The 2nd Western Pacific Regional Business Meeting (2016-2019) was conducted on 26 May 2018 via Skype. The agenda items included confirming rota of the Region's Vice Presidents and rota of national associations hosting the regional meeting, announcing VP nominee for 2019-2022 and host for regional meeting 2019-2022, pending job description of national coordinator, endorsing communiqué of the regional meeting and resolutions for MWIA's General Assembly. Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Philippines, Australia and New Zealand participated in the Skype meeting.

## **6. REPORT FROM MWIA'S REPRESENTATIVES TO THE UN**

### **Dr. Satty Gill Keswani and Dr. Padmini Murthy, USA**

In the month of April 2018 Dr Padmini Murthy attended two Department of Public Information NGO briefings held at the United Nations on behalf of MWIA. She also participated in the DPI NGO Executive committee meetings as a member. A panel discussion held on Human Rights during the members meeting of NGOCSW NY committee at Salvation Army was moderated by Padmini Murthy and had experts on human rights from the NGO community and a senior staff member at the UNHCR liaison office to the UN in New York. The panel was well attended and MWIA was well represented.



Dr Mini Murthy moderates the panel on Human Rights

In the month of May, Murthy participated in the executive committee meetings of the DPI and NGOCSW meetings via the e platform zoom and teleconference and contributed to the challenges being faced by NGO community to having access to the various events at the United Nations.

In June Murthy attended the executive retreat of the NGO CSW committee in NY to discuss the theme of the upcoming CSW in March 2019.

She was invited to participate as a NGO representative and member of academia to attend the international forum *on Freedom and Democracy* in Taiwan organized by the World League for Freedom and Democracy and presented on the influence of politics on health care policies globally with a focus on the current situation in the United States.





Dr. Mini Murthy at the International Forum on Freedom and Democracy

Dr Murthy was invited as a NGO and academic representative to attend the high level panel discussion at the United Nations to commemorate the official observance of International Day for Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict. She also represented MWIA at the 4<sup>th</sup> international Day of Yoga events organized at the United Nations by the Permanent Mission of India to the UN.

Drs Keswani and Murthy are working on reaching out to the UN community including missions in planning the upcoming MWIA centennial in New York in 2019.

## **7. REPORT FROM MWIA'S REPRESENTATIVE TO WHO**

**Dr. Clarissa Fabre, UK**

The theme of the new Director-General, Dr Tedros is **Universal Health Coverage**. This is not made easier by continuing **attacks on health professionals and medical facilities** in many areas of conflict.

Dr Tedros is very keen to have young people more actively involved in the WHO, and is planning to overhaul the **Internship Scheme**. There will be a centralised application process twice yearly, rather than applicants approaching individual WHO staff members, and there will

be some financial assistance for interns. As a WHO scholar himself, he would like to introduce scholarships for doctors from low and middle income countries to study abroad.

The MWIA delegation attending the World Health Assembly in Geneva in May this year comprised members from Taiwan, Australia, Canada, India, Egypt and the UK. It was very interesting as always to meet with WHO staff who share our interests. Dr Claudia Garcia-Moreno, who leads on Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG), is about to launch WHO guidance on **Virginity Testing**. This testing is routine in Africa as part of post-rape assessment. It is common in India to check prospective brides, and has even been used in the UK for women who come from Southern Asia as brides. The guidance is clear: it states that **testing has no clinical value and is potentially harmful**. The guidance will soon be available on the WHO website. We also discussed **Female Genital Aesthetic Surgery** which is very prevalent worldwide. The international Federation of Gynaecology and Obstetrics (FIGO) does not discourage the procedure, and one of our Indian colleagues felt that if women want it, it should be provided. I personally feel that MWIA should take a strong stand against the procedure, especially if it is done on young adolescent girls, who are not in a position to give adequate consent. MWIA has previously spoken out against the normalization of this type of surgery.



MWIA delegation members with Dr Claudia Garcia-Moreno

## **8. EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LOBBY**

### **Dr. Edith Schratzberger Vecsei and Prof. Bettina Pfeleiderer**

The EWL held its second European Women's Forum in June focusing on women (Re)shaping Power. The result was the 50:50 Women for Europe, Europe for Women campaign to achieve equal representation. A task group has been formed for women's Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights to combat sexual exploitation. Policy updates were given on the Work Life Balance package, influencing the Multiannual Financial Framework, work with the Observatory on Violence Against Women on the Istanbul Convention, and the campaign for the European Elections.

At the annual meeting in June, EWL President, MWIA's own Dr. Edith Schratzberger finished a very successful term. MWIA is now represented by Dr. Bettina Pfeleiderer with Dr. Antonella Vezzani as alternate.

## **9. CIOMS**

CIOMS offered a 2-3 month internship between July and December at the WHO Department of Essential Medicines and Health Products. This was posted on MWIA's facebook and the yMWIA Facebook page.

## **10. yMWIA**

### **Dr. Geneviève Koolhaas**

#### **President young MWIA, National Coordinator the Netherlands, Northern Europe**

Greetings from the executive of MWIA's Special Interest Group for Young Female Doctors and Medical Students (yMWIA). We are delighted to be in touch with you. We would love to learn more about your contributions to society's health and development through activities in clinical care, public health, allopathic care services, health policy, leadership and more. There is an opportunity to share your pursuits with the global community at the upcoming centennial celebration for the MWIA in New York City, July 25-28, 2019. Submit a poster or an abstract for an oral presentation between now and September 1, 2018 and showcase your contributions to the world. By doing this, you will inspire other young women doctors to prove to the world that indeed, we are "Ambassadors of Change." Log on to <https://amwa-doc.org/mwia100> for more details.

## **11. CALENDAR OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS MWIA AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS – CONGRESSES AND MEETINGS**

### **2018**

- 1. August 22-23, 2018, UN Headquarters in New York**  
67<sup>th</sup> UN CPI/NGO Conference

*"We the Peoples... Together Finding Global Solutions for Global Problems "*

Please notify [secretariat@mwia.net](mailto:secretariat@mwia.net) if you would like to attend

- 2. September 6-8, 2018, Bangkok, Thailand**

8<sup>th</sup> Central Asia Regional Meeting of MWIA  
Theme is “Women’s wellbeing-a global perspective”  
Montien Hotel, Bangkok  
[www.carc2018.com](http://www.carc2018.com)  
[www.tmwa.or.th](http://www.tmwa.or.th)  
[2018carc@gmail.com](mailto:2018carc@gmail.com)

3. **September 21-23, 2018**, Toronto, Canada  
Annual general meeting and scientific session of the Federation of Medical Women of Canada  
Women Physicians: Making a World of Difference  
[www.fmwcc.ca](http://www.fmwcc.ca)
4. **October 1-6, 2018**, Geneva, Switzerland  
Eighth Session of the conference of the parties to the  
**WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control**  
Rue de Varembe 17, 1211 Geneva  
[www.who.int/fctc](http://www.who.int/fctc)
5. **October 3-6, 2018**, Reykjavik, Iceland  
World Medical Association General Assembly  
[www.wma.net](http://www.wma.net)  
[www.worldhealthsummit.org/conference.html](http://www.worldhealthsummit.org/conference.html)
6. **October 14-16, 2018**, Berlin, Germany  
10<sup>th</sup> World Health Summit 2018  
[www.worldhealthsummit.org/conference.html](http://www.worldhealthsummit.org/conference.html)
7. **October 17-21, 2018**, Coex, Seoul, Korea  
WONCA International Congress, Primary Care in the Future: Professional Excellence  
<http://www.globalfamilydoctor.com/Conferences/WONCAWorldconference2018.aspx>
8. **November 11-15, 2018**, Nairobi, Kenya  
Near East and Africa Regional Meeting of MWIA  
Theme is Accelerating Women’s Health Agenda: Priorities and Opportunities through SDGs  
<http://www.kmwa.or.ke/mwia-near-east-and-africa-regional-meeting/>
9. **November 14, 2018**, Antwerp, Belgium  
Medical Women’s Association of Belgium Congress  
Burn-Out: Gender Related?  
<http://mwab.be/>
10. **November 17-18, 2018**, Manila, The Philippines  
69<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention,  
PMWA@69: Continuously Creating an Impact on the Community.  
Marco Polo Ortigas Manila, San Antonio, pasig, 1600 Metro Manila  
[pmwa\\_doctors@yahoo.com](mailto:pmwa_doctors@yahoo.com)

11. **November 17-18, 2018**, Calcutta, India  
Annual meeting of the Association of Medical Women in India  
[missionkolkata@hotmail.com](mailto:missionkolkata@hotmail.com)

12. **December 5-6, 2018**, New Delhi, India  
Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH)  
2018 Partners' Forum  
Vigyan Bhavan Conference Centre  
[www.who.int/pmnch](http://www.who.int/pmnch)

## 2019

1. **June 3-6, 2019**, Vancouver, Canada  
Women Deliver Conference  
[wd2019.org](http://wd2019.org)
2. **July 25-28, 2019**, New York City, USA  
**Centennial Congress of the Medical Women's International Association**  
[www.amwa-doc.org/mwia100/](http://www.amwa-doc.org/mwia100/)

## 2020

1. **May 15-17, 2020**, cruise  
Northern European Regional Meeting  
[vp\\_northerneurope@mwia.net](mailto:vp_northerneurope@mwia.net)

## 12. NAMES IN THE NEWS

**Gwendoline Lefebvre**, a French feminist, is the new President of the European Women's Lobby, succeeding MWIA's own Dr. Edith Schratzberger

**Dr. Harriet MacMillan**, of Canada, has been named Distinguished University Professor at McMaster University, for her excellence in research and teaching.

**Dr. Padmini Murthy**, VP North America received Exceptional Woman of Excellence Award at the 2018 Women's Economic Forum in New Delhi India in June, 2018

**Dr. Bettina Pfleiderer**, President MWIA, and **Dr. Antonella Vezzani**, VP Southern Europe for MWIA, have recently been elected as delegate and vice-delegate to the European Women's Lobby on behalf of MWIA for a two year term

**Dr. Shelley Ross**, MWIA Secretary General, received the Silver Medal of Service from the British Columbia Medical Association, the highest honour given by the provincial medical association for her contribution to medicine

### 13. **PUBLICATIONS**

1. Dr. Padmini Murthy published an article on the UN International Day of Yoga on pages 62-63. [https://issuu.com/unityearth/docs/lightonlight\\_un\\_idy](https://issuu.com/unityearth/docs/lightonlight_un_idy)
2. Commentary on the decreasing number of men in obstetrics and gynecology [https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2018/03/09/female-gynecologists\\_a\\_23381583/](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2018/03/09/female-gynecologists_a_23381583/)
3. The Director General of WHO has Universal Health Coverage (UHC) as a top theme of this term. The BMJ (British Medical Journal) in partnership with the Harvard Global Health Institute are launching a collection of articles that will explore how to achieve effective Universal Health Coverage (UHC). <https://www.bmj.com/universal-health-coverage>
4. Menstrual Health continues to appear in the news. The New York Times recently published this commentary. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/31/opinion/sunday/menstrual-periods-prejudice.html?partner=IFTTT>
5. Respectful Maternity Care has published A World of Connections [https://drive.google.com/open?id=1aUXK7aQyYpbM\\_QvOO8H8pct57DY&usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1aUXK7aQyYpbM_QvOO8H8pct57DY&usp=sharing)
6. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) released new guidelines for postpartum pain management. ACOG. (2018). Postpartum Pain Management. *Obstetrics & Gynecology*, 132:e1-e7.  
  
Retrieved from:  
[https://journals.lww.com/greenjournal/Abstract/publishahead/Postpartum\\_Pain\\_Management.98058.aspx](https://journals.lww.com/greenjournal/Abstract/publishahead/Postpartum_Pain_Management.98058.aspx)
7. Save the Children Report 2018 -- The Many Faces of Exclusion <https://www.savethechildren.org/content/dam/global/reports/2018-end-of-childhood-report.pdf>
8. Science Daily reports on the first birth cohort to receive HPV vaccine shows it works. <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/06/180618102528.htm>

## **II. OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

### **1. World Health Organization (WHO)**

a. The department of **adolescent health at WHO** is moving forward with the adolescent health agenda AA-HA! The 21st European Regional Conference 2018 of the International Association for Adolescent Health (IAAH) and III National Conference in Adolescent Health, “Equal opportunities for healthy development for all adolescents” will take place on 3-5 October, 2018, in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova. <https://iaahconference2018moldova.yk.md/>

b. Further to the world of adolescents, the *Journal of Adolescent Health* published the paper Educating and Training the Future Adolescent Health Workforce published. Although it focuses on adolescent health training, it has relevance to other areas of AA-HA! because the review that underpinned the findings drew largely from the body of literature on trends in educating health workforce in general. It will help to do a better job in integrating an adolescent health component into the pre-service training.

[https://www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X\(17\)30871-6/fulltext](https://www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X(17)30871-6/fulltext)

c. WHO has published its first **Essential Diagnostics List**, a catalogue of 113 tests needed to diagnose the most common conditions as well as a number of priority diseases.

[http://www.who.int/medical\\_devices/diagnostics/EDL\\_ExecutiveSummary\\_15may.pdf](http://www.who.int/medical_devices/diagnostics/EDL_ExecutiveSummary_15may.pdf)

d. The **Regional Offices of the WHO and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies** have agreed to intensify their partnership and improve health in communities across Africa.

e. WHO has launched its **Clinical Handbook on Care of Girls and Women living with Female Genital Mutilation**. This handbook is for health care providers involved in the care of girls and women who have been subjected to any form of female genital mutilation (FGM), including obstetricians and gynaecologists, surgeons, general medical practitioners, midwives, nurses and other country-specific health professionals. Members of MWIA contributed to review of many of the chapters.

<http://www.who.int/.../health-care-girls-women-living-wit.../en/>

f. WHO has released the new **International Classification of Diseases, ICD 11**.

<http://www.who.int/.../international-classification-of-diseases>

g. WHO has announced the results of the newly published results of the clinical trial comparing heat stable carbetocin and oxytocin in prevention of postpartum haemorrhage.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2018/06/27/623686216/saving-moms-lives-during-childbirth-just-got-easier>

### **2. United Nations**

a. July 5<sup>th</sup> is the date for the **Civil society hearing and high-level meeting on the prevention and treatment of non-communicable diseases**. This is in preparation for the General

Assembly's third high-level meeting on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases on 27 September 2018 in New York with the overall theme "Scaling up multi-stakeholder and multisectoral responses for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." MWIA will be represented by Drs. Satty Keswani and Padmini Murthy. <https://www.un.org/pga/72/event-latest/prevention-of-non-communicable-diseases/>

b. UN Women released a statement for the **International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict**.

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2018/6/statement-un-women-international-day--the-elimination-of-svc>

c. The 193 member **General Assembly** will have a woman preside over its 73<sup>rd</sup> session in September, only the 4<sup>th</sup> woman in its history. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility of Ecuador was elected as its President.

e. The UN Secretary-General has released a report on **conflict-related sexual violence**.

<https://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/news/press-releases-and-statements/2846-wrc-welcomes-listing-of-myanmar-armed-forces-in-new-unsg-report-on-conflict-related-sexual-violence>

3. Registration for **Women Deliver 2019** is now open. The venue is Vancouver, Canada and the date is June 3-6 2019. The theme is Power-Progress-Change. Please visit [wd2019.org](http://wd2019.org) to register and access the early bird rates.

4. The **World Public Sector Report 2018** aims to inform efforts by countries to foster policy integration for implementing the SDGs.

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/publications/world-public-sector-report-2018.html>

5. **World Medical Association** has signed a MOU with WHO to foster understanding on topics of common interest, including the development, improvement and protection of health, and action on the social determinants of health.

WMA is pleased to share its [first Annual Report for the year 2017](#)

6. The Canadian Partnership for Women and Children's Health (**CanWaCH**), of which MWIA is a member, commends the announcement coming out of the G7 Leaders Summit in Charlevoix, Quebec, stating that Canada, the European Union, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the World Bank had pledged \$3.8 billion CAD to close the gap in education for girls and women in crisis and conflict situations. Highlights can be found at [Whistler G7 Finance and Development Ministerial Highlights](#) as well as at [analysis of the G7 Gender Equality Advisory Council's Recommendations](#).

7. The **Standing Committee of European Doctors** admitted MWIA as a new organization member. CPME President, Dr. Jacques de Haller stated that "MWIA will contribute to raise



awareness within CPME on the whole scope of gender medicine, i.e. the differences between men and women as patients and as health professionals, and on key issues such as maternity leave, career progression and fighting discrimination. We look forward to working together with MWIA to reinforce doctors' visibility and strengthen our influence at European and global level.”

8. The **Respectful Maternity Care Advocacy Committee** of the White Ribbon Alliance, of which MWIA is a member, made a submission to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights who reports to the Human Rights Council on the implementation of the Technical Guidance on the Application of a Human Rights Based Approach to Reduce Preventable Maternal Morbidity and Mortality, (A/HRC/21/22). The submission focused on Respectful Maternity Care in humanitarian settings.

9. The **Guttmacher-Lancet Commission** ([https://www.guttmacher.org/guttmacher-lancet-commission?utm\\_source=Master+List&utm\\_campaign=6369218c6b-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2018\\_05\\_01&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_9ac83dc920-6369218c6b-244272989](https://www.guttmacher.org/guttmacher-lancet-commission?utm_source=Master+List&utm_campaign=6369218c6b-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_05_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_9ac83dc920-6369218c6b-244272989)) reported in the May issue of the Lancet regarding a bold new agenda for sexual and reproductive health and rights. <https://www.thelancet.com/commissions/sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-rights>

10. The **Statistics Portal** reported on the countries with the lowest birth rate. The fertility rate is the average number of children born per woman of child-bearing age in a country. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/268083/countries-with-the-lowest-fertility-rates/>

11. The University Women of Europe have created a **Women's Gender Studies Research Network (WGSRN)** <https://uweboard.wordpress.com/2018/04/20/new-womens-gender-studies-research-network/>  
<https://www.genderfiveplus.eu/single-post/2018/03/12/Announcing-New-Womens-Gender-Studies-Research-Network>

12. The Irish Times reported on the landslide victory (68% vs 32%) on the **abortion referendum** - <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/abortion-referendum-count-landslide-yes-victory-predicted-as-counting-begins-1.3509809>

13. **Women in Medicine Legacy Foundation** was founded in 1998 to protect the Archives and Special Collections on Women in Medicine. It is providing a monthly series of stories of the wage gap in the medical field. [wimlf.org](http://wimlf.org)

14. The government of Canada celebrated its one year anniversary of the strategy to prevent and address **gender based violence**. [A Year in Review: Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence](#).

15. The **European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS)** is conducting a survey to hear the barriers to women in surgery. If you are a female surgeon from the European Union, the survey is open until August 24<sup>th</sup> at <https://sv.surveymonkey.com/r/7K8M9GF> 16.

16. **Inclusive Security** has spent almost two decades championing women’s leadership in peace and security in some of the most difficult contexts in the world. We’ve conducted hundreds of workshops—in advocacy, leadership, security sector reform, mediation, and other aspects of conflict resolution and peace building. Last year, we began releasing our training materials and curricula for free. The community asked for more, so now, we’re going even further.

<https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/training-resources/advocacy-for-inclusive-security/#skills-modules>

17. The **Latin American Medical Confederation (CONFEMEL)** consisting of medical entities in Latin America, the Caribbean and the Iberian Peninsula has expressed their deep concern and strongest rejection of the systematic violations of human rights carried out in Nicaragua.

18. White Ribbon Alliance is pleased to announce the first ***What Women Want Wednesday!*** Launching on Wednesday, July 11, 2018 – World Population Day – we are challenging **everyone** to get as many women and girls to take our ***new, simplified survey*** and post to social media (***see guidance here***). There will be several opportunities for recognition, but the person or organization who posts the most surveys will receive a by-lined feature as part of the *What Women Want* blog series with world renowned feminist publication, ***Ms. Magazine***.

19. The Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada has just released an online tool for counselling in contraception, called It’s a Plan and can be found at [ItsaPlan.ca](http://ItsaPlan.ca).

### **III. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The next Update will be published in September, 2018, the eighth in the new triennium. Please send us your reports, comments or any other interesting information by August 31, 2018, at the latest. We are always interested to put your name and your accomplishments in the Update. We are pleased to post the meeting information for your national association’s annual meeting.