

German Society of Epileptology 2021-2022 Report

CHAPTER OFFICERS

Johannes Lenke, President
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Officer Election Date: 18 April 2022

ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The German chapter of the ILAE (DGFE) has continued and extended its educational activities in 2021 and 2022. Given restrictions on in-person meetings, online courses have been intensified and are now certified with strict criteria for evaluation. Examples of international online courses are The Summer School of Imaging in Epilepsy which took place online in 2021, and the 11th International Summer School for Neuropathology and Epilepsy Surgery which took place on-site in Erlangen 2022.
- Several ILAE task forces with participation of German members have finalized reports in 2021 and 2021, and new task forces have been formed. Within the Network Epicure, the epilepsy centers Erlangen and Tübingen have become additional members to Bonn and Freiburg.
- Interactions with patient organizations have been reorganized with online courses provided on a wide spectrum of topics, including COVID-19 and immunization in the context of epilepsy. This included extensive interactions at epilepsy awareness days. Similarly, activities in media have been intensified including radio and TV interviews given by members of the executive committee.

CHALLENGES FACED IN 2021 AND 2022

Major challenges were faced regarding restrictions in patient care, travel and in-person meetings due to governmental restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This included reduced patient access to expert care, and restrictions in international exchange for experts. This also limited in-person interactions with patient organizations which could only partially be substituted for by additional online activities.

FUTURE PLANS FOR 2023

The DGFE is completely revising its official webpage to improve online information on its activities, including extensive information on epilepsies. A tri-national meeting in close collaboration with the Austrian and Swiss chapters of the ILAE is planned for 15-18 March 2023 in Berlin. New online educational activities are prepared as a supplement to in-person courses which have been resumed in the course of 2022 and will be offered fully again in 2023.

International involvement of the ILAE will be strengthened by active participation within the ILAE and in the ERN EpiCare.

RESEARCH AND PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Epilepsy research has been performed across all certified epilepsy centers, covering fields as wide as epileptogenesis, clinical neurophysiology, genetics, psychosocial aspects as well as pharmacological therapies, neuromodulation, and epilepsy surgery. Research is performed also in collaboration with members of the European Reference Network Epicure, as well as in numerous international research consortia.

MEETINGS

- The 2021 meeting was canceled due to restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, and only online educational courses were offered.
- The 2022 meeting took place in person in Leipzig, 17-20 April 2022, including a patient day with activities from patient organizations.

Report submitted by Andreas Schulze-Bonhage