

ESPE DOM School Online Report
May 8th to May 11th 2021

ESPE DOM School should have taken place in Liverpool in 2020, however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the school was cancelled, and it had to be rearranged as an online school in May 2021.

Initially, many doubts arose on the possibility of organizing such an interactive event without a “face-to-face” approach. However, pursuing the aim of the school to guarantee a continuous training of young doctors interested in pediatric diabetes, obesity and metabolism, we decided to accept the challenge.

The entire Faculty and ESPE Council members were highly motivated to deliver the DOM School online. The ESPE Education and Training Committee and ESPE Council were supportive in their effort and hired an events manager, Kate Chick, and a technical supporter, Luke Bennett, who accompanied us before and during DOM School providing a valuable help.

The teachers (Professor Francesco Chiarelli, Dr Cosimo Giannini, Professor Jacques Beltrand, Dr Maria Loredana Marcovecchio, Professor Shlomit Shalitin, Professore Tadej Battelino, Professor John Gregory, Professor Moshe Phillip, Professor Michel Polak, Professor Martin Wabitsch) re-organized their lecture and re-structured the DOM school programme making it suitable for the online version. Kate Chick and Luke Bennett provided constant assistance, showing great skills and professionalism.

In preparation for the school, rehearsals were arranged for students and teachers in order to familiarise their use of the web platform. Approximately five hours of continuous teaching was delivered daily for four consecutive days. The faculty met prior to the first session each day to discuss any logistical issues. A WhatsApp group was created to get all the participants and faculty connected continuously. During the school, small group teaching sessions were undertaken using online breakout rooms, lectures were punctuated by polling questions every 10-15 minutes, audience participation was consistently encouraged by the faculty for case presentations and cameras were kept on at all times.

The evaluation forms filled in by our students were very positive, suggesting its feasibility and successful outcome. Although, we believe that the online version does not give the same opportunity to create a strong relationship between students and teachers and among physicians from all over the world this novel experience gave some thought for the future for having such organization in peculiar settings.

Although really promising, we are really looking forward to organizing the next DOM school in Rome in September 2022 with a “face to face approach” improving the future schools with new insights reached during this experience.

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