

NCC 'FUTURE GENERATION 2024' POSTER Abstracts
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NCC 'Future generation 2024'

Organization Section: NCC/ BCLA

POSTER Abstracts

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IACLE: Engaging Educators Worldwide

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Purpose: In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the International Association of Contact Lens Educators (IACLE) launched an online initiative in 2020 to support its 869 members across 81 countries and working in over 40 languages, to help reduce the impact of the pandemic on contact lens education.

Method: IACLE's Teach. Learn. Connect. (TLC) initiative encompassed two components: A. A communications program providing information to support all sectors of contact lens practice during the recovery of the pandemic, including IACLE's first social media campaign that combined education and outreach to support members and non-members through the pandemic; and B. Educational programs comprising of a learning management system, IACLE teaching online platform (IACLETOP), a webinar series and virtual conferences conducted over Zoom (for members) and Facebook live (for non-members). The webinars covered contact lenses and educational methods, while the biannual virtual conferences addressed various educational, clinical and research topics. IACLE's existing resources were integrated into IACLETOP.

Results: Up to 30 September 2023, a total of 306 webinars were conducted in eight languages, with a viewership of over 24,000 people. The most popular

languages were Spanish (13,827), Chinese (5,080) and English (3,910). Additionally, six virtual conferences attracted 748 delegates worldwide. From the post-conference survey, over 98% of attendees found the topics highly relevant, easy to understand and sufficiently detailed. In the first year following the launch of the TLC Initiative, there was a significant increase in social media engagement, accumulating over 4,400 new followers across Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and X.

Conclusions: Through its global reach, IACLE successfully transitioned to online education during the COVID-19 pandemic reaching a diverse, global audience, offering programs in various languages and across different time zones. Members embraced IACLE's TLC initiative and found it very supportive and beneficial to their teaching and learning needs.

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