

The American Thyroid Association—What's New in 2019?

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17925/USE.2019.15.2.63>

As the 2018–2019 President of the American Thyroid Association (ATA), I am excited to share some news about our recent and upcoming activities. The society, whose current mission statement is, “Transforming thyroid care through clinical excellence, education, scientific discovery and advocacy in a collaborative community,” has been in existence since 1923, and is starting to look towards its centennial year. Our membership base is highly diverse, including adult and pediatric endocrinologists, endocrine surgeons, otolaryngologists, nuclear medicine specialists, pathologists, and basic scientists from 43 countries around the world. Essentially, ATA members comprise individuals across many disciplines, who all work toward the vision of ‘optimal thyroid health for all’.

Keywords

Thyroid, guidelines, grants, hypothyroidism, thyroid surgery

Disclosures: Elizabeth N Pearce has no conflicts of interest to disclose with regards to this article.

Review Process: This is an opinion piece and, as such, has not undergone the journal's standard peer-review process, but has been reviewed by the Editorial Board.

Compliance with Ethics: This article is an opinion piece and does not report on new clinical data, or any studies with human or animal subjects performed by any of the authors.

Authorship: The named author meets the criteria of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors for authorship for this manuscript, takes responsibility for the integrity of the work as a whole and has given final approval for the version to be published.

Received: July 23, 2019

Accepted: August 9, 2019

Citation: *US Endocrinology*. 2019;15(2):63–4

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Support: No funding was received in the publication of this article.

The American Thyroid Association 89th annual meeting

The ATA's 89th annual meeting was held at the Sheraton Grand in Chicago, IL, USA, from October 30th to November 3rd, 2019. The meeting program this year was co-chaired by Dr Antonio Di Cristofano and Dr Mona Sabra. It was designed to cover the latest developments in both basic and clinical thyroid science. Among other highlights, there was a symposium discussing the upcoming ATA guidelines for anaplastic cancer; a joint session with participants in the UK to discuss the evidence base for the treatment of hypothyroidism with T3/T4 combination therapy; year-in-review lectures for basic science, clinical science, and thyroid surgery; and a Sawin historical vignette featuring the contributions of women in thyroidology. Gil Mor, MD, and Terry Fry, MD were plenary speakers.

Journals

The ATA's flagship monthly journal is *Thyroid*®, the Official Journal of the American Thyroid Association, published by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc. The journal publishes original articles and timely reviews that reflect rapidly advancing changes in our understanding of thyroid physiology and pathology, from the molecular biology of the thyroid cell to clinical management of thyroid disorders. Peter Andreas Kopp, MD has provided exceptionally strong leadership for *Thyroid* as Editor-in-Chief for the last 7 years, and the latest journal impact factor is 7.786. In January of 2020, Dr Kopp will be succeeded as Editor-in-Chief by Electron Kebebew, MD, FACS.

Clinical Thyroidology is a monthly online journal publishing concise reviews of the most impactful recent articles in the clinical thyroid literature. Experts in the field summarize the most cutting-edge, relevant papers and provide insight into the significance of each, in relation to clinical thyroid practice. Angela Leung, MD, MSc became Editor-in-Chief at the beginning of this year and under her leadership the journal has expanded its Editorial Board and unveiled a new look. Furthermore, *Clinical Thyroidology for the Public*, led by Editor-in-Chief Alan Farwell, MD, summarizes selected research studies discussed in the previous month's issue of *Clinical Thyroidology* for a lay audience. Finally, *Video Endocrinology*, with Editor-in-Chief William B Inabnet III, MD, FACS, provides high-quality peer-reviewed videos of cutting-edge surgical and diagnostic imaging procedures covering thyroid, parathyroid, and adrenal tumors and diseases.

Clinical guidelines

The ATA's clinical guidelines are highly regarded and have essentially come to define the standard of care for multiple thyroid conditions (www.thyroid.org/professionals/ata-professional-guidelines/). Over the past few years, the ATA's process for guideline development has been updated and codified.¹ Documents currently in development include a clinical guideline for the treatment of patients with anaplastic thyroid cancer, co-chaired by Electron Kebebew MD and Keith Bible, MD, PhD, which is expected to be ready for publication by the end of this year.

In addition, the 2015 guideline for thyroid nodules and differentiated thyroid cancer is now due for revision. This is being divided into two separate guidelines, to make the literature review more manageable. A differentiated thyroid cancer guideline is being revised, co-chaired by Dr Matt Ringel and Dr Julie Ann Sosa. Finally, a separate nodule guideline is also in the pipeline, to be led by co-chairs Dr Susan Mandel and Dr Lisa Orloff.

Training

Nurturing trainees and early career professionals is fundamental to the ATA's mission. The annual meeting will include the E. Chester Ridgway Conference. This learning opportunity includes a day of dedicated teaching sessions to provide an overall primer on thyroid for trainees, advanced practice providers, and anyone else who would like a broad thyroid overview just before the full meeting, as well as continuing sessions for trainees in endocrinology, thyroid surgery, and basic science, which will be interspersed as separate tracks throughout the other meeting content.

Trainee first authors and/or presenters of abstracts are eligible for trainee grants, which include discounted meeting registration and complimentary shared sleeping room accommodations. There is a Trainees' Corner ATA website which includes information about trainees' programming at the ATA, a career link, and links to an online ATA trainees' community. In addition, the ATA funds several grants annually to junior faculty and new investigators. To date, the ATA has awarded 99 thyroid research grants totaling over \$2.6 million. The ATA rigorously manages the selection of research projects and distribution of over \$2.7 million generously donated to the ATA specifically for research grants from ThyCa: Thyroid Cancer Survivors' Association, Inc., Bite Me Cancer, and the Thyroid Head and Neck Cancer Foundation.

Public education

Educating patients and the public about thyroid disease is another important ATA focus. The ATA website includes printable patient brochures

on most adult and pediatric thyroid conditions, which are available in both English and Spanish (www.thyroid.org/thyroid-information/). *Friends of the ATA e-news* is an online newsletter providing up-to-date information on thyroid issues, and invitations to upcoming patient events. A patient forum is also held annually, in conjunction with the ATA's annual meeting.

Future plans and leadership changes

Members of the ATA leadership recently convened in Phoenix, Arizona, United States, to develop a strategic plan for the next 3 years. Areas of focus include goals around increasing diversity/inclusivity; clinical, scientific, and research excellence; primary thyroid health education and advocacy resources; and operational, fiscal, and staffing excellence. Detailed roadmaps for realizing these goals are being developed and will be presented to ATA members at this year's annual meeting.

In addition, following the 2019 annual meeting, there will be some important changes in the ATA leadership: Martha Zeiger, MD will become the next ATA President and Vic Bernet, MD will be stepping down after a 4-year term as the ATA's Secretary/Chief Operating Officer. He will be succeeded in this role by Jacqueline Jonklaas, MD.

Looking forward to 2020, there will not be an annual ATA meeting, since the International Thyroid Congress will be meeting in Xian, China from September 8–13. However, there will be two smaller ATA meetings in 2020; the first, held on March 27, just before the Endocrine Society meeting, in San Francisco, California, United States, will be a symposium entitled *Personalized Approach to Thyroid Disorders*. Following this, a spring meeting, *Controversies in Thyroidology*, will take place at the Westin New York At Times Square, New York, United States from May 28–30, 2020.

If you have not done so already, I hope you will consider attending one of the ATA's meetings, exploring our web and patient information content, or becoming a member. □

1. Sawka AM, Carty SE, Haugen BR, et al. American Thyroid Association guidelines and statements: past, present, and future. *Thyroid*. 2018;28:692–706.