ICH ASSOCIATION

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

ICH Association

2020 Annual Report

Prepared by the ICH Secretariat with the ICH Management Committee and MedDRA Management Committee approval of their respective sections

Version dated 20 April 2021

Approved by the ICH Assembly on 2 June 2021

Message from Assembly Chair and Vice Chair

2020 highlighted the continued commitment of ICH Members and Observers to advance ICH's global public health mission against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic. In spite of the many challenges presented by the pandemic, ICH's 17 Members and 32 Observers remained united in their common goal of harmonisation for better health. ICH's traditional biannual face-to-face meetings were replaced by web conferences, and effort made by all to progress work virtually.

The year was particularly noteworthy in marking ICH's 30th Anniversary, although plans to commemorate this important milestone have been postponed until 2021, when ICH plans to celebrate with the release of a publication, and if circumstances allow, a commemorative event.

Harmonisation activities were progressed during the year by ICH Working Groups on 33 topics, with continued focus on training and engagement of a first "ICH Training Associate" aimed at supporting in a strategic manner the training needs of ICH Members and Observers.

And after successful completion of a first survey in 2019 on the level of implementation and adherence to ICH Guidelines by ICH Regulatory Members, 2020 saw ICH launch a second survey, with the objective focused in particular on supporting the June 2021 Elections of Elected Management Committee Representatives from Regulatory Members.

We look forward to accompanying ICH into 2021 and its fourth decade of activity, and to leading ICH in its mission of harmonisation for better health.

Mrs. Lenita Lindström-Gommers
ICH Assembly Chair
EC, Europe

Dr. Celia Lourenco
ICH Assembly Vice Chair
Health Canada, Canada

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1. About ICH

1.1. Purpose & Aims

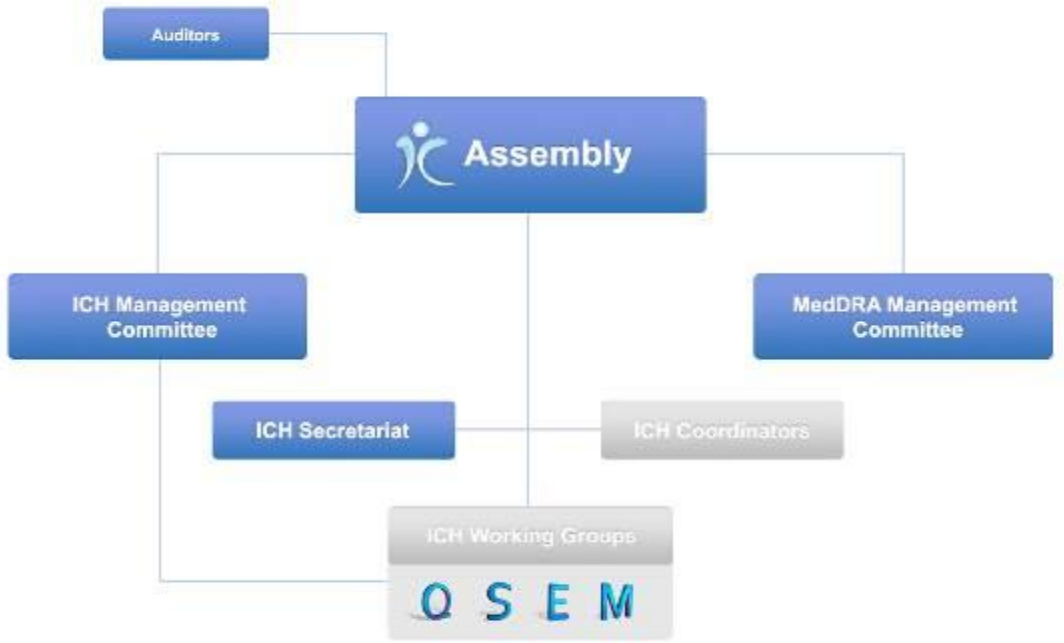
The International Council for Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Pharmaceuticals for Human Use (**ICH**) **is an international non-profit organisation** which was established as an association under Swiss law in October 2015. The purpose of ICH is to **promote public health through international harmonisation** of technical requirements that contribute to the timely introduction of new medicines and continued availability of the approved medicines to patients, to the prevention of unnecessary duplication of clinical trials in humans, to the development, registration and manufacturing of safe, effective, and high quality medicines in an efficient and cost-effective manner, and to the minimization of the use of animal testing without compromising safety and effectiveness.

The **ICH's aims** are the following:

- To make recommendations towards achieving **greater harmonisation** in the interpretation and application of technical guidelines and requirements for pharmaceutical product registration and the maintenance of such registrations.
- To maintain a forum for a **constructive dialogue** on scientific issues between regulatory authorities and the pharmaceutical industry on the harmonisation of the technical requirements for pharmaceutical products.
- To contribute to the **protection of public health** in the interest of patients from an international perspective.
- To monitor and update harmonised technical requirements leading to a **greater mutual acceptance** of research and development data.
- To **avoid divergent future requirements** through harmonisation of selected topics needed as a result of therapeutic advances and the development of new technologies for the production of medicinal products.
- To facilitate the adoption of **new or improved technical research and development approaches** which update or replace current practices.
- To encourage the adequate **implementation and integration of common standards** through the dissemination of, the communication of information about and coordination of training of harmonised guidelines and their use.
- And to develop **policy for** the ICH Medical Dictionary for Regulatory Activities Terminology (**MedDRA**) whilst ensuring the scientific and technical maintenance, development and dissemination of MedDRA as a standardised dictionary which facilitates the sharing of regulatory information internationally for medicinal products used by humans.

1.2. Organisational Structure

The bodies of the ICH Association are the: **Assembly**; **ICH Management Committee**; **MedDRA Management Committee**; **ICH Secretariat** and **Auditors**. Although not a body of the Association, ICH Coordinators play an important role in supporting the work of ICH.



Assembly

- The Assembly brings together all Members and Observers of the ICH Association. It is the **overarching governing body** of ICH and adopts decisions in particular on matters such as the ICH Articles of Association, admission of new Members and Observers and adoption of ICH Guidelines.
- The full list of Assembly Member Representatives and Observer Delegates as of December 31, 2020 is provided in Annex I.

ICH Management Committee

- The ICH Management Committee is the body that oversees **operational aspects** of ICH on behalf of all Members, including administrative and financial matters and oversight of the Working Groups (WGs). The ICH Management Committee is responsible for submitting recommendations or proposals to the Assembly in preparation of Assembly discussions.
- The ICH Management Committee may set up **Subcommittees** for dealing with specific topics to assist the Management Committee. In 2020 the following

Subcommittees were supporting the work of Management Committee: **Finance**, **New Topics, Training**, and **Organising** Subcommittee. In the second half of 2020, a new ICH Finance Committee was established with participation from both the ICH Management Committee and MedDRA Management Committee.

- The full list of the ICH Management Committee Member Representatives and Observer Delegates as of December 31, 2020 is provided in Annex II.

MedDRA Management Committee

- The MedDRA Management Committee has responsibility for **direction of MedDRA**, the Medical Dictionary for Regulatory Activities, ICH's standardised medical terminology.
- A MedDRA Financial Subcommittee was operational in the first half of 2020, prior to the establishment of an ICH Finance Committee with participation from both the MedDRA Management Committee and ICH Management Committee.
- The full list of MedDRA Management Committee Representatives and Observer Delegates as of December 31, 2020 is provided in Annex III.

ICH Secretariat

- The ICH Secretariat is responsible for **day-to-day management** of ICH, coordinating ICH activities as well as providing support to the Assembly, ICH Management Committee and its WGs. The ICH Secretariat also provides support for the MedDRA Management Committee as the **"MedDRA Secretariat"**. The ICH Secretariat is responsible for the implementation of the decisions of ICH's governing bodies. Actions taken by the ICH Secretariat in this regard in 2020 are referred to in Section 5.5.
- The full list of ICH Secretariat Staff as of December 31, 2020 is provided in Annex IV.

Auditors

- In 2020, the Assembly agreed to re-appoint Moore Stephens Refidar SA for a further period of 2 years to audit the **annual financial statements** of the ICH Association for 2020 and 2021.

ICH Coordinators

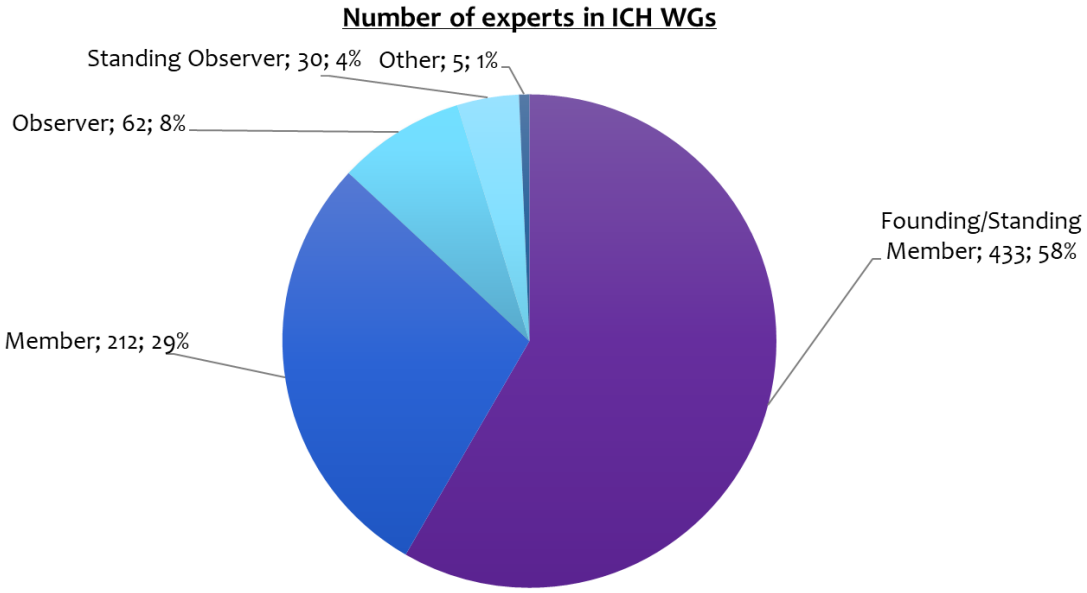
- **Fundamental to the smooth running of ICH** has been the designation of an ICH Coordinator per ICH Member to act as the main contact point with the ICH Secretariat. Coordinators ensure proper distribution of ICH documents to the appropriate persons from their organisation and are responsible for the **follow-up on actions** within their respective organisation within assigned deadlines. They also assist communication between the ICH Management Committee and/or Assembly and the ICH WGs as needed.
- The full list of ICH Coordinators as of December 31, 2020 is provided in Annex V.

2. 2020 Overview of ICH Membership & Observership

2.1. Continued Expansion of ICH Membership & Observership

A driving factor of ICH's 2015 organisational change was to make ICH a **truly global initiative** and enable an expanded forum for dialogue on scientific issues between regulatory authorities and the pharmaceutical industry on the harmonisation of the technical requirements for pharmaceuticals products. 2020 saw the addition of 1 new Member and 1 new Observer, bringing ICH to a total of **17 Members and 32 Observers** and by the end of 2020 over 1,000 individuals were contributing to the work of ICH, either as Representatives/delegates of ICH bodies, experts on Working Groups (WGs) or in supporting roles.

New Members and Observers have demonstrated great interest in participating in the activities of ICH, something which is particularly evident looking at ICH's **WGs**. At the end of 2020 these WGs involved the participation of **over 700 technical experts**, with more than a third of these experts coming from new ICH Members and Observers.



Overview of Expert Participation in ICH, as of October 2020

Further to the ICH Management Committee's decision taken in 2019 to enable the establishment of a Plenary Working Party (PWP) for each new WG established, at the end of 2020 PWPs had been established for 8 Working Groups (ICH E2D(R1), E6(R3), E20, M12, Q3E, Q5A(R2), Q9(R1), S12). This will allow interested ICH Members and Observers without an expert in the WG to follow more closely work on ICH Guidelines and to be consulted ahead of *Step 1* and *Step 3* sign-offs. The establishment of PWPs has been welcomed by ICH's Membership and Observership as a way to enable wider involvement, whilst maintaining the efficiency of the process.

2.2. New Members and Observers Approved in 2020

At the Vancouver virtual meeting in June 2020, the Assembly approved TITCK, Turkey as a **new ICH Regulatory Member** and MOPH, Lebanon as a **new ICH Regulatory Observer**, based on the recommendation of the ICH Management Committee.

3. 2020 ICH Harmonisation Activities

A major output of ICH's work, in line with the specific aims of the organisation, is the development by Working Groups (WGs) of **harmonised technical guidelines** and other work products to support harmonisation activities on **Q**uality, **S**afety **E**fficacy and **M**ultidisciplinary topics.

In 2020, these activities were progressed on 34 **topics** by technical WGs [including Expert Working Groups (EWG), Implementation Working Groups (IWG) and Discussion Groups (DG)], with support from the ICH Secretariat and under the oversight of the ICH Management Committee, with reporting to the Assembly. These activities were undertaken mostly via email and teleconferences, as due to COVID-19 pandemic no face-to-face meetings took place in 2020.

The **key outcomes in 2020** relating to ICH harmonisation efforts include:

- Completion at ***Step* 4** of the ICH process and **finalisation** of work (Please see Section 3.1) on:
  - **1 New ICH Guideline**
  - **1 Revised ICH Guideline**
  - **1 Updated Question & Answer (Q&A) Document and Specification Change Request Document**

- Reaching of ***Step 2a/b*** of the ICH process and completion of drafts (Please see Section 3.2) of:
  - **2 Revised** ICH Guidelines
  - **2 Q&A documents**

- **4 New** topics and **1 Discussion Group** approved in 2020.

An overview of all ICH WG activities and accomplishments in 2020 is presented in Annex VI.

3.1. ICH Guidelines & Other WG Work Products Finalised in 2020

Please note that all ICH documents referenced below can be found on the ICH website at www.ich.org.

E2B(R3) EWG/IWG: Revision of the Electronic Submission of Individual Case Safety Reports E

Steps 3 and *4* for v1.1. of the Dose Forms and Routes of Administration for Individual Case Safety Reports in the E2B(R3) message were finalised in July 2020. The E2B(R3) EWG/IWG continues its work, including on the development of the Module II and III training materials, and on the update of the ICSR BFC (Backwards and Forwards Compatibility) Specification document (in view of an error correction and updates needed further to the revision of the EDQM User Guide).

ICH S5(R3) Guideline - Detection of Reproductive and Developmental Toxicity for Human Pharmaceuticals S

The third revision of the ICH S5 Guideline reached ICH *Step 4* in February 2020. The document incorporates experience gained with the testing of pharmaceuticals using the current and novel testing paradigms as well as the advances of scientific, technological and regulatory knowledge over the past years. The ICH S5(R3) provides human safety assurance at least equivalent to that provided by current testing paradigms. In addition, this revision intends to provide greater clarity and alignment with other ICH Guidelines including ICH M3(R2), ICH S6(R1) as well as ICH S9.

ICH S11 Guideline - Nonclinical Safety Testing in Support of Development of Paediatric Pharmaceuticals S

This new ICH S11 Guideline, which reached ICH *Step 4* in April 2020, provides direction on the nonclinical safety studies important to support a paediatric pharmaceutical development programme. It recommends standards for the conditions under which nonclinical juvenile animal testing is considered informative and necessary to support paediatric clinical trials, and also provides guidance on the design of the studies. A streamlined drug development and higher scientific rigor while minimizing the unnecessary use of animals will be achieved with the implementation of this new harmonised ICH Guideline.

ICH M8 The Electronic Common Technical Document (eCTD) – Revised Q&A and Specification Change Request Document M

The eCTD v4.0 Q&A and Specification Change Request Document v1.4 reached *Step 4* of the ICH process in December 2020. The eCTD v4.0 Q&A document is a summary of questions reviewed by the eCTD Implementation Working Group (i.e. M8 IWG) on the eCTD v4.0 Implementation Package, and further to receiving new Change Requests in 2020, the M8 EWG/IWG has updated the eCTD v4.0 Q&A and Specification Change Request Document to version 1.4.

ICH M1 Points to Consider (PtC) – Revised MedDRA PtC Documents and Companion document M

MedDRA is a standardised medical terminology developed by ICH to facilitate sharing of regulatory information internationally for medical products used by humans. Under the governance of the MedDRA Management Committee, MedDRA is continuously

enhanced to meet the evolving needs of regulators and industry around the world. The current ICH M1 PtC Working Group develops and maintains two PtC documents on the use of MedDRA for data entry (coding) and data retrieval/analysis. In March 2020, "MedDRA Term Selection: Points to Consider" and "MedDRA Data Retrieval and Presentation: Points to Consider" documents were updated and released with the release of MedDRA Version 23.0 in English and Japanese. Furthermore in October 2020, Chinese, Korean, and Spanish translations of the two PtC documents were released. In November 2020, version 2.0 of the Companion document with a new section on product quality issues was released. The M1 PtC WG continues its work on the update of the PtC documents and on the revision of the Companion document, which are expected to be finalised by March 2021 and December 2021, respectively.

3.2. ICH Guidelines Endorsed at Step 2a/b in 2020

In 2020 the following ICH Guidelines and other WG Work Products were endorsed first at ***Step 2a*** of the ICH process by all Members of the Assembly, followed by endorsement at ***Step 2b*** by the Regulatory Members of the Assembly. This endorsement followed the reaching of consensus within the respective ICH WGs and sign-off by all Member experts of these WGs, under ***Step 1***.

ICH Q3C(R8) - Impurities: Guideline for Residual Solvents

The revised draft ICH Q3C(R8) Guideline, which reached *Step 2b* in March 2020, provides inclusion of new Permitted Daily Exposure (PDE) levels as new toxicological data for solvents become available. The draft document contains only the PDE levels for three solvents: 2-methyltetrahydrofuran, cyclopentylmethylether and tert-butanol that were agreed to be included in the ICH Q3C(R8) revision. Further to reaching *Step 4*, these PDEs would be integrated into a complete Q3C(R8) Guideline document.

ICH Q3D(R2) - Guideline for Elemental Impurities

The revised draft ICH Q3D(R2) Guideline, which reached *Step 2b* in September 2020, provides inclusion of PDE for new elemental impurities (EI)/routes of administration and revising the PDE for EI already listed in Q3D(R1) as new toxicological data for EI becomes available.

ICH E14/S7B Q&As - Clinical and Nonclinical Evaluation of QT/QTc Interval Prolongation and Proarrhythmic Potential Questions and Answers

The ICH E14/S7B Q&A document, which reached *Step 2b* in August 2020, provides guidance regarding best practices for the design, conduct, analysis, interpretation and reporting of *in vitro*, *in silico* and *in vivo* nonclinical assays in order for these assays to influence nonclinical and clinical evaluations. The Q&As will be developed in two stages to allow for more rapid impact of novel approaches on S7B and subsequently E14 for evolving drug candidates, enabling a more efficient, comprehensive and mechanism-driven process. The objective of the first stage of the proposed harmonisation work is to provide clarity on how to standardise assays such as multi-ion channel assays, *in silico*

models, *in vitro* human primary and induced pluripotent cardiomyocyte assays and *in vivo* evaluation, and apply these learnings to guide predictions and subsequent clinical assessment. These efforts will provide a customisable nonclinical strategy that is more informative for clinical development.

ICH M7(R2) Q&As - Assessment and Control of DNA Reactive (Mutagenic) Impurities in Pharmaceuticals to Limit Potential Carcinogenic Risk - Questions and Answers M

The ICH M7(R2) Q&A document, which reached *Step 2b* in June 2020, provides clarity on quality and safety issues and concerns that have been identified from experience through implementation of M7 since its publication in 2014. As part of *Steps 2a/b*, the Assembly Members / Regulatory Members of the Assembly pre-approved a change in the M7(R2) draft Guideline which is referenced in the Q&As, so that the change could be published alongside the M7 Q&As as a support document.

3.3. New Harmonisation Activities

3.3.1. Approval of New Topics

In 2020 the ICH Management Committee and its New Topics Subcommittee assessed **14 New Topic proposals** which had been submitted by ICH Members and Observers by a mid-December 2019 deadline. Further to this, an assessment **of all proposals** was prepared for the Assembly, and a number of **New Topic proposals were recommended** by the ICH Management Committee. In addition, 3 New Topic proposals submitted in the Quality area were redirected to the Quality Discussion Group (QDG) to be taken into account as part of the QDG's larger exercise of review and prioritization of ICH Quality topics, for consideration for the 2021 New Topics cycle.

Based on the ICH Management Committee assessment, the Assembly approved the following 2 new harmonisation activities:

Revision of ICH M4Q(R1) Common Technical Document (CTD) M

The revision of ICH M4Q(R1) aims to reorganize the application that would be compatible with current quality assessment platforms in use in various regulatory agencies which would facilitate a more highly structured assessment as compared to today's narrative approach to submission and review.

- The M4Q(R2) informal WG will be established once the Q13 EWG would reach *Steps 1* and *2a/b*.

Structured Product Quality Submissions M

This document aims to identify sections of eCTD Module 3 that can be internationally standardized into a structured data format and to create a common set of data elements, vocabularies, and an electronic exchange format for those sections of Module 3. The foregoing initiatives would minimize variability and duplication in global data

submissions and internal databases while allowing for unique requirements in any given region.

- The timeframe for initiation of work on this topic will be defined by the MC after the establishment of the M4Q(R2) informal WG, with the M4Q(R2) informal WG being tasked to detail considerations on content and timing for starting work on this topic. A code will be assigned once the work will be initiated.

The Assembly additionally supported the establishment of a Discussion Group to further consider the scope and approach of potential new harmonisation activities relating to the following topic proposals:

General Considerations for Model-Informed Drug Development to support Drug Registration and **ICH E4 on Dose Response Information to Support Drug Registration**

As a first step to progress on these two topics, the Assembly approved the establishment of a Discussion Group (DG) on Model-Informed Drug Development (MIDD) which will work to finalize the scope of a Guideline on MIDD, and make a recommendation for appropriate sequencing and format for incorporating MIDD concepts into a proposal on ICH E4 (i.e., Revision, Addendum, Q&A).

- The MC supported that the MIDD DG would initiate work in January 2021.

3.3.2. Other New Harmonisation Activities

In 2020, the following activity received the support of the Assembly:

ICH Q4B Maintenance Procedure

The **ICH Q4B Guideline on the Evaluation and Recommendation of Pharmacopoeial Texts for Use in the ICH Regions**, finalised in November 2007, describes a process for the evaluation and recommendation by the Q4B EWG of selected pharmacopoeial texts to facilitate their recognition by regulatory authorities for use as interchangeable in the Founding ICH regions and Canada. Following favourable evaluations, ICH issued 14 topic-specific annexes, the last of which was published in 2012, which include information about these texts and their implementation intended to avoid redundant testing by industry. The Q4B EWG was disbanded with the conclusion of this work.

In November 2018, the Assembly approved a **proposal from the Pharmacopoeial Discussion Group (PDG) for a new Q4B Maintenance Procedure of the ICH Q4B Annexes**. The new process will be triggered by PDG's sign-off of a revised text which is the subject of a Q4B Annex. The PDG will then compare the corresponding current ICH Q4B Annex, the PDG sign-off text as well as the corresponding European Pharmacopoeia (Ph. Eur.), Japanese Pharmacopoeia (JP) and United States Pharmacopoeia (USP) chapters as published in the respective Pharmacopoeias. Other pharmacopoeias will be informed of the ongoing review via the contact list of the International Meeting of World

Pharmacopoeias (IMWP). Annex 5 of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) of the WGs had been revised in November 2018 to reflect the new maintenance procedure and describes how this process follows the usual ICH Step process.

In November 2020, the ICH Assembly noted PDG plans to conduct a pilot of the engagement of the pharmacopoeia of non-Founding/Standing ICH Regulatory Members in the process for revision of the ICH Q4B Annexes, focusing on the three Q4B Annexes 6, 7 8, and to report back on the outcome.

3.3.3. Strategic Reflection Papers

In November 2020, the Assembly endorsed a Reflection Paper on *Patient-Focused Drug Development* (PFDD), which had been supported by the MC in September 2020. This Reflection Paper identifies key areas where incorporation of the patient's perspective could improve the quality, relevance, safety and efficiency of drug development and inform regulatory decision making. It also presents opportunities for development of new ICH guidelines to provide a globally harmonised approach to inclusion of the patient's perspective in a way that is methodologically sound and sustainable for both regulated industry and regulatory authorities. As supported by the Assembly the Reflection Paper was published on the ICH website in December 2020 for public consultation until March 2021.

In 2020 the MC agreed on the finalised "ICH Strategic Framework" document which aims to help ICH to identify near and long-term priorities by listing already agreed topics, either endorsed New Topic proposals with a delayed start or topics included in an endorsed Reflection Paper. In addition, the MC agreed that going forward the document would be maintained by the ICH Secretariat.

3.4. Implementation of ICH Guidelines

At *Step 5* of the ICH process, harmonised ICH Guidelines are implemented by ICH Regulatory Members and Observers within their respective country/region. This is in line with the ICH Articles of Association and the aim and intention that **all ICH Regulatory Members should implement all ICH Guidelines**. At the time of Membership application to ICH, each Regulator is expected to have implemented the **"Tier 1" ICH Guidelines**: **Q1, Q7 and E6,** and have specific plans with identified milestones and timeframes for implementation of the following **"Tier 2" ICH Guidelines** within the next five years: **E2A, E2B, E2D, M4 (CTD) and M1 (MedDRA)**. The other, remaining ICH Guidelines should be implemented in the near term and as soon as possible.

ICH Guideline implementation information is published on the ICH website www.ich.org, with a searchable database tool rolled-out in 2019 and periodically updated by the ICH Secretariat which allows information on the status of implementation of any ICH Guideline by any ICH Regulatory Member to be readily retrieved by all stakeholders.

Monitoring the progress of international harmonisation and coordinating efforts in this regard is an important ICH focus. ICH is working to understand the level of implementation and adherence to ICH Guidelines within Regulatory Member and Observer countries/regions. In support of this effort, an **ICH-driven survey** was launched for the second time in December 2020 in coordination with the Centre for Innovation in Regulatory Science (CIRS), an independent third party contracted by ICH to conduct the survey. The objective of the study was principally to assist the Management Committee in determining whether Regulatory Members would meet the eligibility criteria for the MC elections in 2021 and to also allow participating Observers interested in future ICH Membership to reference survey findings. The scope of the survey included Tier 1 ICH Guidelines for Observers, and Tier 2 and Tier 3 ICH Guidelines for ICH Non-Founding Non-Standing Regulatory Members, based on the criteria of ICH Membership and MC Elections. The results of the study are to be presented at the ICH Virtual meeting in June 2021.

Furthermore, in 2020 the MC supported the conduct, as a pilot, of an analysis of the free-text entries from the 2019 Phase 2a Implementation Survey to help inform the development of the Phase 2b survey and inform ICH Training needs.

3.5. Training on ICH Guidelines

As part of its effort to achieve **global harmonised implementation of ICH Guidelines,** ICH is working on ensuring that high quality training is available based upon scientific and regulatory principles outlined in the ICH Guidelines. Training materials developed by/with ICH can be accessed with the respective ICH Guideline as they become available.

3.5.1. ICH Training Strategy

Work was progressed on several fronts in 2020 in furtherance of efforts to ensure the availability of high quality training on ICH Guidelines, even though some new challenges were faced in view of the global pandemic situation. The work included: continued delivery of **ICH Recognised Training Programmes** organised by Training Providers; contracting of accredited non-profit training organisations/institutions as **ICH Training Associates** to develop online training materials and provide other support according to

ICH needs; and the **financial support of training on ICH Guidelines** organised by ICH Regulatory Members and Observers.

In 2020 the MC supported the proposal for the development of a Training Library on the ICH website, to make it easier for users to access all training materials including *Step 4* WG presentations, WG training materials, Training Associate materials and materials developed by Training Providers. It was also agreed to provide web links on the ICH website to translated materials, mainly ICH Regulatory Member ICH Guideline translations and training materials. The work was initiated in 2020 and is expected to be finalised in 2021.

ICH Recognised Training Programmes:

In 2020 the following **training programmes** from Training Providers, supported as **ICH Recognised Training Programmes** by the ICH Management Committee's Training Subcommittee, were delivered:

- NEU: ICH Q1 Drug Stability training, Burlington, MA, USA, 10-12 March 2020 (in person);
- USP: ICH Q3 Impurity and M7 Mutagenic Impurities Guidelines, Rockville, MD, USA, 31 August - 2 September 2020 (live webcast);
- DIA China: ICH E2 Workshop, Beijing, China, 20-21 September 2020 (in person);
- DIA China: ICH Day 2020, Suzhou International Expo Center, China, 27 October 2020 (in person);
- APEC PKU: Pharmacovigilance Seminar, Phase 1: 15-30 September 2020; Phase 2: 15 November-15 December 2020 (Phase 1: Online training, pre-recorded lecture and live case study; Phase 2: Online training, live presentation and case study);
- MHLW/PMDA, Japan and JPMA: Seminar on GCP Renovation – Recent Work of ICH and Overview of ICH E6(R3), Tokyo, Japan, 17 December 2020 (in person and online).

The format of the trainings included in-person, hybrid face-to-face/virtual and online.

In coordination with the Training Subcommittee, the links to the following **introductory online training courses** developed by Training Providers were published on the ICH website:

- ICH E6(R2) Interpretation and Application training developed by MRCT Center, published on the ICH website in February 2020;
- ICH Q1 Introductory Training Material developed by NEU, published on ICH website in March 2020.

Additionally, in relation to this activity the ICH Management Committee provided its approval in 2020 to: revised Procedure for Organisations Interested in Developing an ICH Recognised Training Programme, revised Terms of Reference for Training Providers for an ICH Recognised Training Programme and revised ICH Training Programme Provider Application Form.

ICH Training Associates:

In 2020 ICH contracted a first ICH Training Associate **to assist ICH in its efforts to address in a strategic manner the training needs of its Regulatory and Industry Members and Observers**. The work of the Training Associate consisted of developing training on ICH Q1, with a first deliverable being an ICH Q1 Introductory Overview Video finalised and published on the ICH website in October 2020. The ICH Training Subcommittee developed a mechanism to support review of the deliverables of ICH Training Associates, which includes creation of "Technical Advisory Groups" responsible for specific topics. The Training Subcommittee was also tasked to monitor work and performance of the Training Associates. Furthermore, in 2020 discussions were advanced to explore engaging another ICH Training Associate for the development of training materials on ICH M4 and ICH E2.

ICH Regulatory Training

2020 also saw the ICH Management Committee approve the **provision of ICH funding support to training programmes on ICH Guidelines organised by 5 ICH Regulatory Members and 1 ICH Regulatory Observer**. This came further to a Call for Expression of Interest launched by the ICH Management Committee in January 2020 and saw support provided for training planned by:

- ANVISA, Brazil on ICH Q8-Q11 Guidelines;
- FDA, United States on ICH Q12 Guideline;
- Health Canada, Canada on ICH M9 Guideline;
- MFDS, Republic of Korea on a number of ICH Q, S, E and M Guidelines;
- MHLW/PMDA, Japan on ICH E6(R3), E8(R1) & other E Guidelines;
- SCDMTE, Armenia on ICH Q3 Guidelines.

In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, only one training event took place in 2020, with others being postponed to 2021. The ICH Assembly approved carry over in the 2021 ICH budget to support these postponed training events in 2021.

Furthermore, the ICH Assembly supported allocated budget towards a new Call for Expression of Interest process in 2021 for ICH Regulatory Members and Observers.

3.5.2. Training Materials Developed by ICH Working Groups

Further to support provided by the Assembly and ICH Management Committee for WGs to pursue training material development to help **assist understanding of new concepts** and implementation of their respective ICH Guidelines, in 2020 work was initiated and/or progressed on developing the training materials on the following ICH topics, with the assistance of Founding Regulatory Member FDA, United States which made available the support of its studios for the production of videos:

- E9(R1) EWG;
- E2B(R3) EWG/IWG;

- E14/S7B IWG;
- Q12 IWG.

3.5.3. Working Group *Step 2/Step 4* Presentations

In line with ICH procedures, when an ICH Guideline reaches *Step 2b* or *Step 4* of the ICH process, each ICH WG develops a presentation to be included by the ICH Secretariat on the ICH website. In 2020, the following presentations were made available:

- ICH Q3D(R2) *Step 2* Informational Presentation;
- ICH M7 Q&A *Step 2* Informational Presentation;
- ICH Q12 *Step 4* Introductory Training Presentation;
- ICH S5(R3) *Step 4* Introductory Training Presentation;
- ICH S11 *Step 4* Introductory Training Presentation;
- ICH M9 *Step 4* Introductory Training Presentation.

3.6. MedDRA Activities

MedDRA, the **Medical Dictionary for Regulatory Activities**, is a rich and highly specific standardised medical terminology developed by ICH to facilitate sharing of regulatory information internationally for medical products used by humans. It is used for **registration, documentation and safety monitoring of medical products** both before and after a product has been authorised for use.

Despite the global COVID-19 pandemic, MedDRA's number of users continued to grow globally with 264 new subscribers in 2020 alone, bringing the total number of users to over 6,600 organisations in more than 125 countries.

The continued growth in the number of users of MedDRA is a clear indicator of the successful adoption of MedDRA over the past 21 years as a worldwide standard in the protection of public health. In view of this continued user growth, 2020 saw continued expansion in the support provided to facilitate the use of MedDRA in a broader set of countries/regions. This included release to users of a **Brazilian Portuguese MedDRA translation**, initiation of work on a new Swedish MedDRA translation, planning for initiation of a multi-year project in 2021 which will see the translation of MedDRA into the remaining 16 languages of the European Economic Area in collaboration with individual European National Competent Authorities, and release of specific translations of MedDRA Points to Consider documents (noted in Section 3.1 above), as well as expanded training and helpdesk support with the decision taken in 2020 to add from 2021 local support in Russia further to local support staff already in place **in Europe, India, China, Republic of Korea, Latin America, the USA and other regions**.

3.6.1. Overview of 2020 MedDRA Management & Key Decisions

The MedDRA Management Committee is responsible for overseeing the main activities of the MSSO (Maintenance and Support Services Organisation), as well as providing oversight and direction to the "MedDRA Secretariat" which is provided by the ICH Secretariat. (MedDRA Secretariat implementation of key MedDRA Management Committee decisions are referred to in Section 5.5 below.)

The following key decisions were taken in 2020 related to MedDRA's management:

Financial:

- The MedDRA Management Committee supported the **2021 Budget** including the **2021 MSSO Subscription Fees** for presentation to the Assembly. The 2021 Budget and Subscription Fees were subsequently approved by the Assembly.
- The MedDRA Management Committee approved the **2021 MSSO Business Plan**.
- In 2020, several MedDRA Management Committee Representatives joined a newly established ICH Finance Committee, which includes participation also from the ICH Management Committee.

Operational:

- The MedDRA Management Committee took the decision in 2020 to make an **exceptional re-release of MedDRA version 23.0 in April**, following its initial release on 1 March. This decision was taken in view of the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that any scientific and medical information could be captured, shared and analysed appropriately thereby **supporting identification of potential safety issues**. This resulted in close to 70 new COVID-19 related terms being included in the re-release of MedDRA version 23.0 in English and Japanese on 19 April, and in all other MedDRA translations by 29 April.
- The MedDRA Management Committee additionally supported the creation of a dedicated COVID-19 page on the MedDRA website (www.MedDRA.org), webinars to explain the re-release and the development of a COVID-19 Standardized MedDRA Query (SMQ).
- The MedDRA Management Committee supported the **2021 Annual MedDRA Work Plan** for submission to the Assembly, which was subsequently approved by the Assembly.
- The MedDRA Management Committee supported the continued implementation of a **MedDRA trademark strategy** by the MedDRA Secretariat for the registration of the MedDRA name mark and the MedDRA logo (device) mark in a broad set of countries, including in the regions/countries of the new ICH Observers joining ICH, which included Lebanon for 2020.
- The MedDRA Management Committee supported two amendments to the MSSO contract in 2020, sign-off of which were further supported by the ICH Assembly.
- In 2020, the MedDRA Management Committee was informed on work by an external IT consultant who performed an assessment towards undertaking a digital transformation of MedDRA operations, leveraging technological advances. The

recommendations of the Consultant will be further considered by the MedDRA Management Committee in 2021.

- The MedDRA Secretariat welcomed two new staff in 2020, one to the vacant Manager position and one to a newly created Coordinator position aimed at better supporting additional MedDRA activities.

Interoperability with other terminologies:

- As part of the efforts to facilitate the use of MedDRA through **mapping with other terminologies**, the MedDRA Management Committee: (1) concluded in July 2020 the previously ICH Assembly supported Memorandum of Understanding with the International Medical Device Regulators Forum (**IMDRF**) concerning cooperation on the maintenance of a mapping between MedDRA and IMDRF's terminology: terminology: Annex E: Health Effects – Clinical Signs, Symptoms and Conditions Terms and Codes, which was furthermore supported by the ICH Assembly; (2) received ICH Assembly support to enter into cooperation with **SNOMED International** for the maintenance and distribution of a bi-directional MedDRA/SNOMED mapping; and (3) continued to investigate a mapping between MedDRA and **WHO's ICD-10/11**.

Development of SMQs:

- The MedDRA Management Committee approved 2 new Standardised MedDRA Queries (SMQs) – Immune-mediated/autoimmune disorders and COVID-19 - included in MedDRA version 23.1. The addition of these new SMQs resulted in a total of **108 SMQs developed to-date**.
  - The SMQ on Immune-mediated/autoimmune disorders was the last SMQ developed in collaboration with ICH Observer CIOMS, further to which the MedDRA Management Committee acknowledged the completion of a very successful collaboration between ICH and CIOMS.
  - The SMQ on COVID-19 was the first SMQ developed under a new process by the MSSO working with ad hoc expertise from international experts from regulatory authorities and industry.

3.6.2. Oversight of 2020 MedDRA MSSO Activities

A summary is provided as follows on the main activities of the MSSO related to MedDRA development and support of MedDRA users in 2020, which were overseen by the MedDRA Management Committee:

- The COVID-19 pandemic led to travel restrictions in some countries and quarantine requirements at the destination. Therefore, it was necessary for the MSSO to cancel the majority of face-to-face training classes in 2020, and increase the volume and scope of virtual trainings, with **163 webinars** held over the year**.** The MSSO additionally developed **new webinar courses** including a MVAT Demonstration course, an interactive coding course, Let's Code Together, and a MSSO Open Session (live Q&A).
- Release to users of MedDRA versions 23.0 and 23.1, as well as re-release of 23.0.

- Release to MedDRA users of a **Brazilian Portuguese MedDRA translation**, developed in close coordination with ICH Regulatory Member ANVISA, Brazil.
- Initiation of work on a **Swedish MedDRA translation** to be developed in close coordination with MPA, Sweden.
- Initiation of work on the **translation of MedDRA into the remaining 16 languages of the European Economic Area** in collaboration with individual European National Competent Authorities.
- Hiring of an additional two local support in China to support high training needs until 2022 with the agreement of the MedDRA Management Committee.
- **Cooperation with the WHO and its Collaborating Centre, the Uppsala Monitoring Centre (UMC)** for MedDRA training to Vigiflow users and in organising User Group Webinars.
- Liaison with the **IMDRF** Adverse Event Terminology and Coding Working Group regarding maintenance of its mapping of its Annex E (Health Effects – Clinical Signs, Symptoms and Conditions Terms and Codes) terminology to MedDRA LLTs.
- Support of the work of the **ICH M1 PtC WG** to update with the March release of MedDRA the PtC documents on Term Selection and Data Retrieval and Presentation, and to develop a **new section in the Companion Document** on product quality issues as supported by the MedDRA Management Committee.
- Participation until the project's end in 2020 as ICH's contractor in the **Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) WEB-RADR 2 Project** in Work Package 4, focusing on a **bi-directional mapping between MedDRA and SNOMED** terminologies, including developing a model for the ownership, maintenance and distribution of a mapping.

4. 2020 Overview of Meetings & Planning

4.1. 2020 Meetings

In 2020, due to the exceptional circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, all ICH face-to-face meetings were cancelled and ICH activities were progressed via virtual biannual meetings and teleconferences of the WGs, the Assembly, ICH Management Committee, and MedDRA Management Committee.

The first of the biannual virtual meetings of the year for the Assembly, ICH Management Committee, and MedDRA Management Committee was held over several days between 13 and 27 May, and the second between 4 and 18 November. Both virtual meetings were well attended by ICH's growing numbers of Members and Observers with around 80 participants to the Assembly meetings.

The reports of Assembly and ICH Management Committee face-to-face meetings and teleconferences from 2020 are made available on the **ICH website**.

Details on 2020 meetings are provided as follows:

Assembly Meetings

- The **Assembly met twice during 2020**, at the time of ICH's biannual virtual meetings: on 27 May and 18 November.
- Both meetings were chaired by **Mrs. Lenita Lindström-Gommers (EC, Europe Chair) and Dr. Celia Lourenco (Health Canada, Canada, Vice-Chair)**.
- The ICH Management Committee supported the participation of an Ad-Hoc Observer Delegate to the ICH Assembly meeting in May 2020 from MOPH, Lebanon, which was subsequently approved as ICH Observer.

ICH Management Committee Meetings

- The ICH Management Committee met several times virtually throughout the year:
  - **8 times via teleconference** on the following dates: 4 March, 9 March, 2 April, 22 April, 10 July, 30 July, 23 September, 19 October.
  - **3 virtual meetings (composed of 3 teleconferences each):** during ICH's biannual meetings on 13, 25 and 26 May and on 5, 16 and 17 November, and during its interim meeting on 17, 18 and 19 March.
- Additionally, **close** to **20 ICH Management Committee Subcommittee teleconferences** were held (on New Topics, Training, Finance, and Organisation of 30th Anniversary Event).
- All meetings in 2020 were chaired by **Dr. Theresa Mullin (FDA, United States, Chair)** and **Dr. Nobumasa Nakashima (MHLW/PMDA, Japan, Vice Chair)**. In November 2020 the ICH Management Committee re-elected Dr. Mullin as Chair and Dr. Nakashima as Vice-Chair to serve a further 1-year term.

MedDRA Management Committee Meetings

- The MedDRA Management Committee met several times:
  - **8 times via teleconference** on 8 April, 23 April, 24 April, 8 May, 16 June, 15 July, 30 September, and 1 October.
  - **2 virtual meetings (composed of 2 and 3 teleconferences respectively):** during ICH's biannual meetings on 20 and 21 May and on 4, 10 and 13 November.
- All meetings in 2020 were chaired by **Mr. Mick Foy (MHRA, UK)**, who the MedDRA Management Committee re-elected as Chair in May 2020 for a further 1-year term.

ICH Working Group Meetings

In the absence of face-to-face meetings, WGs were encouraged to continue their activities remotely, replacing as far as possible any planned face-to-face meetings with virtual meetings in the form of series of teleconferences over several days.

4.2. Planning of Future ICH Meetings

In 2020, the ICH Management Committee took decisions regarding the organisation of future ICH meetings. **Key decisions** are outlined below:

- In view of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the ICH Management Committee agreed on the necessity to cancel the March 2021 face-to-face interim meeting of the ICH Management Committee and the June 2021 face-to-face biannual meeting, which will be replaced by virtual meetings.
- The ICH Management Committee agreed to re-schedule the 2020 meetings due to have been held in **Vancouver, Canada** and **Athens, Greece** to **November 2021 and May 2022** respectively, and confirmed **Incheon, Republic of Korea** as the location of the **November 2022 meeting**.
- The ICH Management Committee agreed on the following dates for the 2022 and 2023 meetings:
    - From 12 to 16 November 2022;
    - From 10 to 14 June 2023 or 27 to 31 May 2023.
- As agreed by the ICH Management Committee in 2019, a **call for tenders** was launched by the ICH Secretariat in July 2020 to receive offers from Professional Conference Organisations (PCOs) for the organisation of ICH meetings from 2023 and beyond.

5. 2020 ICH Operational Matters

5.1. ICH Articles & Procedures

5 Documents support the governance of the ICH Association: the ICH Articles of Association, the Assembly Rules of Procedures (RoP), the ICH Management Committee RoP, the MedDRA Management Committee RoP and the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of the ICH WGs. Each of these documents is available on the ICH website.

The following highlights the key decisions taken in 2020 regarding these documents:

ICH Articles of Association

- The Assembly approved several amendments to the ICH Articles of Association with approval of version 5.0 in November. Amendments related to: criteria for Membership related to expert participation in WGs; Assembly virtual meetings in extraordinary circumstances; expedited Process for Membership applications; and use of surplus to offset the MedDRA budget where surplus exists from previous years' subscription fee collections.

Assembly RoP

- The Assembly approved several amendments to the Assembly RoP with approval of version 9.0 in November. Amendments related to: the process for revising Assembly minutes; criteria for Membership related to expert participation in WGs; process for enabling proxies between ICH Observers; Assembly virtual meetings in extraordinary circumstances; expedited Process for Membership applications; and several minor clarifications.

ICH Management Committee RoP

- The ICH Management Committee approved several amendments to its RoP in 2020, with approval of version 9.0 in April and version 10.0 in October. Amendments related to: the process for revising MC minutes/reports; Assembly and MC virtual meetings in extraordinary circumstances; criteria for MC Elected Representatives; a revision to extend the term of office of the MC Chair and Vice Chair from one to two years, and to synchronise it with the term of office of the Assembly Chair and Vice Chair, to be effective from the MC elections in November 2021; and several minor clarifications.

SOPs of the ICH Working Groups

- The ICH Management Committee several amendments to the SOPs of the WGs with approval of version 10.0 in November. Amendments related to: the process for nominating ad-hoc experts to ICH WGs; process for *Step 1* and *3* sign-off when the Topic Leader is not available; Assembly virtual meetings in extraordinary circumstances; template for Compilation of *Step 3* Public Consultation Comments; and several minor clarifications.

5.2. ICH Funding

ICH Financial Audit

In May 2020 **the Assembly approved the 2019 Audited Accounts and Financial Statements of the ICH Association**, supporting their submission along with ICH's 2019 tax return in July 2020.

ICH Funding[1]

2020 Membership Fees were paid as follows by all ICH Members in line with the decision taken by the Assembly in 2018:

Membership Category	Membership Fee (CHF / Swiss Franc)
Founding Regulatory Member	CHF 233,000
Founding Industry Member	CHF 233,000
Standing Regulatory Member	CHF 96,000
Regulatory Member	CHF 20,000
Industry Member	CHF 20,000
Standing Observer	N/A
Observer	N/A

2020 Membership Fees

[1] ICH notes that in lieu of the membership fee payment required of ICH Founding Members, for the period 2016 to-date, FDA, United States has supported ICH through an equivalent level of funding via a grant mechanism. ICH (2016 to-date) is supported by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award [FAIN] totaling $1,578,300 with 15% funded by FDA/HHS, and $10,473,504 and 85% funded by non-U.S. government sources. The contents are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by FDA/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

The Assembly furthermore approved the same level of fees for 2021 and 2022.

In November 2021, the Assembly approved the final updated 2021 ICH Budget and provisional 2022 ICH budget.

Information can be found on the ICH website regarding yearly ICH Budgets and Membership Fees.

MedDRA Funding

MedDRA activities are self-financed through the collection of annual subscription fees from organisations which are subscribers to MedDRA.

In November 2020, the **Assembly approved the 2021 MedDRA Budget, including 2021 MSSO MedDRA Subscription Fee levels,** which were kept stable from 2020, approving the use of MedDRA surplus from previous years' subscription fee collections to offset the 2021 MedDRA budget.

Information can be found on the ICH website regarding the 2020 MedDRA Budget.

Financial Management

In 2020, work was continued towards the **establishment of a sustainable ICH funding model**, which is not reliant to the use of surplus funds to cover core operational activities and equitable in its distribution of burden to all ICH participants. In support of this effort, a new ICH Finance Committee was established, including representation from both the ICH and MedDRA Management Committees, to ensure a comprehensive consideration of the overall funding of the ICH Association. In November 2020, the ICH Finance Committee presented the Assembly with a new annual ICH Membership fee structure for implementation beginning in 2023 (foreseen as: CHF 45,000 for non-Founding/non-Standing Members and meeting participation fees for Observers of CHF 1,000 per participant to attend each physical meeting). The new fee structure will be for Assembly approval in November 2021.

Additionally in 2020, the ICH Finance Committee supported increasing the amount of ICH surplus funds to be held in reserve for contingencies, and further considered ICH's asset management strategy, including options to preserve ICH's funds, noting significant depreciation of the US Dollar against the Swiss Franc in 2020.

5.3. ICH Communication

The following should be noted in relation to communication activities in 2020:

- On 15 and 16 October 2020, a public webinar on "New Approaches for an Integrated Nonclinical-Clinical QT/Proarrhythmic Risk Assessment" was held by the ICH E14/S7B IWG to provide an overview of the high-level principles and rationale behind the new interconnected Q&As to ICH E14 and S7B and to answer questions received during the webinar.
- The following two events were held in relation to the GCP renovation plan:

- Stakeholder Engagement ICH E6 web conference, organised by FDA, United States on 4-5 June 2020, to learn more about stakeholder experiences with the ICH Good Clinical Practice Guideline (ICH E6). This web conference informed the discussions of the ICH Expert Working Group (EWG), which was tasked with updating the Guideline and making it more responsive to advances in clinical trial design and conduct. Members of the EWG provided an overview of the ongoing work to update the Guideline and heard from multiple stakeholders on their experiences with ICH E6(R2).
- Seminar on GCP Renovation, organised by MHLW/PMDA, Japan and JPMA on 17 December 2020 in Tokyo, Japan as a hybrid in-person and online format. This seminar focused on topics of revising the E6(R3) Guideline. Experts working on the E6(R3) Guideline gave briefings on the potential revisions.

- Acknowledging a benefit for more routine engagement with ICH Observer **PIC/S** on ICH Guideline work with relevance to both Regulatory Assessor and Inspector disciplines, a pilot programme for more routine engagement between ICH and PIC/S was established in 2020, focusing on Q12 and the future Q9(R1) Guidelines. The pilot programme was initiated with the launch of the Q12 IWG and Q9(R1) EWG work with nomination of PIC/S experts to both WGs.
- In April 2020 a video commemorating ICH's 30th Anniversary was released, in which ICH Members and Observers looked back at ICH's evolution since its inception in 1990, reflected on the positive impact of ICH for public health and shared considerations on future directions. The video was filmed during ICH meeting in Singapore in November 2019, and is available on the ICH website www.ich.org.
- In view of the COVID-19 pandemic and cancellation of the face-to-face ICH meeting in Athens in November 2020, the organisation of an ICH 30th Anniversary Commemorative event needed to be postponed. It is hoped that the event can instead be held in 2021.
- In 2020, the work of the ICH 30th Anniversary Organising Subcommittee shifted towards the development of an ICH 30th Anniversary Publication. The publication, which is due to be finalised in 2021, will be made available in both electronic and printed formats, and is intended to serve as an ICH communication document beyond the anniversary celebration to allow sharing of information on ICH in various forums, as well as by ICH Members and Observers.

ICH Regional Public Meetings

While ICH no longer organises the large international ICH Conferences that it did between 1991 and 2003, public meetings are still considered important for disseminating information of ICH activities. ICH Members periodically hold dedicated **ICH regional public meetings**, either independently or in collaboration with other non-profit organisations. In 2020 the following ICH Members held regional public meetings: FDA, United States, Health Canada, Canada together with FDA, United States; and JPMA.

Information on these meetings is made available by the ICH Secretariat on the ICH website.

It should be noted, that in addition to these regional public meetings, ICH Members were also active in presenting on ICH and its Guidelines in other fora in 2020. Such presentations were delivered at the regional DIA meetings organised in 2020 with the following sessions to honour ICH 30th Anniversary:

- DIA 2020 Global Annual Meeting in June 2020, session "ICH 30th Anniversary Series: Harmonizing Global Requirements for Clinical Trials";
- DIA Europe in July 2020, session "ICH at 30 - What Will Come the Next 30 Years?"
- DIA China ICH Day in October 2020, session "ICH 30 Years Special Forum";
- DIA Japan Annual Meeting in November 2020, session "ICH 30th Anniversary: Summary of 30 Years and Future Prospects with the Role of Japan" and few other sessions on different ICH topics.

5.4. Cooperation with the IPRP

Further to the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between ICH and the IPRP (International Pharmaceutical Regulators Programme) in June 2019, the ICH Secretariat continued in 2020 the provision of support services to the IPRP, which are funded by IPRP Members and conducted separately from the support of ICH activities. IPRP is a venue which addresses the increasingly complex global regulatory environment, facilitates the implementation of ICH and other internationally harmonised technical guidelines for pharmaceuticals for human use, promotes collaboration and regulatory convergence, and contributes to the coordination of a range of international efforts related to regulation of medicinal products for human use.

In July 2020, the ICH Assembly further approved the renewal of the MoU for another year so that the ICH Secretariat would continue the provision of support services to the IPRP for the year 2021.

5.5. ICH Secretariat

2020 Staffing

The following highlights key points and decisions related to ICH Secretariat staffing in 2020:

- ICH Secretariat staffing was initially planned at **8.4 FTEs (Full Time Equivalents) for 2020**, being revised by mid-2020 to **8.8 FTE**, with the decision made with the support of the ICH Management Committee, to continue longer term additional administrative support originally only foreseen until mid-2020. This decision was based on the growth in recent years in ICH Membership and Observership, as well as ICH Working Groups, which had resulted in an increase in workload for the ICH Secretariat.
- While this revised planning foresaw 8.8 FTE allocated between ICH (~ 5 FTEs) and MedDRA (~ 3.3 FTEs) activities, as well as IPRP support (~ 0.5 FTEs), the ICH Secretariat operated at less than full capacity in 2020, with approximately 6.8 FTEs, due to staff leave, as well as delays in filling vacancies.

- The year saw **Ms. Clarisse Bertherat** and **Mr. Masaki Fujita** join the team in April and September respectively in the positions of **MedDRA Coordinator** and **ICH MedDRA Manager**; and **Ms. Mélanie Bouveret** and **Ms. Nadja Leuba** join in July and December respectively in the positions of **Administrative Assistants**, further to the departure in June 2020 of Ms. Léa Bolle Buenano Mora, and in view of the departure of Ms. Coralie Angulo in January 2021.
- Staff worked principally from home from March 2020 in view of the COVID-19 pandemic and consideration of the recommendations of the Swiss Federal Office of Public Health.

2020 ICH Secretariat Key Activities

The following outlines key activities undertaken by the ICH Secretariat in 2020 in accordance with its responsibilities for day-to-day ICH management, WG support, and the support of the Assembly, the ICH Management Committee and the MedDRA Management Committee and the implementation of their respective decisions and directives.

2020 Day-to-Day Management Key Activities:

- **Preparing agenda papers and reports** for meetings of the Assembly, the ICH Management Committee and the MedDRA Management Committee, all of which had to be organised virtually by the ICH Secretariat in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This included the biannual meetings of these governing bodies in May/June 2020 and in November 2020, and in March 2020 for the interim ICH Management Committee meeting.
- **Supporting ICH harmonisation activities** and the work of **34 ICH WGs** in 2020, including keeping up-to-date membership lists and establishing 3 new WGs in 2020.
- **Providing support and input for the work of the ICH Management Committee Subcommittees** on: Finance; Training; New Topics; and Organisation of 30th ICH Anniversary.
- **Drafting ICH Association Reports and Work Plans** in support of ICH Management Committee and MedDRA Management Committee reporting to the Assembly, including: 2019 Annual Report; 2021 ICH Work Plan and ICH Multi-Annual Strategic Plan; and 2021 MedDRA Work Plan. All documents were approved by the ICH Assembly.
- **Maintaining the ICH website** including:
  - **Keeping the ICH website up-to-date** with publication of draft documents for public consultation, final ICH Guidelines, *Step 2* and *Step 4* presentations, regional public consultation dates, guideline implementation status and dates, ICH Management Committee and Assembly Meeting Reports, ICH WG Training Materials, Press Releases, and information on ICH Recognised Training Programmes.
  - Maintaining up-to-date the publication on the ICH website, as part of **ICH's communication strategy and transparency policy,** the photographs and short

biographies of all ICH Assembly, ICH Management Committee and MedDRA Management Committee Representatives, Member Coordinators and ICH Secretariat, as well as the list of experts' names for all active WGs.

- Overseeing, inputting into and reviewing the work of the website developer contracted to: (i) perform **upgrades to the ICH, Private Platform, and MedDRA websites**, work which was finalised in 2020, and (ii) maintain these websites, along with the **internal database interfaced with the websites** which was developed in 2019**.**
- **Managing the hosting of ICH websites**, which by the end of 2020 saw all websites and the database being hosted by a single hosting provider on a server located in Switzerland.

- **Responding to stakeholder enquiries** received via the ICH mailbox with input solicited as necessary from ICH experts and ICH Coordinators in accordance with the new process implemented in 2019 for managing technical questions received.
- **Managing ICH's financial administration**, including: regular coordination with the fiduciary firm providing accountancy services to ICH; authorisation of payments; drafting of ICH and MedDRA budgets and multi-year budget plans; preparation of separate year-end closing expense reports for ICH and MedDRA; organising the financial audit; liaising with the relevant Swiss tax authorities for items including submission of 2019 tax return, quarterly VAT declarations, and recovery of withholding tax deducted from interest earned in 2019 from fixed-term deposit bank account; managing renewal of a fixed-term deposit bank account (until June 2020); submitting information required as part of an application for a grant in support of an ICH meeting; managing ICH's grant agreement with FDA, United States, which in 2020 included: applying for renewal of the grant agreement for a further 5 years (from April 2021) and completing all related administrative steps required for the processing of the renewal; submitting quarterly and annual Federal Financial Reports and the annual Research Performance Progress Report; and with respect to use of the funds to support the continued Rapporteurship of a former FDA, United States expert, renewing for a further year an agreement which facilitates provision of consultancy services to ICH, and submitting a request for additional funding to support this.
- **Entering into and managing contracts**, including those related to day-to-day operations (e.g., office support, website hosting/maintenance, SharePoint, web conferencing tools etc.), as well as support of the MedDRA Management Committee's oversight of the MSSO Contractor, which in 2020 included progressing work on two amendments to the MSSO contract and contracting a consultant to support MSSO following of ISO/IDMP related activities.
- **Controlling use of the ICH logo** (including ICH Member logo and ICH Recognised Training Programme logo) in line with the agreed procedures governing its use.
- **Supporting the logistical organisation of current and future year ICH biannual meetings and ICH Management Committee interim meeting** including: regular coordination with and oversight of the PCO in their (i) selection of potential meeting venues for presentation to the ICH Management Committee, (ii) contracting of meeting venues and support services, such as translators and audio-visual equipment,

and (iii) organisation of meetings with registration and meeting information provided to participants followed by logistical set-up of meeting venues to ensure ICH meeting requirements are met appropriately to support the successful meetings of ICH governing bodies and WGs. In 2020, work was undertaken in coordination with the PCO in view of the COVID-19 pandemic to cancel/re-schedule meetings originally planned for 2020.

2020 New/One-Time/Key Activities:

- **Supporting ICH WG collaboration** by facilitating the use of SharePoint by all WGs in 2020 and conducting a pilot to explore the most appropriate web conferencing tool to offer all WGs from 2021.
- **Supporting the ICH Management Committee in efforts to engage Training Associates**, with negotiation of agreements with solicitation of the appropriate legal input, with a first agreement with a Training Associate signed in 2020 for the delivery of training materials on ICH Q1.
- **Supporting ICH Guideline implementation activities**, including: supporting the ICH Management Committee and its Implementation Co-Leads to prepare for the next implementation survey launched in December 2020 by independent third-party survey provider CIRS.
- Supporting a **call for tenders** launched in July 2020 to receive offers from **Professional Conference Organisations** (PCOs) for the organisation of ICH meetings from 2023 and beyond.
- **Managing ICH's trademark registration strategy** for the **ICH logo (device)** which was approved by the ICH Management Committee, and for the **MedDRA logo (device) and name**, which was approved by the MedDRA Management Committee, which in 2020 included renewal of the MedDRA name logo. This effort included provision of input to the trademark lawyers for: class descriptions; responding to trademark authority questions and refusals; requesting a third-party letter of consent; issuing to a third-party a letter of consent; supporting an opposition filed by ICH in 2019 against an application for the registration of a trademark similar to the MedDRA trademark; and considering other new applications for trademarks similar to ICH and MedDRA trademarks, as well as sign-off of Powers of Attorney (with arrangement of notarisation as required) to facilitate the follow-ups by lawyers in each jurisdiction, and follow-up with ICH and MedDRA Management Committee Chairs on key decision items.
- **Supporting the MedDRA Management Committee** oversight of the MSSO Contractor's participation in the **IMI WEB-RADR 2 project** which ended in 2020 and which ICH had joined in 2018 in support the development a proof-of-concept bidirectional **mapping between MedDRA and SNOMED**, and support of efforts towards establishing an agreement between ICH and SNOMED Internationals regarding the maintenance and distribution of the mapping.

- **Identifying opportunities for enhanced efficiencies** in the ICH Secretariat's management of the day-to-day operations of the ICH Association to ensure a mindful and well-appropriated use of ICH Secretariat resources.

5.6. ICH Management Appointed Signatories

In November 2020, and in line with Article 36 2(e) of the ICH Articles of Association, the ICH Management Committee named Dr. Celia Lourenco, ICH Assembly Vice-Chair, as an additional person to represent the ICH Association vis-à-vis third parties alongside existing ICH signatories: ICH Assembly Chair Ms. Lenita Lindström-Gommers, and ICH Secretariat staff Dr. Anne Latrive, Ms. Emilie Macara and Dr. Dawn Ronan. All signatories have joint (by two) signatory rights.

Annex I

Assembly Member Representatives & Observer Delegates

December 31, 2020

Founding Regulatory Members

EC, Europe
Dr. Georgios Balkamos
Dr. Harald Enzmann
Mrs. Lenita Lindström-Gommers *(Chair)*

MHLW/PMDA, Japan
Dr. Nobumasa Nakashima
Mr. Naoyuki Yasuda

FDA, United States
Dr. Theresa Mullin
Ms. Joan Wilmarth Blair

Founding Industry Members

EFPIA
Dr. Sue Forda
Mr. Pär Tellner

JPMA
Dr. Hironobu Hiyoshi
Dr. Masafumi Yokota

PhRMA
Dr. Peter Honig
Ms. Janet Vessotskie

Standing Regulatory Members

Swissmedic, Switzerland
Dr. Andreas Pfenninger
Dr. Jörg Schläpfer

Health Canada, Canada
Dr. Léo Bouthillier
Dr. Celia Lourenco *(Vice Chair)*

Regulatory Members

ANVISA, Brazil
Mr. Gustavo Mendes Lima Santos
Mr. Diogo Penha Soares

HSA, Singapore
Ms. Siew Wei Chua
Dr. Dorothy Toh

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Annex II

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December 31, 2020

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Mr. Philip Tregunno

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WHO
Mr.Takahiro Goto

Annex IV

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31 December, 2020

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Annex V

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31 December, 2020

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Annex VI

Overview of harmonisation activities and accomplishments in 2020

Topic Code	Type of Working Group	Topic Name	Accomplishments	Anticipated Milestones
Standing Pediatric	Standing EWG	Expert consultation and guidance to ICH WGs on pediatric considerations		N/A (Ongoing Activity)
E2B(R3)	EWG/IWG	Revision of Electronic Submission of ICSRs	*Steps 3* and *4* for v1.1. of the Dose Forms and Routes of Administration for Individual Case Safety Reports in the E2B(R3) message were finalised in July 2020. Training Material Module II was finalised in December 2020.	The voice-over presentation for Training Material Module I is expected to be finalised by March 2021. Training Material Module III is expected to be finalised by March 2021.
E2D(R1)	EWG	Revision of Post-Approval Safety Data Management: Definitions and Standards for Expedited Reporting		*Steps 1* and *2 a/b* are expected by November 2022
E6(R3)	EWG	Revision of Good Clinical Practice		*Steps 1* and *2 a/b* are expected for Annex 1 by January 2022 *Steps 1* and *2 a/b* for Annex 2 to be determined (work to be undertaken following reaching of *Steps 1* and *2 a/b* for Annex 1)

E8(R1)	EWG	Revision on General Considerations for Clinical Studies		*Steps 3* and *4* are expected by June 2021
E9(R1)	EWG	Addendum to Defining Appropriate Estimand for a Clinical Trial/Sensitivity Analyses		Training materials and videos are expected to be finalised by early 2021
E11A	EWG	Paediatric Extrapolation		*Steps 1* and *2a/b* are expected by November 2021
E14/S7B	IWG	Clinical Evaluation of QT/QTc Interval Prolongation and Proarrhythmic Potential for Non-Antiarrhythmic Drugs	First stage of Q&As reached *Steps 1* and *2a/b* in August 2020.	*Steps 3* and *4* of the first stage of Q&As is expected by November 2021 Need for a second stage of Q&As to be determined by December 2021.
E19	EWG	Optimization of Safety Data Collection		*Steps 3* and *4* are expected by June 2022
E20	EWG	Adaptive Clinical Trials		*Steps 1* and *2 a/b* are expected by November 2022
M1	PtC WG	MedDRA Points to Consider (PtC)	Release of "MedDRA Term Selection" and "MedDRA Data Retrieval and Presentation" PtC documents in Chinese, Korean, and Spanish in October 2020. Release of the v2.0 of the MedDRA PtC Companion document in November 2020.	Release of updated "MedDRA Term Selection" and "MedDRA Data Retrieval and Presentation" PtC documents (based on MedDRA v.24.0) in English, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and Spanish is expected in March 2021. Release of the v3.0 of the MedDRA PtC Companion document is expected in December 2021.
M2	EWG	Electronic Standards for the Transfer of Regulatory Information (ESTRI)		N/A (Ongoing Activity)

M4Q(R1)	IWG	Addressing CTD-Q-Related Questions		N/A Group is in standby in case of any questions received on the revised M4 Granularity Document
M7(R2)	Maintenance EWG	Addendum to Assessment and Control of DNA Reactive Impurities in Pharmaceuticals to Limit Potential Carcinogenic Risk Development of Q&As	M7(R2) Q&As reached *Steps 1 and 2a/b* in June 2020.	*Steps 1* and *2 a/b* of the revised M7(R2) draft Guideline are expected by April 2021, and *Steps 3* and *4* by December 2021 *Steps 3* and *4* of the M7(R2) Q&As are expected by August 2021.
M8	EWG/IWG	Electronic Common Technical Document: eCTD	The eCTD v4.0 Question and Answer (Q&A) and Specification Change Request Document v1.4 reached *Step 4* of the ICH process in December 2020.	The eCTD v4 Implementation Package v.1.4 is expected to reach *Step 4* in June 2021.
M10	EWG	Bioanalytical Method Validation		Steps 3 and 4 of the M10 Guideline are expected by November 2021 Training materials are expected to be finalised within a 6-month timeframe after completion of the M10 Guideline.
M11	EWG	Clinical electronic Structured Harmonised Protocol (CeSHarP)		*Steps 1* and *2 a/b* on the Guideline, Template, Basis of Requirements, and Technical Description are expected by September 2021 *Steps 1* and *2 a/b* on the Full Technical Specification for Electronic Exchange are expected by February 2022.
M12	EWG	Drug Interaction Studies		*Steps 1* and *2 a/b* are expected by May 2022

M13	EWG	Bioequivalence for Immediate-Release Solid Oral Dosage Forms		*Steps 1* and *2 a/b* are expected by June 2022.
Q2(R2)/Q14	EWG	Analytical Procedure Development and Revision of Q2(R1) Analytical Validation		*Steps 1* and *2 a/b* are expected by May 2021
Q3C(R8)	Maintenance EWG	Maintenance of the Guideline for Residual Solvents	Reached *Steps 1* and *2 a/b* in March 2020.	(Ongoing Activity) *Steps 3* and *4* are expected by Q1 2021.
Q3D(R2)	Maintenance EWG	Maintenance of the Guideline for Elemental Impurities	Reached *Steps 1 and 2a/b* in September 2020.	*Steps 3* and *4* are expected by August 2021
Q3E	EWG	Impurity: Assessment and Control of Extractables and Leachables for Pharmaceuticals and Biologics		*Steps 1* and *2 a/b* are expected by November 2022
Q5A(R2)	EWG	Revision of Viral Safety Evaluation of Biotechnology Products Derived from Cell Lines of Human or Animal Origin		*Steps 1* and *2 a/b* are expected by May 2022
Q9(R1)	EWG	Quality Risk Management	Concept Paper and Business Plan endorsed by the MC in October 2020	*Steps 1* and *2a/b* are expected by September 2021
Q12	IWG	Technical and Regulatory Considerations for Pharmaceutical Product Lifecycle Management		Finalisation of Training Materials Modules 0-7 are expected by March 2021, and Module 8 and case studies are expected by November 2021.
Q13	EWG	Continuous Manufacturing of Drug Substances and Drug Products		*Steps 1* and *2 a/b* are expected by June 2021

S1(R1)	EWG	Revision of the Rodent Carcinogenicity Studies for Human Pharmaceuticals		*Steps 1* and *2a/b* are expected by March 2021
S5(R4)	Maintenance EWG	Maintenance of Annexes 1 and 2 of the S5 Guideline on Detection of Toxicity to Reproduction for Human Pharmaceuticals	S5(R3) reached *Steps 3* and *4* in February 2020.	Group currently dormant, to reconvene activities no earlier than March 2021.
S11	EWG	Nonclinical Safety Testing in Support of Development of Paediatric Pharmaceuticals	Reached *Steps 3* and *4* in April 2020.	Disbanded.
S12	EWG	Nonclinical Biodistribution Considerations for Gene Therapy Products		*Steps 1* and *2 a/b* are expected between May and July 2021
PEpiDG	DG	Pharmacoepidemiology Discussion Group (Strategic Approach to International Harmonization of Technical Scientific Requirements for Pharmacoepidemiological Studies Submitted to Regulatory Agencies to Advance More Effective Utilization of Real-World Data)		Work on prioritisation of proposed topics based on feasibility, needs and importance for harmonisation, expected to be completed by early 2022 (2-year term).
GDG	DG	Generic drug Discussion Group (Further Opportunities for Harmonization of Standards for Generic Drugs)		Finalisation of recommendations for draft New Topic Proposal(s) is expected by July 2021.
QDG	DG	Quality Discussion Group	Developed 2 New Topic proposals which would be submitted to	Finalisation of the QDG work on recommendation and prioritisation of existing ICH

		(Advancing Biopharmaceutical Quality Standards to Support Continual Improvement and Innovation in Manufacturing Technologies and Approaches)	the 2021 New Topics Cycle	Quality and relevant Multidisciplinary Guidelines is expected by August 2021.