The ASRM 2014–2019 Strategic Plan

Global Impact through Dynamic Engagement
DEVELOPING a new Strategic Plan is an exciting time. It is a time to examine the organization and identify its accomplishments, strengths, weaknesses, vulnerabilities, and opportunities. It is a time to collectively utilize the energy of its members and leaders to plan for a future that is bigger than us all — to make goals that are achievable but stretch us to perform at our very best and have a maximum effect on all those we serve. ASRM is a premier medical organization that has led the way and set many standards for organizations across a gamut of medical specialties. We have maintained a vibrant membership, set standards of care, provided excellent electronic learning modules to members and our constituents, funded cutting edge research, and advocated for reproductive rights for all.

In 2010, the Society’s strategic planning process focused on 5 major areas as strategic goals: Advocacy, Education, Membership, Organizational Stability, and Research. Over the past 5 years, ASRM has been guided by superb leadership and staff, an insightful and hardworking Board, as well as loyal and talented members who have served on many committees and put in countless hours of personal time. The Society surpassed each of the goals it had set. The ASRM advocated for patients while preventing legislature throughout the country that would restrict reproductive rights, developed an enormous library of exceptional educational modules and a burgeoning patient education portal, solidified its financial position to allow the organization to retain high-caliber staff and to be nimble in responding to the needs of its members, and contributed resources for new and seasoned researchers in the field.

Over the past 1½ years, the Executive Committee and Board prepared for the 2014–2019 strategic planning process. A nationally known facilitator was hired to guide the process, which included a member survey; a pre-planning session with the full Board of Directors to gain better understanding of membership needs and expectations; a pre-planning day with the Executive Committee to focus the areas for discussion; a strategic planning meeting with 45 dedicated ASRM members and leaders in Woodstock, VT; and follow-up work by the facilitator and ASRM leadership to finalize the new Strategic Plan.

Our overarching goal is to have the greatest impact globally on reproductive care.

We proudly present here the 2014–2019 ASRM Strategic Plan. We are excited about the future of the organization and hope we can engage all of you in the work of the Society and plan for the best possible reproductive care for our patients worldwide. Our strategic goals will focus on 5 new areas in addition to Organizational Stability and Research. Please be assured that we will not abandon our ongoing focus on Advocacy, Education, and Membership, and intend to stretch our work in these areas to many levels higher. The title of our Strategic Plan, “Global Impact through Dynamic Engagement,” affirms our overarching goal to have the greatest impact globally on reproductive care, but in order to do so, we need our entire membership engaged in the work we do—either by utilizing our programs for education, research, and advocacy or by volunteering to help develop new resources in these areas. The 2014–2019 strategic goal areas are: Communications, Continuous Professional Development, Impacting Reproductive Care, Research, Engaging the Profession, Global Outreach, and Organizational Stability. Please join us on our journey to that future bigger than us all, using the latest technology to communicate and spread our work to all corners of the earth.

Respectfully Submitted,
The ASRM Board of Directors
July 2014
2014–2019 Strategic Goals

Communications
Make the ASRM and our mission highly visible | Page 4

Continuous Professional Development
Set new standards in the continuing medical education of reproductive medicine | Page 5

Impacting Reproductive Care
Have maximal impact on reproductive medicine | Pages 6-7

Research
Spearhead the agenda for research in reproduction and the development of both the current and future generations of clinical investigators in the reproductive sciences | Page 8

Engaging the Profession
Engage membership at all career phases | Page 9

Global Outreach
Extend our reach of impact to all corners of the earth | Page 10

Organizational Stability
Maintain ASRM’s excellent financial, leadership, and organizational foundations to allow us to stretch for the impossible | Page 11
THE THRUST OF THE 2014 STRATEGIC PLAN may seem lofty. It is achievable; however, the highest quality Informational Technology and Communications Programs must first be put into place.

Tactics: Information Technology

Tactics for enhancing the ASRM IT program include an outside IT consultation that will review:

- Staffing configuration and oversight;
- IT hardware;
- Association management software;
- Website capabilities;
- Social media and electronic educational platforms.

This review will then guide the necessary changes in this important area. It will be the major thrust of the first year of the plan while simultaneously initiating each of the other strategic goals.

THE ENHANCEMENT OF MARKETING, PUBLIC RELATIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMS envisioned in this Strategic Plan will advance the global utilization of the Society’s superb educational programs and increase the effectiveness of its advocacy initiatives. Increased visibility will allow the Society to attain maximum utilization, resulting in a major impact on reproductive care.

Tactics: Enhanced Communications

Tactics for enhanced communications include:

- Upgrading IT first;
- Resourcing and assessing staff configuration of the Communications Program;
- Initiating a branding campaign that showcases new activities;
- Developing a refreshed logo and presentation to the public of ASRM’s new slogan: “Health Affects Reproduction Affects Health”;
- Exploring additional forms of communication (radio, TV)
- Disseminating timely messages to a broader public audience.
THE CORNERSTONE OF THE ASRM’S IMPACT has historically been through very robust educational programs, primarily with the Annual Meeting and through e-Learning. The 2014 Strategic Plan will emphasize the importance of both continuous learning and the engagement of learners in more interactive, enticing educational formats.

Tactics: ASRM Annual Meeting

Refreshing the Annual Meeting will utilize tactics that include:

- Maximizing the ease and efficiency of electronic (not paper) media;
- Live-streaming portions of the program;
- Utilizing more interactive and hands-on formats;
- Partnering with other organizations for enrichment of content;
- Translating portions of the program into the languages of predominant international registrants present;
- Developing post-meeting packages for viewing various portions of the program for registrants unable to attend.

Tactics: e-Learning

New and exciting e-Learning formats will be developed under the charge of the Strategic Plan with specific tactics that include:

- Development of libraries of micro-videos*;
- Development of robust, “live” online learning activities;
- Creation of ASRM apps to access these learning materials.

All of these activities will be designed for learners at all levels, practitioners, and scientists, with attention paid to engaging a global audience. Translations will continue to play an important role in reaching this goal.

* Micro-videos are characteristically 5-10 minutes in length with 1-4 take-home messages, allowing learners to engage over short intervals of free time. Apps have clearly demonstrated their power of enticing the user to engage. Some of these micro-videos will be Kahn Academy–style micro-videos which utilize a specific technique of learning (like “chalk talks”) and depart from the traditional teaching media, such as PowerPoint presentations.
THE 2014 STRATEGIC PLAN is designed to have a high impact on reproductive care worldwide through a multifaceted approach. Developing standards of care is as important as educating clinicians, allied health providers, and lab personnel. Educating the public is paramount. Equally, and perhaps more important, is the continued support of reproductive research that will push the frontiers of efficient and successful reproductive care to all sectors of the global population (see page 8). The voice of ASRM must be loud and clear, protecting the reproductive rights of couples and assuring that infertility is treated by medical establishments and governmental agencies with the same level of attention and concern as are all other diseases. In that regard, advocacy remains a key component in all of this work.

The 2014 Strategic Plan calls for across-the-board attention to all aspects of reproductive care. It focuses particular attention on infertility prevention as the ideal, and a specific new focus on accessible care to all as a stretch goal.

**Tactics: Educating ASRM Members, Patients, and the Public**

In addition to the tactics for educating ASRM members under the goal of Continuous Professional Development on page 5, the ASRM will:

- Continue to focus on the development of guidelines for clinical care (to be developed in accordance with the Institute of Medicine’s recommendations and accepted for publication in the National Guidelines Clearinghouse);
- Move the education of the public and patients ahead, using similar strategies developed for members that are discussed in other sections of the plan;
- Enrich ReproductiveFacts.org with a library of micro-videos and a patient app;
- Continue translations of materials for patients in emerging countries.

**Tactics: Advocacy**

Tactics for making political advocacy more impactful include:

- An advocacy/media training program for members;
- Heightened communications to members on policy issues through social media, brief videos, webcasts, and newer technologies as they emerge;
- Radio public service messages and TV opportunities;
- Investigation of expansion of the role of the ASRM DC office.

Have maximal impact on reproductive care through education, research, and advocacy, keeping prevention of infertility the ideal and accessible reproductive care the goal.
THE 2014 STRATEGIC PLAN, when enacted, will have maximum impact on a broad spectrum of reproductive care issues around the globe. This plan, however, goes further to address, in particular, specific barriers to reproductive freedom for all individuals. It views the ideal goal of such freedom first and foremost as prevention of infertility. In addition, it addresses the biggest barrier for couples with infertility both at home and around the globe: access to care. ASRM holds the achievement of reproductive freedom as our Society’s true stretch goal for the 2014–2019 Strategic Plan.

Tactics: Prevention of Infertility and Access to Care

Two task forces will be developed, one to tackle the prevention of infertility and a second to work on all aspects of access to care. The ASRM will hold open, 3-hour (or longer) symposia for each of these areas, either at the Annual Meeting or at stand-alone gatherings, bringing together the true thought leaders in the areas for:

- Discussing current status in the field and identifying barriers to further development;
- Developing RFPs (request for proposals) for clinical research studies in this area;
- Funding accepted proposals, either as clinical trials or the development of tactics to gain traction in these areas;
- Showcasing the work in these areas at the Annual Meeting (e.g., half-day programs, plenary lectures, abstract sessions, workshops and/or yearly symposia);
- Engaging the Affiliated Societies in this work to pursue additional tactics that include high-profile advocacy.
RESEARCH IS A CORE MISSION OF THE ASRM, and setting the research agenda is of paramount importance in the 2014 Strategic Plan. The clinical application of research findings ultimately achieves the greatest impact on patient health and reproductive outcomes. The proactive planning by ASRM of the direction of reproductive research is essential at this time of decreasing support and budgetary constraints for research at the National Institutes of Health, in industry, and in foundations. The research focus of the Strategic Plan will be on research that has tangible value to the membership and includes clinical, translational, and basic approaches directly relevant to the practice of reproductive medicine. In addition, the Strategic Plan calls for continued support of reproductive research that fills existing voids and introduces innovation and new discoveries in the reproductive sciences. Equally important is the goal of contributing to the development of the next generation of clinical investigators and scientists in reproduction through mentoring of trainees and junior physician scientists and basic/translational researchers.

Tactics: Development of the Research Agenda

A task force will be formed to establish research priorities that will increase the effectiveness of reproductive medicine research, funding, and dissemination of findings relevant to both female and male reproduction. This is a major thrust of the 2014 Strategic Plan. It calls for:

- Continued, but re-evaluated support of research endeavors and programs that
  
  - Define and prioritize the questions to be addressed;
  - Identify gaps in RCT (randomized controlled trial)-based reproductive practice knowledge for targeting ASRM-sponsored research;
  - Develop clinical research projects designed to answer practice-related questions;
  - Focus on RFA(s) (request for applications) for SPECIFIC topic(s) of interest to the ASRM membership;
  - Consider providing pilot and bridge grants to “junior” investigators;
  - Consider funding projects of longer duration (3-5 years) in key areas of interest;
  - Evaluate research focus and priorities yearly
  - Consider implementation of periodic workshops/conferences to identify new reproductive research priorities

- Development of a major research endowment;
- Further development of young investigators through support and mentoring;
- Consideration for development of ASRM research networks with national and/or global collaborations;
- Establishment of ASRM research priorities to complement those of other agencies, such as NIH;
- Partnership with federal agencies and global organizations to promote, support, and advance research and training in reproductive science and medicine.
THE MEMBERSHIP OF ASRM is the Society’s lifeblood. Recruiting and retaining members was a critical goal of the 2010 Strategic Plan, and it was achieved with an increase in membership since 2011. While it is critical to never lose sight of the importance of this 2010 goal, the 2014 goal charges the Society with recruiting and maximally engaging membership both as users of and volunteers in its educational, research, and advocacy activities. In order to maximize its impact on global reproductive care, it is critical that ASRM engage new reproductive health professionals and sustain their participation in the Society throughout their careers. In addition, the 2014 Strategic Plan calls for engaging the Affiliated Societies, Professional Groups, and Special Interest Groups in this work. Engagement of members is key to maintaining a robust membership, which will in turn lead to the Society’s greater impact.

Tactics: Member Participation

ASRM will develop ways to engage members at all career levels. Tactics include:

• Using webinars to “onboard” new members and communicate Society activities to members;
• Identifying unengaged members and determine how the Society can better serve their professional needs;
• Developing a Council of Practitioners Focus Group that will solicit feedback from individual members (e.g., those who have not attended the Annual Meeting in a number of years) and utilize them to determine how to better engage their respective sectors of the Society;
• Increasing opportunities to engage loyal international members in all levels of work.

Tactics: Volunteerism

Opportunities to volunteer will be expanded and diversified. Plans include:

• Enhancing the volunteer selection process for easier identification and utilization of members;
• Utilizing short-term task forces to allow for focused, efficient completion of necessary work and to engage the maximal number of member volunteers;
• Creating meaningful volunteer opportunities for international members.

Tactics: Increasing Member Value

In addition to the tactics outlined above, ASRM will continue to engage members by improving the value of membership. The following are examples of initiatives that could greatly enhance member value:

• Packages that bundle membership and educational opportunities for nurses and lab personnel;
• New platforms to diversify access to e-Learning, such as:
  › Mobile apps;
  › Micro-videos;
  › Libraries of Electronic Medical Record smart sets;
  › Sets of teaching slides.
Global Outreach

THE ASRM received NGO (Nongovernmental Organization) status from the World Health Organization in January of 2014. As a WHO partner, ASRM will now be invited to officially participate in informal consultations pertaining to global reproductive health. This designation was reflective of the Society’s commitment to provide our services to all parts of the world and to work with our reproductive medicine association partners globally in meeting the challenges that couples have regarding prevention and treatment of reproductive disorders throughout their lifetimes.

Having a separate Global Outreach strategic goal underscores ASRM’s strategic focus on impacting reproductive care to the far corners of the earth.

Tactics: Global Outreach

Tactics for this work are described throughout this plan and include:

- Development of educational materials for professionals and the lay population using a number of different translations;
- Development of research collaborations;
- Development of programs that model prevention and include more widely accessible and efficacious care – particularly infertility care – with the ability to monitor outcomes;
- Political advocacy for a high standard of reproductive care for all;
- Further strengthening of ASRM’s relations with its sister organization and partner societies.
Organizational Stability

STRONG ORGANIZATIONAL AND FINANCIAL FOUNDATIONS are essential in order for ASRM to successfully implement its strategic goals over the next 5 years. ASRM leadership has demonstrated its fiduciary responsibility by planning for and achieving a strong financial reserve. This was planned with the full realization that the cost of running the organization would likely change in the future, as historical sources of revenues were predicted to diminish, the cost of the electronic age would increase dramatically, and the demands of a global society for enhanced reproductive care continued to expand. A critical part of the financial planning was to create a Fund Development Program with the goal of endowing as much as possible in order to allow our programs of value (Annual Meeting, e-Learning, support of research) to exist into perpetuity, despite the unpredictable financial climate of the time.

Under the direction of the 2010 Strategic Plan, a solid financial backing was achieved and a Fund Development Program, “Write the Next Chapter,” was developed with early success. ASRM is in great financial shape to ensure success of the new Strategic Plan, as long as the Society can continue to demonstrate fiscal responsibility and grow its Fund Development Program. In addition, ASRM has acquired and developed a strong organizational foundation with talented leadership and staff.

The 2014 Strategic Plan calls for a re-evaluation of ASRM’s financial principles of operation. Historically, earnings from reserves have not been utilized for operations, and the work of the Society has been accomplished from all other earnings. That is no longer the case. In addition to decreasing revenue sources, the cost of running the Society has increased, and necessary expenditures for new technology are disproportionately higher than the cost of living. Excellent financial stewardship poises the Society to enact a successful 2014–2019 Strategic Plan. While the cost of the next 5 years is expected to be high, the 2014 Strategic Plan predicts a very high resulting impact.

Tactics: Organizational Stability

Tactics to achieve these strong bases include:

- Formation of a task force to develop a new set of financial guidelines for operations;
- Analysis of the cost of moving forward with this plan;
- Outside review and the development of a fund development strategy going forward;
- Thorough review of current organizational operations, with an eye to eliminate processes no longer necessary and create structures and processes required by this changing environment;
- Modernization of the bylaws.
ASRM is poised to move into the future with a Strategic Plan that utilizes cutting-edge technology, maximally engages its members in education, research, and advocacy, and results in a high impact on those for whom we care. The ASRM leadership looks forward to member involvement during these exciting times.

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