

## EDITORIAL

# YOU AND YOUR SOCIETY GROW TOGETHER

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Almost all professions have their corresponding professional societies or associations. Every professional should be a member of some related professional society. That society will represent its members and work for the betterment of their profession. A society or association is a synergistic group. This means that the effect of a group of people is more than just one person. Societies are usually the non-profit organizations that promote a particular profession, promote the members of the profession, and also protect the public interests. Societies protect the interests of the public by maintaining the standards of training and by ensuring the ethical practices in their profession. Professional societies bring together like-minded people who can network, share experiences and learn from each other. Members of the society contribute to meet the expenses for the activities of the society. Membership fees and other contributions members make help support society programs and operating costs. Society programs play a big part in helping the membership grow.

The mission of any professional society is primarily educational and informational. Their influence is evident from their functions, which are: to publish professional journals, to improve professional excellence, to increase the public awareness, and to make awards to their efficient members. Professional societies help to set standards for their professional fields and so promote high standards of quality in their professions. Many professional bodies also develop and monitor professional educational programs in their fields, and help update skills of their members. Their certification signifies that a person possesses credible qualifications in the related area of expertise. Associations contribute to their communities in a number of ways like providing scholarships for students providing travel grants and CME credits to its members and by supporting important charitable causes in their communities.

Membership of professional organizations is important and worthwhile to you. You are informed of current developments in your fields of expertise. Membership also shows your dedication to the field. It connects you with your peers, mentors, and other field leaders. It keeps you updated with the latest developments and scientific breakthroughs in the field. It also helps your professional development through CME activities. If you are a senior, it provides you an opportunity to find out students for mentoring. It gives you a personal satisfaction to be a part of a respectable community. It provides you the opportunities to foreign tours through conferences and seminars. It helps you to

find out the latest jobs and research slots in your field. It is also important as you make contacts with those who share similar interests and goals. Public becomes aware of the importance of your work.

Your membership presents opportunities for healthy competition, personal recognition and access to educational forums. Membership in a professional society offers their members opportunity to support people involved in research, and other educational programs in their field. Membership provides you with a moral boost. Listening to the experiences of others, you are energised and refreshed with the feeling that you are not alone in the fight to find a respectable place in the field. Organizations and societies have an important political role in the community that far exceeds the presence of individual members.

In short, the networking, the resources and the ideas and advice you get from society's senior members will be an outstanding return on your small, manageable investment of time, money and effort. The society enhances the performance of its members that ultimately will benefit the society in the end. So, help your Society grow, the more you engage yourself in the Society, the more you will receive from your Society.

To physiologists in Pakistan, it is advisable to join Pakistan Physiological Society. Grow up from our respective institutes to the national level through Pakistan Physiological Society (PPS); to the regional level through South Asian Association of Physiologists (SAAP) and Federation of Asian and Oceanian Physiological Societies (FAOPS), and jump to the international level through International Union of Physiological Sciences (IUPS). A PPS member also becomes a member of SAAP automatically. In the present antagonistic international environment, we can present a true soft image of Pakistan through our international linkages.

It is important to note that you get out of a society as much as you put into it. You and your Society have a symbiotic relationship, both benefiting from each other. The more you engage yourself in the society, the more you will receive from your participation. Become an active member! Do more than simply attending meetings!! There are lots of advantages of becoming a professional member. The true advantage of a professional membership comes from your participation in the Society. When you have made a commitment to join the Society, make a personal commitment to grow your Society. Helping the Society achieve its mission will immediately bear the fruits of your labor.

There are some disadvantages of the societies also. They often act like a cartel, a labour union or a trade union for the members of the profession. They usually get tipped in favour of protecting and defending the professionals rather than to protect the public interests. Nevertheless, advantages to become a member definitely outweigh these disadvantages. So be proud to be a member of your society, shout it from the rooftops. Become an active member and educate others for this excellent, worthwhile investment in future.

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