Dear Colleagues

We would like to thank you for your patience, well-wishes and support while we, the ICD Local Organising Committee (LOC), were engaged in deliberations to come to a decision about the format of ICD 2021.

After considering the possible challenges, risks and opportunities to be encountered over the coming year, the ICD LOC decided to continue as a virtual congress from 1-3 September 2021. Key considerations in this decision-making process included:

• the health and safety of congress participants,
• the unpredictability of travel and quarantine,
• financial limitations from participants from various countries considering the effect of COVID-19,
• time constraints in terms of planning logistics of an in-person congress considering how rapidly plans can change again with potential surges over the next year.

A very important consideration that thought-leaders around the world have shared over the past months, is that virtual congresses are here to stay, and associations would continue in the future, to combine hosting virtual and in-person congresses post-COVID. While among the many changes and challenges we have all faced the past year, being online continuously, can be a challenge - but it is worth recognising the benefits of a virtual congress rather than discounting it due to virtual fatigue alone, as this will very likely form a continued part of our professional lives in the foreseeable future. The substantially reduced costs to attend, and in our current global climate, the reliability and certainty that a virtual congress will take place regardless of surges, lockdowns, airline challenges and other life-changing world events, is important to recognise. The more we invest in this solution in the short and medium term, the better the success of it will be.

A survey was also sent to all current registered delegates and presenters during February this year, and the vast majority who voted confirmed they would continue to support the congress if held virtually. This critical information, among others, assisted us in making the decision to go virtual, which we believe would serve the best interests and safety of our delegates, our presenters and the ICDA.

We have reduced the rates significantly for the ICD 2021 Virtual Congress. Considering limited travel expenses involved, the cost of participation is substantially reduced, and we trust this will enable even more delegates to attend. The opportunity to access a number of keynote presentations, symposia, workshops, oral and poster presentations (which will be available on demand after the congress for a period of time) for a very reasonable cost, is considerable.

We recognise that for many the in-person networking is of great value. Therefore, our online platform will include a meeting hub where you can connect with other delegates as well as exhibitors and sponsors.

Together with the global nutrition fraternity, we yearned for the ICD to take place in a face-to-face format on the African continent. For now, it may not be our time, but we keep the faith that we will still see the ICD hosted on this beautiful continent in the future.

Looking back on the objectives we set for this congress, we will not be wavering from them. We still strive to host a world-class congress that upholds the purpose, mission, goals and objectives set out by the International Confederation of Dietetics Associations. In due course, more detailed information will be shared about the congress. We can confirm that it will include various keynote presentations, structured sessions, panel discussions, workshops, and discussion sessions. We look forward to meeting you in the virtual space at the ICD 2021.

Prof Lisanne du Plessis
Chairperson: ICD 2021 Scientific Committee

Regards,
Dr Christine Taljaard-Krugell
Chairperson: ICD 2021 Organising Committee

VIRTUAL CONGRESS RATES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Rate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADSA and NSSA Members &amp; Students</td>
<td><strong>R 1900 (Approx $130)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low and middle income countries including South Africans that are not ADSA or NSSA members</td>
<td><strong>R 2200 (Approx $150)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High income countries</td>
<td><strong>R 2900 (Approx $195)</strong></td>
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*R = South African Rand (ZAR)

DEADLINES:
Early registration to qualify for the above rates - 30 April 2021
(from 1 May 2021 the rates increase as per the information on the congress website)

All Programme Presenters (Workshop, Symposia, Oral & Poster Abstract Presenters): to re-confirm participation by 9 April 2021