

# CASE STUDY No. 17

Continuing the series of case studies from leading PCOs around the world

## Beyond Congress Management

*Associations are more than their congress, and IAPCO PCOs are more than congress organisers. Delivering innumerable quality congresses has given IAPCO members invaluable insights into the business needs of their clients and has allowed them to become trusted advisors who can contribute to the success of an organisation beyond their congress. IAPCO's philosophy is entirely based on quality, and its members actively share best-practice and develop educational programmes and guidelines which enable them to perform at the highest levels in any area of expertise related to organisational excellence. To illustrate this, IAPCO regularly publishes success stories of members who have helped their clients to be successful not just by organising their congress, but by achieving overarching business objectives.*

### SITO – Società Italiana Trapianti d'Organo (Italian Society for Organ Transplants) Strategic Consulting as a new objective for PCO Association Management

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#### The challenge To pilot medical-scientific associations towards the future

The Italian Society for Organ Transplants (SITO) has been active in Italy since 1966 promoting a knowledge of, and the performance of, organ transplants, and has recently celebrated the 40th edition of its Annual Conference bringing to the attention of the scientific community, the Italian institutions and the public opinion, the levels of excellence in Organ Transplantation that our country has reached as witnessed by Italy's presence amongst the first and most active in the international field.

The Association's activities were underlined with the approval of Law number 644 on the 2nd December 1975, the first time Italy defined with state legislation, the criteria for cerebral death, to the birth of the National Transplantation Centre, and through the continuing improvement of transplant techniques, including greater training resources, scientific research and an ever growing dissemination of knowledge and results.

SITO has witnessed a continuing and positive escalation within its field, but the number of organs donated in Italy is still far too low both in terms of percentages and absolute data. A culture of organ donation has not developed at the same pace as the practice of organ

transplantation and this is a photograph that the Association could not ignore.

What can be done to promote a culture for organ donation? How can this mission be included in the strategic objectives already undertaken by the Association? What activities should be implemented? How can they be financed?

These are the principal questions that the Association's Board has been debating as a result of which they invited EGA, (already responsible for the association's management), to help them, and the Association's Presidency, trace, research and develop concrete answers and solutions.

#### The solution

In 2015 EGA formed a highly specialized



First FIPTO Board Meeting at EGA headquarters.

professional team offering strategic consultancy to support SITO to find the right solutions.

This professional responsibility changed EGA's original role from that of simple PCO for the annual SITO congresses, to a 360° advisor, when SITO decided to take on the mission to directly promote the culture of organ donation, creating FIPTO – the Italian Foundation for the Promotion of Organ Transplants.

FIPTO was born in April 2016 as a no-profit institution, with the mission of implementing communication projects and cultural initiatives. FIPTO works strategically in tandem with SITO (which it represents). EGA is responsible for the Foundation management as well as for the communication campaign.



From left to right: Ariella Neustadt (EGA), Professor Franco Citterio (FIPTO President), Valentina Lancella (EGA), Cristina Aru (EGA), Professor Umberto Cillo (SITO President), during the first FIPTO Board meeting at EGA headquarters.

#### The outcome

FIPTO was officially presented to the world during the 40th SITO National Congress, outlining its first innovational element: an ongoing relationship with all forms of media referring to transplants and organ donation. Online channels were identified through which to reach a possible larger audience and to raise awareness in the general public and through the medical field. As a result of this strategy, over 400 articles in the general and online press, in-depth interviews and space in important national radio and television programmes, and activities on Social Networks, have been achieved, thanks especially to the SITO-FIPTO tandem supported by EGA. Other innovative communication and promotional activities are being created and will be undertaken in order to attract and maintain the attention of both the general public and all national institutions.

Even if there is still a long way to go, the National Report on Transplantations 2016 gives good news about the national attitude towards organ donations. This result will certainly be improved in the future thanks to FIPTO's communication campaign.