



Notice of the Cancellation of the 42nd Triennial Congress

As we all know, the Coronavirus Pandemic has affected meetings, gatherings, and sporting events around the world. Travelers and large groups are particularly influenced by this terrible contagion, and those who need to make plans months ahead are struggling to cope with unknown factors. GSMD, which includes so many at-risk vulnerable people, is no exception. Massachusetts is currently operating in a state of emergency, and it is really impossible to predict when that emergency will end or whether it may occur again later this year.

Your Executive Committee is carefully considering how to balance the health of our members with the needs of our Society. After considerable review, it has been decided that we must cancel the Congress scheduled for September 2020. The Emergency Orders from Massachusetts will allow us some extra flexibility in how we conduct activities, and over the next two months or so we will work with the General Board to determine how we can conduct the essential business of our organization.

You may be interested to know that there is precedent for this action. During the Second World War, GSMD did not hold Congress in 1942, and the 1945 Congress was postponed until 1946.

We will try to reschedule the commemorative events that we planned for this year into the future, but those plans are all up in the air. Over the next two to three weeks we will refund all of the paid registration fees that our members and guests have made for 2020 – it will be a full refund. Please note: No action is required by Registrants at this time.

We are currently working through the mechanics of processing refunds to our members with our Registration Team. Full refunds will be processed without requesting them. If you paid for your reservations via credit card, you will receive a refund applied to your credit card. Once your refund is submitted for processing, you will receive an email notification from our Registration Team advising you of this processing: it will include an itemized receipt of the refund. If you placed reservations on separate days, you will receive multiple refunds, by reservation date. The refund process can take up to 10 business days once it is initiated. And because of timing differences, you may not see the credit until you receive your May credit card statement.

We have been in contact with our partners at the Pilgrim Monument and Provincetown Museum regarding the Provincetown 400 events. At this time, they, too, are under a state of emergency. Their Board of Directors is considering options about their events, but no decision has been made at this time. Right now, their events are going-forward as planned. When a decision is made, I will send an additional communication to inform our members.

Please be sure to cancel any accommodation reservations you may have made on your own.

These are indeed extraordinary times. More than ever, the Society feels an enormous obligation to our members during this international crisis. But cancellation terms in our existing contracts must be met and paid for by GSMD, even though all the money to pay for these contracts is being refunded to our members. To help GSMD defray some of the significant costs for the cancellation of this event, won't you please consider donating back your registration fee or whatever you can afford? (Please send your donation via check, payable to GSMD.) We hope to plan commemorative events as soon as possible but will be unable to do so without restoring these depleted funds.

We all look forward to brighter days when we can bring our membership together and commemorate the 400th anniversary. We all will have much to be thankful for, when we are past this pandemic.

Governor General George P. Garmany, M.D.
April 20, 2020