

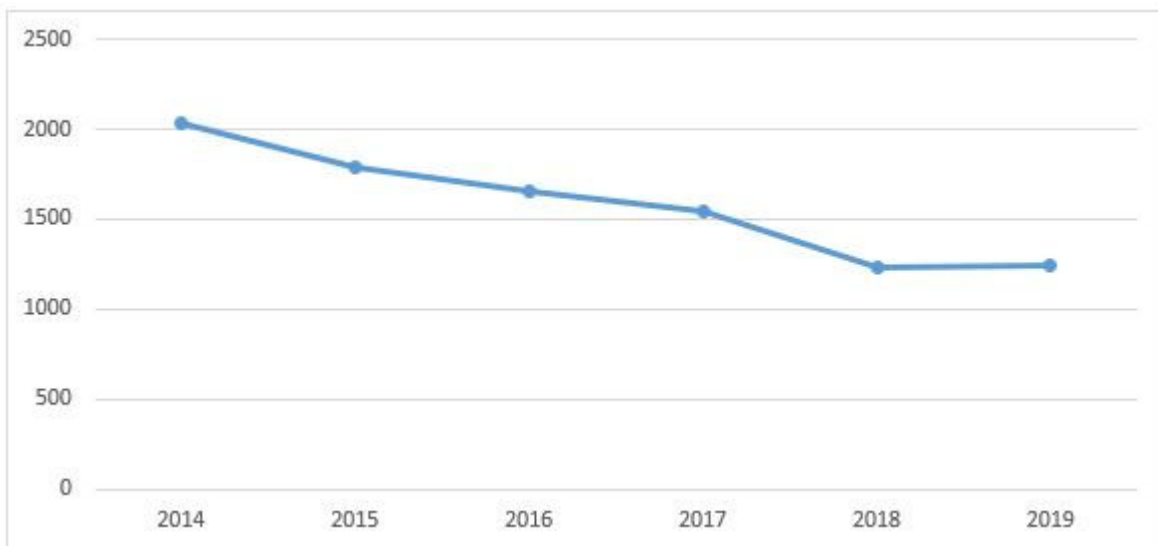


RESEARCH
EDUCATION
TREATMENT
ADVOCACY

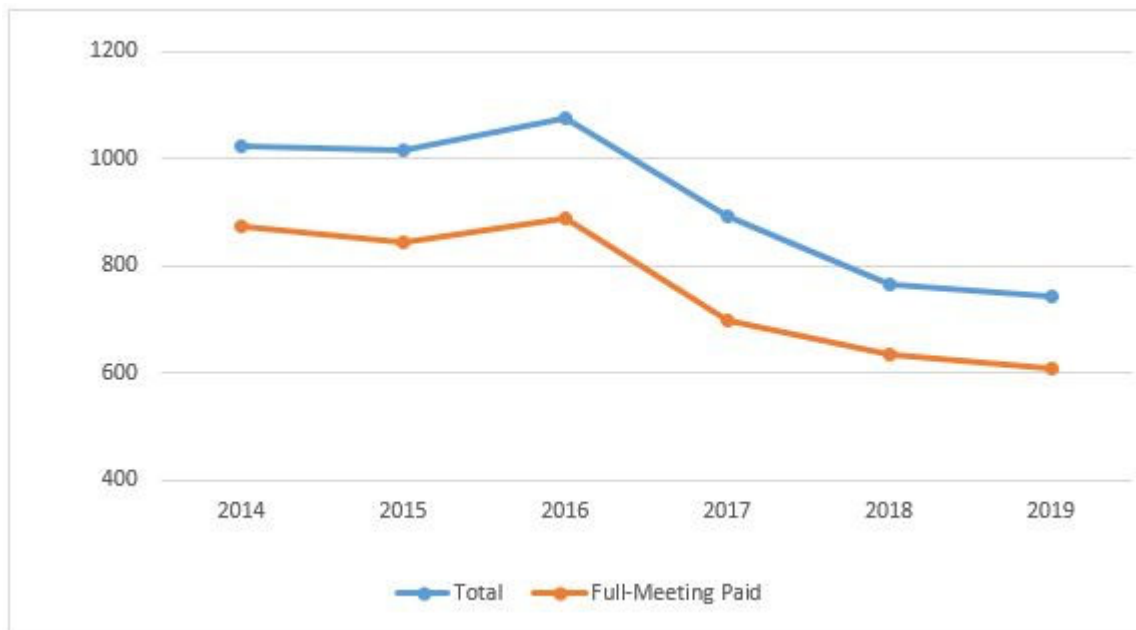
Dear colleagues,

I'd like to thank those of you who were able to attend the Scientific Meeting in Milwaukee. It was great to connect with colleagues and hear the latest science. During the meeting, I gave a brief address and shared some of the challenges that APS faces and our intentions as we proceed forward. Please find that information below.

Membership and Meeting Costs: Like many other pain societies and organizations, we have experienced a steady decline in membership over the last five years. The good news is that we have slowed the rate of decline, thanks largely to the stellar outreach and hard work of our Membership Committee. Though we are optimistic, we're not out of the woods. As one of our primary revenue streams, this decline is deeply impacting the APS.



The APS Scientific Meeting consistently receives great feedback for its educational content and networking opportunities. Unfortunately, this has not translated into a growing or even a stable audience. In some years, we have lost money on this meeting which is not sustainable. We're looking at meeting trends, leading practices, and your feedback to dynamically meet your needs as your premier American pain society. Our goal is to provide you with key information that you value at an affordable cost.



Spending: Thanks to new programs and partnerships there have been bright spots over the past few years; however, APS continues to operate in a deficit. The decline in membership and meeting attendance has put us in a precarious position. With the exception of 2016 and 2017, due largely to grants to APS, we have experienced a deficit requiring the Board to dip into reserves to cover expenses. Over the next several months the APS Board intends to introduce several initiatives that will change APS's business model. Please anticipate additional correspondence from me and the Board as we make strategic decisions to solidify the future of APS.



Legal Issues: Last fall, you received notice that APS is named in several lawsuits. While we're still not able to be as transparent as we want to be based on advice from our attorneys, I'd like to give you an update on where APS stands from a legal perspective. We have been named in lawsuits in Illinois and one in California, the latter of which was transferred to the Ohio Multi-District Litigation. Monetary damages are not the goal for the vast majority of these legal claims, and plaintiffs are currently NOT prosecuting claims against APS, which means we're in "litigation purgatory." We are being kept on the sideline while they fight other parties. We've also responded to several subpoenas, or demands for information. This is draining resources – both time and money. It impacts our ability to secure adequate insurance coverage and diminishes our risk tolerance. Our communication and advocacy efforts have been thwarted because of our inability to speak freely. All of these factors affect APS. After recent positive conversations with our attorneys, we have reason to believe that our legal situation will turn around, allowing us to emerge as a stronger society that serves the needs of our membership and stakeholders. We'll know more in the next few months. In the meantime, we are actively planning our future.

While we sit in litigation limbo, we're going to put our time to good use and plan for how we can make APS - your home for pain science - more engaging and better

meet your needs. Most notably, the APS Board has decided to forego the 2020 Scientific Meeting and seek more focused and economical alternatives. This will give us time to consider new venues and timing – such as alternating years, as well as work on partnerships. We're discussing smaller, SIG-sponsored satellite meetings to provide focused education with a special emphasis on early career development in the years when we're not hosting the traditional meeting.

The Board is also looking into convenient formats for our membership to bring cutting-edge science to you and our stakeholders. Digital offerings may include personal and professional development delivered via webinar or podcast.

We're proud of the [*Journal of Pain*](#) and have had fruitful conversations about promoting its excellence as well as the authors who are published.

Overall, we'll be analyzing our costs and yours including membership dues and meeting registration. We'd like to see a meeting where more of our students and mentees can attend. We aim to remove barriers for participating in APS.

Importantly, we're establishing the APS Future Fund. We're asking for your help. If you believe in the mission of APS, have benefitted from being a member or attending a meeting, and want to be part of our solution, we ask that you donate to the fund. Your tax-deductible donation will support the development of our programs, our investment in the early career professionals who are the future of pain science, and enable us to defend the Society and its reputation. Keep an eye out for the launch of the fund!

We live in turbulent times, which produces both risk and opportunities. Many organizations are facing declining membership and attendance, yet our situation is complicated by legal matters. The APS Board is energized and prepared for the good fight. I hope you'll join us.

Yours in Service,
William Maixner, DDS PhD
APS President
