

## BACKGROUND

- Scientific exchange and engagement platforms, such as scientific congresses, adopted virtual formats across the globe in response to in-person restrictions following the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Virtual congresses provide an opportunity for participants to attend live presentations online, interact in real time, and access on-demand content<sup>1-3</sup>
- In addition to making scientific information more accessible through internet connectivity, virtual congresses allow for scheduling flexibility, access to content beyond the congress dates, and decrease cost and carbon footprint<sup>1,3,4</sup>
- Despite the added benefits of virtual platforms, the challenges of e-Learning, the lack of adequate internet infrastructure, and the digital platform selected to deliver content may limit widespread access, and ultimately, the successful delivery of these congresses<sup>3</sup>
- Herein, we assessed attendance and virtual offerings for oncology congresses from 2019 to 2022

## OBJECTIVE

- To assess attendance and virtual offerings for oncology congresses from 2019 to 2022

## METHODS

- An online search assessed attendance and virtual offerings of oncology congresses from 2019-2022
- The search was limited to a representative sample of principal congresses with ≥1000 in-person attendees in 2019 that transitioned to a virtual format between 2020-2021
- Congresses were contacted directly via email to request additional information

## RESULTS

- Of 16 evaluated oncology congresses from North America, Europe, and Asia, 12 had readily available attendance data (Table)

Table. Summary of Evaluated Congresses

| Oncology congresses evaluated (N=16)                                                        |        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| AACR, ASCO, ASH, COSA, CSCO, DGHO, ESMO, JCA, JSCO, JSMO, NCCN, NZSO, ONS, SABCS, SSO, WCLC |        |
| Sample set                                                                                  |        |
| Congresses with 2021 platform and attendance data, n                                        | 12     |
| Congresses with 2022 platform data, n                                                       | 12     |
| Congresses with 2022 attendance data, n                                                     | 11     |
| Large congresses (≥8,000 attendees in 2019), n                                              | 6      |
| Small congresses (<8,000 attendees in 2019), n                                              | 6      |
| Maintenance of attendance                                                                   |        |
| Hybrid congresses that maintained ≥90% of pre-pandemic attendance, n (%)                    | 7 (88) |
| In-person congresses with 2022 attendance data, n                                           | 3      |
| In-person congresses that maintained ≥90% of pre-pandemic attendance, n (%)                 | 2 (67) |

AACR: American Association for Cancer Research, ASCO: American Society of Clinical Oncology, ASH: American Society of Hematology, COSA: Clinical Oncological Society of Australia, CSCO: Chinese Society of Clinical Oncology, DGHO: German Society for Hematology and Oncology, ESMO: European Society for Medical Oncology, JCA: Japanese Cancer Association, JSCO: Japanese Society of Clinical Oncology, JSMO: Japanese Society of Medical Oncology, NCCN: National Comprehensive Cancer Network, NZSO: New Zealand Society for Oncology, ONS: Oncology Nursing Society, SABCS: San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium, SSO: Singapore Society of Oncology, WCLC: World Conference on Lung Cancer.

# Congress Attendance Through the COVID-19 Pandemic: Evolution to Virtual and Back

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Please take our brief survey available through the QR code below!

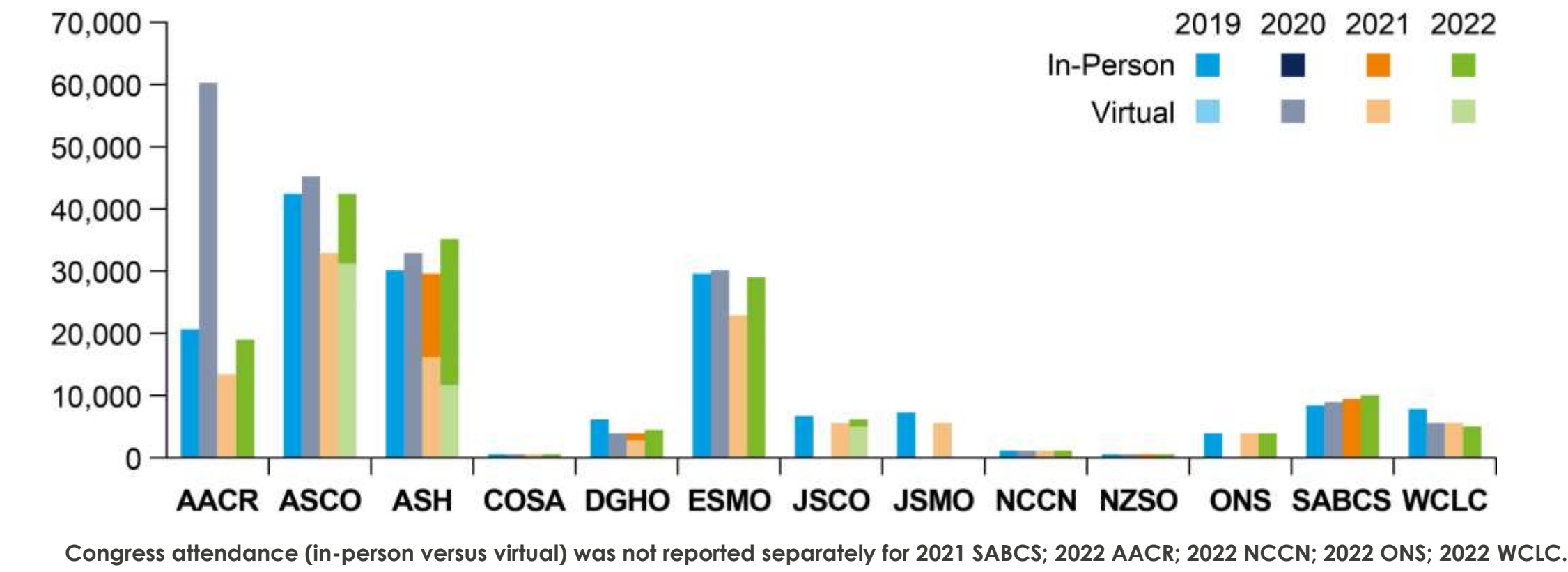


<http://bit.ly/ISMPPCov-19Survey>

Larger conferences retained virtual or hybrid platforms and were more likely to achieve pre-pandemic attendance vs smaller conferences, suggesting virtual or hybrid platforms may encourage attendance

- In 2022, 100% (6/6) of congresses with ≥8,000 attendees pre-pandemic had virtual/hybrid platforms versus 50.0% (3/6) of congresses with <8,000 attendees pre-pandemic
- Of the congresses that offered virtual/hybrid platforms in 2022, 87.5% (7/8) reached ≥90% of 2019 attendance versus 66.7% (2/3) of in-person only congresses; one hybrid congress, JSMO, was excluded due to lack of 2022 attendance data (Figure 1)

Figure 1. 2019-2022 Congress Attendance



- Digital offerings included e-posters, on demand and live streaming sessions, quick response codes, and optional audio and/or video recording
  - In 2022, most congresses (75%) offered print and ePosters (Figure 2), as well as broadcast and on-demand content (Figure 3)

Figure 2. Poster Presentation Format by Year

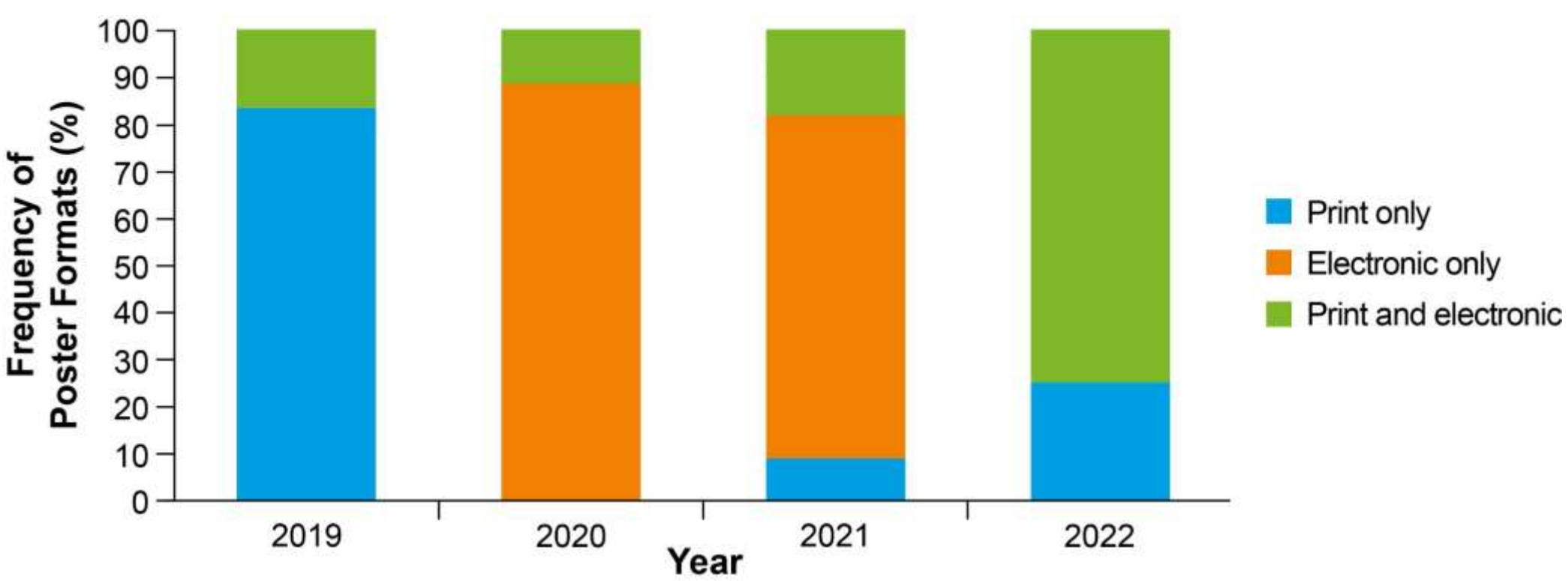
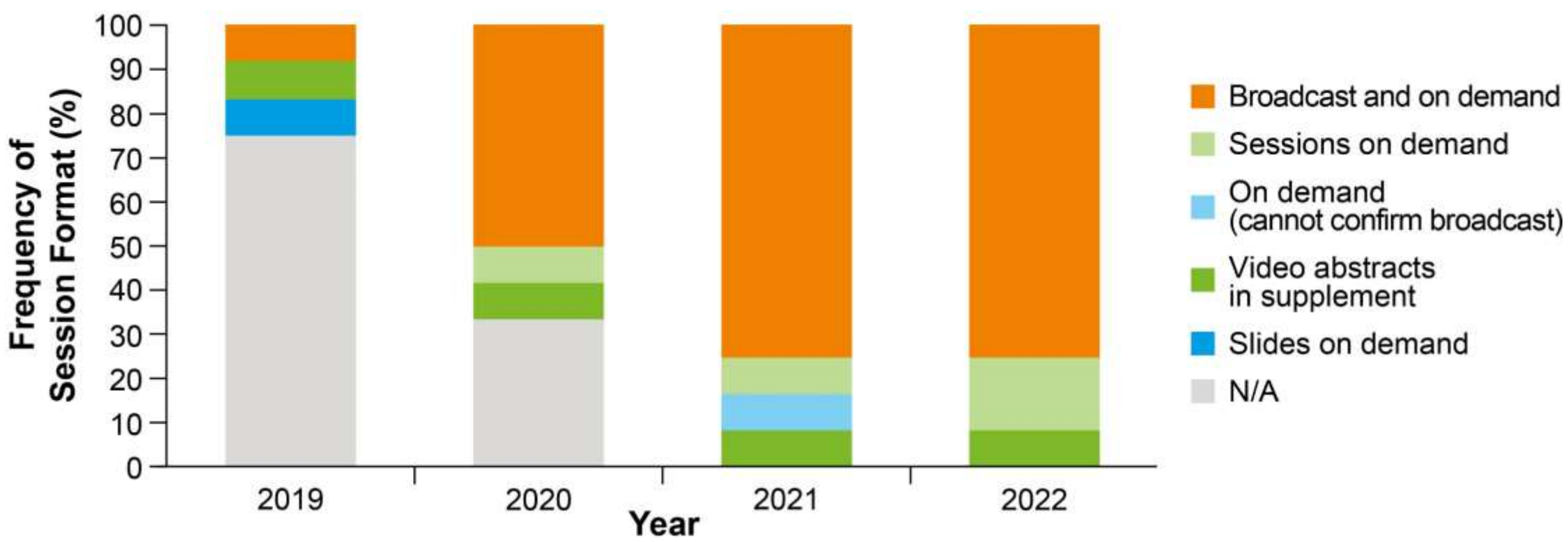


Figure 3. Congress Digital Offerings by Year



## CONCLUSIONS

- Larger conferences retained virtual or hybrid platforms and were more likely to achieve pre-pandemic attendance versus smaller conferences, suggesting virtual or hybrid platforms may encourage attendance
- Congresses offering broadcast and on-demand content, as well as print and electronic/virtual posters, are now common; offering only live sessions and print-only posters reflects a continued pre-pandemic approach
- This study is limited by including only a subset of conferences and the reliability of attendance reporting
- These findings can inform strategic decisions to those in medical communications supporting oncology accounts

## REFERENCES

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