THALASSAEMIA INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION (TIF)
In official relations with the World Health Organization

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Press release

TIF to hold Annual General Assembly and Patient Workshop in Athens

The three-day gathering will feature a dedicated programme for the Assembly and a separate educational programme for patients and associations.

ATHENS, GREECE – November 13, 2026 – The Thalassaemia International Federation (TIF) is set to welcome patient advocates, representatives of its member organisations and healthcare professionals from across its international network to Athens for a three-day gathering devoted to patient education, advocacy and international cooperation.

From 20 to 22 November 2026, the Titania Hotel in Athens will host TIF's Annual General Assembly (AGA) alongside its signature Capacity Building Workshop for Patients and Associations. The two activities will follow separate programmes, reflecting the Federation's commitment to strong governance and an informed, engaged patient community.

The AGA will bring together members of TIF's Board of Directors and representatives of its member organisations from 45 countries to discuss the Federation's work and consider shared priorities. The workshop will focus on the knowledge and skills patients and associations need to represent their communities and contribute to better care for people living with thalassaemia, sickle cell disease and other haemoglobin disorders.

For nearly four decades, TIF has steadfastly championed the principle that knowledgeable patients and empowered associations are indispensable to achieving optimal health outcomes and safeguarding patients' rights. As treatments advance and healthcare systems continue to evolve, patients and their associations must also navigate persistent challenges in accessing quality care. Reliable information helps patients take part in decisions about their own health and equips their associations to engage with the authorities responsible for policy and services.

The workshop's multidisciplinary educational programme will explore developments in stem cell transplantation, gene therapy and gene editing, alongside recently approved treatments and updates from clinical trials in thalassaemia and sickle cell disease. Patients from various countries will share first-hand accounts of life after gene therapy or a stem cell transplant.

Further sessions will examine what quality care requires in practice, including the role of clinical guidelines, multidisciplinary teams, specialist centres and patient registries. The programme will also address how patient organisations can engage with policymakers, contribute to healthcare reform and represent their communities effectively.

Attendees will hear experiences from TIF's regional networks in the Americas, the Arab region, the Indian subcontinent, the ASEAN–West Pacific region and the Nordic region. Case studies from India, the United States and Greece will show how organisations have pursued change in different healthcare settings and give participants opportunities to exchange approaches they can adapt to their own communities.

"*The voices of patients with haemoglobin disorders and their associations must be heard wherever decisions about care and health policy are made. When people understand their condition and their options, and when their associations have the knowledge and resources to advocate effectively, they can help shape better care. In Athens, we will share experiences and strengthen the partnerships that make this work possible,*" **said Panos Englezos, TIF President**.

In addition to formal working sessions and plenary debates, the event will offer participants invaluable opportunities to establish new partnerships, renew cross-border relations, and reinforce the collaborative spirit that defines the global haemoglobinopathies community.

TIF extends its sincere thanks to the Greek Thalassaemia Federation (EOTHA) for its excellent collaboration and valuable contribution to organising the event, and to Agios, Genetix Biotherapeutics, Vertex and Bristol Myers Squibb for supporting the Annual General Assembly and the Capacity Building Workshop for Patients with Haemoglobin Disorders and Their Associations.

Interested stakeholders, delegates, and media representatives are invited to visit the official TIF event portal at for ongoing updates, detailed agendas, and registration information.

Official event website