



EAPCI focus on the EAPCI Gender and Disparities Committee: an interview with the Chair, Marta Kaluzna-Oleksy

What is the role of the Committee?

Along with my Co-Chair, Giulia Masiero, and committee members, the EAPCI Gender and Disparities Committee promotes equity, diversity, and inclusion in interventional cardiology by addressing gender, cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic disparities. The Committee works to identify barriers to professional opportunities, as well as access to interventional cardiology, particularly for underrepresented groups, and implements initiatives to bridge these gaps.

How does the Committee benefit the community?

The Committee benefits the interventional cardiology community by fostering an inclusive environment where diverse perspectives are valued and represented. It aims to create equal opportunities for career advancement, mentorship, and leadership roles regardless of gender or background. Through its initiatives, the Committee raises awareness about disparities, supports research on gender-related issues, and encourages practices that lead to a more equitable professional landscape. This, in turn, enhances patient care, professional satisfaction, and the overall growth of the field.

How does the Committee work with the other EAPCI Committees?

The Gender and Disparities Committee works closely with other EAPCI Committees to integrate diversity and equity into all aspects of EAPCI's activities. This includes joint projects, shared educational programmes, and coordinated advocacy efforts. We are working on joint initiatives particularly with the EAPCI Young Committee, the EAPCI Patient Advocacy Committee, and the EAPCI Valvular and Structural Heart Interventions Committee. We are also actively involved in the broader European Society of Cardiology initiatives to address inequities of care and opportunity.

How are topics chosen by your Committee and what are your Committee's goals for this term?

Topics are selected after many discussions with Committee Co-Chair, Giulia Masiero, and EAPCI President, Alaide Chieffo, based on current research, emerging trends, and feedback from EAPCI members. The Committee prioritises issues that have a significant impact on gender equity and professional disparities. This term, the Committee's goals include:

1. Creating a mentoring programme in collaboration with the EAPCI Young Committee: Establishing the EAPCI Online

Coaching Programme designed to support the professional development of interventional cardiologists returning to clinical practice after a period of absence due to sick leave or maternity leave.

2. Carrying out a survey to identify challenges in interventional cardiology training: Assessing issues encountered during the learning process in interventional cardiology, with a focus on identifying gender, socioeconomic, and cultural disparities, and working towards effective solutions, particularly targeting fellows and women, in collaboration with the EAPCI Young Committee.
3. Addressing inequities: Identifying and seeking solutions to issues related to gender inequalities, cultural and socioeconomic differences, and challenges arising from political situations that impact professional opportunities and healthcare delivery.
4. Highlighting gender differences in cardiovascular patients: Emphasising the importance of recognising gender-related differences in the context of cardiovascular patient care to improve clinical outcomes, in collaboration with the Patient Advocacy Committee.

How can EAPCI members become involved in the work of the Committee?

EAPCI members can get involved by participating in the Committee's initiatives and raising awareness in their professional environment about gender and disparities. Members are encouraged to share their experiences and insights, and advocate for diversity and inclusion within their own institutions. The Committee also welcomes new ideas and collaborations, providing opportunities for members to actively contribute to its mission of promoting equity in interventional cardiology.

All key information about the EAPCI Committee's activities, initiatives, and updates is regularly published on the official EAPCI channels. Additionally, EAPCI maintains an active presence on social media platforms, where members can find up-to-date information about ongoing projects and upcoming events.

We also encourage members to join the dedicated LinkedIn group, Women in Interventional Cardiology, which serves as a vibrant community for networking, sharing experiences, and discussing gender-related topics in interventional cardiology. Moreover, most relevant information is also disseminated through National Societies, ensuring broad access to EAPCI's initiatives and opportunities for involvement.