

EAPCI membership: converging worlds and techniques

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An association grows strong for many reasons: the quality of its offerings, the underlying validity of its existence, and above all, the members it has brought in.

Today there are over 10,000 of you receiving this journal... more than 10,000 potential members of the European Association of Percutaneous Cardiovascular Interventions (EAPCI), an integral part of the European Society of Cardiology (ESC) – an Association whose official publication you are now reading and which is open to all those who can honestly declare that “percutaneous cardiovascular intervention is your primary activity or interest”. And yet today, with so much recognised potential, our still young EAPCI only counts a little over 1,400 of you as members. Why? The benefits are many, and have been mentioned before and can be best consulted at our dedicated website (www.escardio.org/bodies/associations/EAPCI/) where you will find information not only on membership itself, but on our training and research fellowship programmes, as well as the upcoming meetings.

The EAPCI is open to all professionals whether you are PCI doctors, valvular specialists, cath lab nurses and technicians, non-cardiologists who are performing these procedures such as surgeons, radiologists or angiologists as well as researchers or doctors working in the device industry – all of you are eligible.

Membership benefits are manifold, and the areas of interest of the young EAPCI are constantly evolving through member participation. If we look at our current membership data, as of mid-February, we had 1,409 members – and while you can only vote if you are resident in one of the 50 official ESC member states – 93 countries throughout the world are represented. If we look at these numbers in a little detail, they are revealing of a number of trends, first a growing interest within Europe in our association, and second, the emergence of Asia as a centre of interest, not just for us, but – by their very active participation in the EAPCI – in what we are doing here in Europe.

An international presence

Italy has the most participants with well over 100, followed closely by Poland and Spain which have over a hundred members as well. The U.K., Germany and France are close behind with between 50 and 100 members each, while other European countries such as Greece, The Netherlands and Belgium are fast approaching the 50 mark. Switzerland, Serbia, Romania and the Czech Republic are all represented with substantial participation, while there are now members from just about every European nation, including the Russian Federation.

Outside of Europe, our worldwide membership is of great interest to us, and strengthens our determination to grow. India and Iran have over 60 members each. The Mediterranean basin and the Near East – with Egypt (54 members), Turkey (45 members), Israel (41 members), Saudi Arabia (12), Libya (10), Jordan (10), Syria (8), Lebanon (8), Tunisia (7), United Arab Emirates (6), Yemen and Algeria (2) – are very active. Moving farther east Pakistan and Iraq all largely participate as well. Other regions of Africa are present with members from South Africa to Mauritius and Sudan; Central and South America are represented, with Brazil being the most represented of all these countries.

It is of course not surprising that North America is well represented with membership from Mexico to Canada, but what is very interesting to us, from our standpoint in the speciality, but also as Europeans, is that we have as many members in the United States as we now do in China. And if we add up all the other Pacific rim and East Asian nations that have joined the EAPCI to this date (and not including that very large participation from India we mentioned above), we have more members from this region than we do from South or North America (and for that matter, some areas of Europe): from Thailand (which has more members than either the US or China) down to Australia and New Zealand we have more than

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80 members in this part of the world today, and growing. And we are sure that, for instance, in countries such as Japan, there are many more potential members who are not aware that they can become part of the EAPCI.

Joining together

What does all this mean? That we have room to grow, certainly, that we have even more reasons to urge you to join, absolutely, because together we have far more influence than each of us alone and together we can make a true difference in the evolution of our practice.

We strongly believe that advancement requires collaboration and teamwork and a strong commitment to being inclusive – open to all that might pertain to achieving our goals of improved care and practice. This is true both for interventionalists specifically and for medicine and healthcare in general. While this might all seem obvious, and just mere rhetoric, it can have a real impact by the work we do as a group. Becoming an active member of an association such as the EAPCI, which is firmly based in Europe, committed to advancing medical education and healthcare – and at the same time has a clear international vision – is just one concrete way of making these words reality. There is a certain force in

involvement and organisation. The more we are, the more influence we have over our educational offerings, our accreditation, and our viability as players in the increasingly bureaucratic game of healthcare. And we cannot emphasize enough how much you are all welcome in the EAPCI, all you who work in our field – from surgeons to radiologists, cath lab nurses and technicians, industry researchers and doctors... all of you and from every country have a role to play in our association.

A decade ago, as the computer age entered the mature stage that we know today, the term on everybody's lips was convergence. Convergence between images and idea, between what at the time were the separate domains of video and television and the computer itself. Today, with the vast developments in technique and understanding in medicine and fast advances in certain specialities we are starting to see another such convergence, a convergence between the different specialities themselves, as well as a convergence of skills and cultures. Today we know that this advancement requires, more than ever before, not only vision, but a group effort which can only be strengthened by the kind of participation that associations such as our own represents.

We encourage interaction and exchange, we grow by working together. Become part of our world, your world and join the EAPCI.