

EAPCI Membership: reflecting on a year of change

The EAPCI was officially recognised as an association of the European Society of Cardiology (ESC) in 2006, having previously been the ESC Working Group on Interventional Cardiology. As with any association, growth and development depend on numerous factors, including the underlying need for the association, the quality of output of the association and, most importantly, the strength of the members of the association. The EAPCI is an open and inclusive organisation, with membership open to interventional cardiologists, cath lab nurses and allied health professionals, researchers and doctors working in the field of interventional cardiology. The new EAPCI Membership was launched at PCR London Valves 2023 with the aim of offering more to members and increasing participation in the present and future activities of the association. Here we reflect on some of the highlights of the first year of the new membership structure.

EAPCI Certification

The EAPCI Certification in Interventional Cardiology remains well established within the community, allowing operators to develop and demonstrate knowledge, skills and competency levels. Fifty-five candidates were successful in the last theory exam, based on 100 multiple choice questions. Following completion of the theoretical examination, operators are eligible to complete the practical pathway in local centres meeting EAPCI criteria. This year, 27 candidates successfully submitted their logbooks, thereby achieving the full EAPCI Certification in Interventional Cardiology, a status which is valid for five years. The EAPCI Training and Certification Committee is continuing to work with National Societies and Working Groups to adopt the EAPCI examination and allow mutual recognition of operator status. Importantly, this year the EAPCI Structural Heart Intervention Curriculum was finalised and published in EuroIntervention. The EAPCI Training and Certification Committee will now begin work to develop the EAPCI Certification in Structural Heart Intervention based on this curriculum. EAPCI members are eligible for discounted rates for the EAPCI Certification exam.

EAPCI Fellowship Grants

This year, the EAPCI Fellowship Grant Committee awarded 12 grants to young interventional cardiologists to allow them to pursue a period of training in a centre of excellence in an EAPCI member country. The call for applications for

fellowship host centres allows centres which meet EAPCI criteria to identify themselves as centres providing high-quality training and education in interventional cardiology. The Fellowship Grant Committee dedicates a significant period of time to collaborating with industry partners in order to negotiate grant support. Increased grant support allows more possibilities for fellows to train in high-volume centres, obtaining skills and knowledge that are not available in their home centre, translating into better quality of care for patients. EAPCI remains committed to equitable access to training opportunities and has been well recognised for awarding 50% of grants to men and 50% to women. Further consideration is also given to other aspects of disparity among member countries; therefore, the ability to return to their ESC member country, develop new programmes and improve the overall access to interventional cardiology care within ESC member countries is an important consideration when allocating grants.

Nurses and Allied Health Professionals

The Nurses and Allied Health Professionals (NAP) Committee has been particularly active within the new membership structures, successfully launching the new online NAP educational course. Whilst the course is open to all NAPs, EAPCI members benefit from a 40% discount on the course fee. The nine modules have been well received, with participants enjoying the self-paced learning that allows opportunities to work around professional and other commitments.

Online Coaching Programme

The EAPCI Gender and Disparities Committee successfully launched this initiative with the mentor-mentee matches announced at ESC 2024. The programme, which is open to EAPCI members returning to practice following a period of absence, has been well received, with the mentor-mentee pairs already making significant progress towards their goals. A further programme will be launched during the upcoming year.

Coming together

Overall the new membership structure has been extremely successful, offering increased opportunities to EAPCI members. Nevertheless we have room for growth and improvement: as a community, we have a significantly increased influence compared to an individual, and we encourage you to become an EAPCI member, as together we can shape the future of interventional cardiology.