



The Society for Cardiac Angiography & Interventions



President's Page

EDUCATION: SCA&I's Core Mission

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President

Society for Cardiac Angiography & Interventions

In previous President's Pages, I have explored with you two of our key goals: closer partnerships with our colleagues internationally, and expanded advocacy on behalf of U.S. members. This month I would like to explore a third goal at the core of SCA&I's mission: enhancement of our professional education offerings. Those take many forms, some traditional, others only recently made possible by exciting new technologies.

SCA&I's Annual Meeting. When SCA&I was founded in 1978, the intent was to provide a collegial environment for individuals committed to practicing invasive cardiology. A major focus was exchange of information through our Annual Meeting.

Our Annual Meeting has a unique niche, offering close interaction with world-class faculty to gain new, practical knowledge participants can use immediately. Educational methods are constantly changing, however. Live cases enjoyed popularity over the past ten years. Audience feedback told us that well-constructed moderated taped cases can provide a superior learning experience. Our 2002 Annual Meeting in Seattle, featuring the "Best of the Best in Interventional Cardiology," incorporates this concept. This underscores an advantage we have: we can adapt quickly in response to member feedback and educational needs.

The Judkins Imaging Symposium. For twenty years, we have paired a unique educational offering with the

Annual Meeting—the Judkins Imaging Symposium. This intensive review of cath lab imaging technology and tools has no equal. Under the leadership of Dr. Warren Laskey, the Symposium has filled a vital role in the transition from film-based to digital imaging systems. New interest in formalized credentialing for use of fluoroscopy may further enhance the importance of this educational forum.

Core curriculum, slide sets, fellows education. Our CME/Education Committee (led by Dr. Ted Feldman) is developing a myriad of new educational opportunities. Development of Interventional Cardiology Boards acknowledges existence of a body of knowledge unique to interventional cardiology. This is a call for a core curriculum. A simple task for large programs, this task can be daunting for smaller programs.

In response, your Society is developing an online slide library of core knowledge from leading interventionalists. Society members will soon be able to download these slides from our website to use as core curriculum material. This new member benefit is an example of your Society's commitment to education for the next generation of interventionalists.

In lockstep with this effort is another enterprise—development of an Interventional Training Program Directors Committee. No such entity exists specifically for interventional training directors. Our effort fills this void and has been enthusiastically received.

Services for fellows in training. Connecting to our interventional fellows is vital. Educational contact with fellows creates awareness of our role as their educational and advocacy voice. To encourage participation in the Society, I will be asking the Board of Trustees to consider eliminating dues for fellows in training and waiving their fees for the Annual Meeting.

Additional contact with the fellows is necessary. The annual fellows course organized by Drs. Tom Linne-meier and Gregg Stone (both SCA&I FSCAI's) is a well-known and highly acclaimed educational experience. They have agreed to allow us a presence at their meeting this coming spring, a major step forward for all concerned.

Novel educational efforts. Innovative ways to train interventional cardiologists in new procedures are needed. Recently, industry has adapted flight simulator technology to simulate percutaneous procedures. We are engaged in discussions with the technology's developers (a contract should be signed by the time this column goes to press) to partner in developing curricula and cases for this exciting new educational approach.

We are also developing a new, comprehensive project to train physicians in selected procedures. In equal partnership with ACC and other organizations, SCA&I is developing an intensive training program in iliac and renal intervention. This combines didactic material with animal practicums and clinical experience under supervision of expert practitioners. Supported by an educational grant from the Foundation for Advanced Medical Education (FAME), this project will be pilot-tested early in 2002. This new training approach will provide post-fellowship training of impeccable quality.

Cyber education. We are examining opportunities to participate in the new learning frontier of distance education and are working with ACC in their novel web-based educational initiative—ACCArдио. We also continue to explore providing selected Annual Meeting content on-line for members unable to attend in person.

Enduring materials. Through the years, SCA&I has published many important cath lab position statements

and guidelines. These were compiled into a monograph representing the progressive thinking of the Society on important practice issues. SCA&I also produced a videotape series on cath lab hemodynamic and radiographic principles. We will soon update these tapes to educate practitioners, an important step since FDA and JCAHO have raised the issue of having formal credentialing for use of fluoroscopy.

Our Society's journal, *Catheterization and Cardiovascular Interventions*, under the superb editorship of Dr. Chris White, is admired worldwide as the gold standard for timely and relevant material. Because postage and delivery is relatively costly outside the U.S., we are now exploring with Wiley-Liss, the publisher, the feasibility of offering the journal on-line to selected overseas audiences. Although further exploration of this lies ahead before a decision is made, such a step would expand the journal's audience—again expanding the Society's educational reach.

Where next? Handheld devices such as the Palm™ have opened the door for additional educational offerings. ACC has made downloadable practice guidelines available on its website for Palm hand-helds in several non-interventional areas. We are currently exploring offering similar files to our members using materials from our position papers and guidelines. By bringing consensus documents and important guideline papers to the invasive cardiologist's pocket, we will be bringing the highest standards of clinical practice within easy reach of our members.

Summary. From a single Annual Meeting of less than fifty attendees, your Society's educational offerings have grown dramatically. These offerings fulfill much of the educational needs of the growing worldwide invasive/interventional cardiology community. However, we must never stop innovating as we focus on our mission: promoting excellence in invasive/interventional cardiology. In short, the best is yet to come !

I welcome your comments; send them to me at president@scai.org