



The Society for Cardiac Angiography & Interventions

SCA&I President's Page



The Society for Cardiac Angiography and Interventions: A Status Report

Ted Feldman, MD, FSCAI
Evanston-Northwestern Healthcare,
Evanston, Illinois
President
Society for Cardiac Angiography & Interventions

Looking back over the past year, the one word that best characterizes what SCAI has been up to is “activity”! While the Society has for many years been an increasingly busy organization, this last year has been one of explosive growth and productivity.

SCAI is the voice of the interventional physician within the greater field of cardiology. Our perspective and the challenges we face are unique. As our field has become more complex the imperative to have a clear voice has grown.

The cornerstone to our ability to make ourselves heard within cardiology, within the greater house of medicine, and in government is dependent entirely on the size of our membership. Over the last year our membership has grown from 2000 to 2500. We also have developed a new pathway to Fellowship in the Society for those who have passed the recently created Interventional Board examination. We also established free membership for interventional fellow trainees to insure that they have access to participation in the Society, and the opportunity to become involved early. Thanks go to Drs. Spencer King and Jeff Marshall, who chaired SCAI's Membership Growth and Enhancement Task Force, which led to these changes, and to Dr. Chris White (editor of CCI Journal)

and Mr. Sean Morton (CCI's Publisher) for their invaluable cooperation as well. We are about to formalize an international membership category, to facilitate participation by our colleagues around the world. This effort is being led by Dr. Joe Babb (who chairs SCAI's International President's Roundtable) and Dr. Warren Laskey (Bylaws Committee Chair).

ADVOCACY

Surveys have clearly stated the first priority for our membership is advocacy. A growing part of our mission has been advocacy. Medicare reimbursement in cardiology has declined by almost a third in the past five years. Interventional specialists have been the hardest hit of all cardiology subspecialists. We are all too familiar with skyrocketing insurance premiums. Pressures to cut cost are relentless. Among our advocacy efforts has been a

*Correspondence to: Ted Feldman, MD, FSCAI, Evanston Hospital, Cardiology Division-Burch 300, 2650 Ridge Ave., Evanston, IL 60201. E-mail: tfeldman@enh.org

DOI 10.1002/ccd.10557

Published online in Wiley InterScience (www.interscience.wiley.com).

campaign to improve the practice expense component of our catheterization procedures. We have been ably represented by MARC Associates, our advocacy firm, led by Randy Fenninger and Bernie Patashnik. Our Advocacy Committee has likewise become extremely active, led by Dr. Babb and co-chaired by Dr. Carl Tommaso. Other active members have included Drs. Steven Farber, Christopher Cates, Peter Berger, and (ably representing the congenital/pediatric community) Michael Slack.

In addition to organized efforts directly with government, we have interacted with ACC vigorously—always with mutual respect and, when necessary, with the emphasis that the invasive/interventional community represents fully one-third of ACC's membership, a constituency whose interests must be looked after [1].

We have arranged visits on Capitol Hill during the TCT meeting in Washington D.C. for specific targeting of local representatives by SCAI members. Participants have included Dr. Douglass Morrison (five Hill visits in one day!), Dr. Tommaso, Dr. John Hodgson, Dr. Babb, Dr. Cates, and Dr. Randy Bottner among others.

The Society was recently invited to nominate individuals to the FDA circulatory devices panel. This invitation is an important sign of the growing recognition of SCAI.

A future direction for advocacy will involve fellow training and the increasing workforce needs anticipated in an aging society. Support for training of interventional subspecialists has declined, and the institution of board certification has further constrained the number of trainees coming into the practice workforce each year. We have raised a flag regarding the importance of this issue and will concentrate significant effort to be sure our field meets societal needs in the interventional workforce [2]. Dr. George Vetrovec is representing SCAI on an inter-society task force in this area.

EDUCATION

Another major focus of SCAI is physician education. Our annual meeting remains the cornerstone of this effort [3]. Last year's meeting in Seattle, chaired by Mark Reisman was our largest yet. Thanks go to Dr. Reisman, conference co-chair Larry Dean, M.D., Judkins Symposium chair Warren Laskey, M.D., and fundraising chair Barry Uretsky, M.D. (with great support from Betty Sanger, SCAI staff) for their efforts. Under the direction of Ziyad Hijazi, M.D. and Tom Jones, M.D. we had an exceptional congenital/pediatric interventional program. Thanks also go to the two superb keynote speakers, Martin Leon, M.D. and Eric Topol, M.D. The upcoming meeting in May in Boston (chaired by Bonnie Weiner, M.D., co-chaired by Don Baim, M.D., with Dr. Laskey again as Judkins chair) promises to be better still. We will look forward to seeing you all there for the best of

basic reviews, cutting edge presentations, and interactive workshops.

A major goal was achieved over the last year with the posting of downloadable slide sets on the Society web site. Slide sets have been contributed by Drs. Joseph Babb, Stephen Balter, Ted Bass, Mort Kern, Ron Krone, Alexandra Lansky, Al Raizner, Brett Sasseen, George Vetrovec, Chris White and myself.

We have launched a webcast program beginning in February 2003 with a debate between Jeff Moses and Ron Waxman regarding drug-eluting stents vs. brachytherapy. New monthly web programs will continue to appear. Drs. Babb and Jeff Popma are co-editing this innovative series, in cooperation with our web partner, CEU Online/MEBN Net in New Hampshire.

We have posted palm-compatible downloads for management of contrast mediated reactions. We plan to continue to develop additional palm downloads relevant to the interventional physician. The work of the Interventional Committee, re-energized under Dr. Lloyd Klein, has been instrumental in this and related guidelines efforts. The Society also continues to co-produce the interventional board review course with ACC. These and related educational efforts were coordinated by our CME staff consultant, Anne Marie Smith, whose work has allowed our educational program to grow so successfully.

In response to a need expressed in a member survey, a drug-eluting stent position paper was published in CCI in March [4]. This represents tremendous leadership by SCAI to provide guidance in an area that is developing extremely rapidly. The writing committee worked very hard to produce a document that will serve the needs of SCAI members and their patients (principal author: Dr. John McB. Hodgson; co-authors: Drs. Babb, Mike Cowley, Spencer King, Lloyd Klein and me).

COMMITTEES

The committees remain the backbone of Society programs (Table I). Our work has been carried forward especially by the Lab Survey Committee, previously chaired by Greg Dehmer and now by Bonnie Weiner. Lab surveys provide a critical service to both hospitals and physician groups to insure quality cath lab equipment and practice. The Lab Performance Standards Committee has developed, principally under the direction of Dr. Charlie Chambers, a phantom for calibration of cath lab systems, and further study of the phantom should ultimately provide a valuable tool to enhance cath lab quality. Also instrumental to the Phantom effort: Drs. Balter, Fred Heupler and Laskey, and Mr. Merrill Wondrow.

TABLE I.

Committee	Chair
Ad Hoc Bracco/ACIST	Frank J. Hildner, M.D.
Advocacy & Govt Relations	Joseph D. Babb, M.D.
Budget and Finance	Jeffrey J. Popma, M.D.
Bylaws	Warren K. Laskey, M.D.
CV Lab Techs Standards	Douglass A. Morrison, M.D.
Congenital Heart Disease	Thomas Jones, M.D.
CME/Education	Joseph D. Babb, M.D.
Credentials	William K. LaFoe, M.D.
Fundraising	Barry Uretsky, M.D.
Governor's	Michael Cowley, M.D.
Interventional Cardiology	Lloyd Klein, M.D., Chair; Chris White, M.D., Co-Chair (Peripheral Subcommittee); Albert E. Raizner, M.D., Co-Chair (Radiation Subcommittee)
Laboratory Performance Standards	Michael J. Cowley, M.D., Chair Charles E. Chambers, M.D., Co-Chair
Laboratory Survey	Bonnie H. Weiner, M.D.
Annual Program	Mark Reisman, M.D.
Nominating	Carl M. Tommaso, M.D.
Program for Boston 2003	Bonnie Weiner, M.D. (chair), Donald Baim, M.D. (Co-chair)
Program for San Diego 2004	Jonathan Tobis, M.D.
Publications	Morton J. Kern, M.D.
Public Relations	Jeffrey Marshall, M.D.
eSCAI	Bonnie Weiner, M.D.
Training Program Standards	John McB. Hodgson, M.D.

As the Society membership grows, regional coordination has become increasingly important. Mike Cowley has helped organize a governor's network regionally, and we look forward to further growth of our organization in this manner.

INTERSOCIETAL RELATIONS

Intersocietal relationships have developed as well. A coalition of cardiology societies was recently organized, largely with an effort started by SCAI in conjunction with ACC over the past 3 years. A recent meeting established a formal organization, so that the various sub societies within cardiology can have an organized voice. Our past president Joe Babb will chair the sub society coalition next year.

We continue to develop increasingly strong relationships with our international society counterparts. Our participation in the SOLACI meeting has been maintained. Web links with societies from around the world are being constructed to further strengthen our ties. Current SCAI Trustee Hugo Londero, M.D. and previous

Trustee Adolpho Cosentino, M.D. have made invaluable contributions to this effort.

Our relationship with the American College of Cardiology remains strong and positive. We have increasing participation in guideline authorship, and better representation on ACC committees. We now have formal representation on the catheterization and interventional committee, peripheral vascular committee, advocacy committee and others.

One of the great resources of the Society has been the willingness of former Society leaders to continue in important roles. A few examples in the past year: Mort Kern (as Publications Chair), Bill Sheldon (a founding Trustee, updating our Cath Lab Directory and reviewing 22 years of minutes to prepare our Policies Handbook), Frank Hildner (Bracco Awards Committee), Warren Laskey (Bylaws, ethics task force, Amersham Fellows), Airlie Cameron (developing position paper on ethics), Harry Page (historian), Carl Tommaso (taking on the often thankless job of Treasurer), and numerous others.

In the past year we have also had many unsung heroes, whose efforts you should know about. Drs. Charley Chambers, Fred Heupler and Greg Dehmer worked incredibly long hours on a joint ACC/SCAI Task Force to produce a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) toolkit. Dr. Manu Rajachandran traveled hundreds of miles (three times!) just to participate in one committee meeting (his efforts were invaluable). Dr. Ziyad Hijazi personally wrote 250 of his congenital/pediatric colleagues urging them to join the Society. Drs. Michael Slack and Mark Turco braved a snowstorm to participate in a late-night radio program. Dr. Ted Bass took time off to advocate for you in front of a most unfriendly third party payor. Dr. Bill LaFoe spent hours in a back room checking the spelling on several hundred FSCAI certificates—while the rest of us were at the President's Reception having a terrific time. Joe Babb flew coast-to-coast solely for the opportunity to address a meeting of interventional fellows. Dr. Steve Balter contributed a critically-needed slide set on radiation safety. Dr. Vijay Kalaria reached out in important new ways to the interventional fellows community. Dr. Tim Sanborn came through repeatedly when asked to advocate for you in Illinois. Dr. John Hirshfeld always responded with good cheer when staff directed endless questions to him about certification, workforce, and other issues. Dr. Jeff Brinker superbly represented your interests at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The list goes on and on; I've been lucky to have worked with them all.

None of this would be possible without the remarkable dedication and hard work of our full-time staff, all based at the Heart House in Bethesda, Maryland. Our executive director Norm Linsky, and staff Rick Heneger and Bea

Reyes continue to do a Herculean job and cannot be thanked enough.

OUR FUTURE

Through all of this I am always cognizant of the critical importance of member involvement in the Society. After finishing my fellowship training, I was initially attracted to the Society by the potential for all Society members to participate fully. Society committees are open to anyone who is interested. It was this ability to simply walk into the room and join in the activity that led to my own involvement in the Society. This kind of open structure is not possible in larger organizations. I was thrilled as a trainee to be able to sit down in a committee meeting elbow to elbow with the leaders in our field and participate fully from the beginning. While continued membership in a committee requires attendance at least once yearly at a committee meeting, the ability to join in remains completely open and one of the great strengths of this Society. I hope you will all find your way to

greater direct participation (Table 1), so that next year's status report is even more robust than this.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you as President for the past year. It has been a true honor to do so, and I look forward to continuing to work with you all in the coming years.

REFERENCES

1. Feldman T: Society for Cardiac Angiography and Interventions Presidents page: Cardiovascular Subspecialty Societies Summit. *Cathet Cardiovasc Intervent* 2003;58:272-274.
2. Feldman T: Society for Cardiac Angiography and Interventions Presidents page: Interventional Cardiology Manpower Needs: how many of us are there? How many should there be? How many will we need in the future? *Cathet Cardiovasc Intervent* 2003;58: 137-138.
3. Feldman T: Society for Cardiac Angiography and Interventions Presidents page: Meetings, meetings, meetings. Are there too many interventional meetings? *Cathet Cardiovasc Intervent* 2002;57:557-558.
4. Hodgson J, King SB, Feldman T, Cowley MJ, Klein LW, Babb JD: Society for Cardiac Angiography and Interventions Position Statement: Drug Eluting Stents. *Cathet Cardiovasc Intervent* 2003;58: 397-399.