



## The Society for Cardiac Angiography & Interventions

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### SCAI President's Page



### The Midpoint

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“Like riding a speeding bullet.” That’s what my predecessor, Ted Feldman, M.D., FSCAI, called the experience of serving as SCAI President. At the halfway point of my term, I can attest that Ted was absolutely correct. If anything, the velocity is accelerating.

I plan to depart from my usual medically oriented page to keep you abreast of your Society’s efforts. Many doctors ask me why they should belong to SCAI. After you read this you’ll know why.

#### Advocacy

We took the lead in getting you practice expense reimbursement from Medicare (clinical staff time) for patients you cath or intervene on as outpatients. You pay this expense, but until now, you haven’t been reimbursed a penny. This is new income for your efforts. Further, after many years of steep decline in global Medicare reimbursement for invasive/interventional procedures, that trend will be reversed next year. YOU did this, through your collective action in the Society’s advocacy efforts. Our dedicated advocacy experts in Washington, your responses to our surveys, and our increasing numbers are all making a difference. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) pays no attention to hollow pleas, but they DO pay attention to FACTS and to

a unified, strong voice. No other group is dedicated to your interests—we are that voice, because “we are you”.

Increasingly, we are the go-to society for issues related to invasive/interventional cardiology. The FDA recently decided to accept our recommendation for a new member to a key FDA advisory panel. The CMS recently contacted us for advice on the drug eluting stent sub-acute thrombosis issue. Your Society representatives led the ensuing discussions and assisted the CMS staff in fully understanding the situation. Small word changes in individual procedure codes—which we helped CMS frame and understand—have major impact on our practices. You told us advocacy was important to you. We have responded and those efforts are paying off!

#### Education

This is one of the cores of SCAI’s mission. We have grown from a single annual scientific meeting of 350 to

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an international, highly acclaimed event of over 1000. Now 20 additional programs are co-sponsored by your Societies' CME committee, chaired by Dr. Feldman. We have vastly expanded our educational efforts to include web-casts, co-sponsorship of enduring materials (CD-ROM for example), Palm™-based guideline downloads and an on-line slide library for fellow education (members only benefit, led by Dr. Barry Uretsky).

We soon will be moving even more activities to a renovated web site with a powerful video engine to allow sharing of cineangiograms and other images. We also are closely involved with an exciting new teaching modality: simulation. Over one year ago we signed an educational affiliation with Medical Simulation Corporation to explore ways in which simulation could enhance the learning process for invasive/interventional cardiologists. We are now beginning to see the early impact of such technology. Device manufacturers are using simulation to substitute for FDA-required proctoring on newly approved devices. We are working on a direct angioplasty acute myocardial infarction course and a national benchmarking project. In partnership with other societies we will assist in developing standard training modules for the soon to be approved carotid stenting procedure. SCAI intends to establish standards and training modules for a number of the specialty procedures that our members perform.

### Membership Growth

In a time when most professional societies are stable or contracting, yours is experience explosive growth. We have DOUBLED in two and a half years and currently have 600 applications pending; Dr. Bill LaFoe's Credentials Committee is busy! There is increasing recognition among your peers that SCAI is *the* voice of the invasive/interventional specialist. In order to serve you better, we are streamlining our committees and the workflow process to become even more responsive to the changing environment we live in.

As an example, in response to a quick survey regarding DES, we were able to form a rapid action task force that produced a white paper—with concrete recommendations—in less than three months. Newly trained interventionalists recognize our importance as well. Over 145 interventional fellows signed up as members this past spring alone, encouraged by our board member Dr. Gregg Stone! These energetic new interventionalists are your Society's future leaders, and they are getting involved from the start of their careers.

### Guidelines/Quality Standards

Establishing guidelines and standards was one of the founding practices of your Society. Our monograph collection is used widely in the cath lab as the standards

“Bible” and forms the basis for many cath lab policy and procedure books! In the area of pediatric/congenital interventions, our Congenital Heart Disease Committee (Dr. Thomas Jones) is actively working on guidelines as well. We have partnered with the ACC and the AHA on numerous documents, but recently, ACC/AHA elected to cease updating the Coronary Angiography Clinical Guideline, an essential document. Your Society has taken on this important task and will produce the next version of these guidelines as “sole author”. Morton Kern, MD FSCAI, your Publications committee Chairman will lead this important effort.

This year your Society has produced important statements regarding DES, no-reflow (led by Dr. Lloyd Klein) and medical ethics (Drs. Airlie Cameron and Warren Laskey). We are updating our training guidelines and providing many of the simpler guidelines in Palm™ format. SCAI has been instrumental in defining the x-ray phantom used to quantitate the performance of our cath lab imaging equipment, involving years of hard work by Drs. Charles Chambers and Steve Balter. The SCAI database will provide valuable registry data on image performance needed to ensure that we can perform the most complicated procedures with ease and safety. Your participation in this core SCAI project is greatly desired. We will continue to address current issues and provide you with needed updates.

### International

Your Society is continuing its growing relationships with our international colleagues. We have formed close, ongoing relationships with European, Latin American, and Asian interventional societies, often sponsoring session at their national meetings. Just this August we held a special session at the Sao Paulo SOLACI meeting. This year we added a new International Associate Member category—many have already signed up. To be an International Associate Member of SCAI our international colleagues need only to belong to a recognized national interventional society. The San Diego annual scientific meeting next May (chaired by Drs. Jon Tobis and Jessie Currier will include increased international participation and we welcome the important scientific, educational and health-care delivery perspective contributed by our colleagues practicing outside of the US.

### Surveys

We have initiated a series of web-based surveys that allow us to understand the issues that affect you most. In just the past year, we have addressed DES; this survey resulted in a DES position statement (we are the only organization to take a stand in this area), and creation of a DES task force. The task force was inclusive reaching out to industry, physicians, attorneys, economists, other

societies, policy makers and payers. A comprehensive analysis of the medico legal, economic and access issues was created. A follow up DES survey will have been completed by the time you read this, with an update to our position statement if warranted. An occupational health survey is underway (thanks to Dr. Jim Goldstein, Dr. Klein, and Dr. James Choi) to assess the health risks unique to invasive/interventional physicians, and, more importantly, to determine what can be done to mitigate those risks. Infection control in the cath lab is another current area of investigation.

### **Public Relations**

We have launched a very active public relations effort under the guidance of J. Jeffery Marshall, M.D., FSCAI. At the Boston Annual meeting we launched our first press conference. Since then we have routinely released informative updates on our activities and the key articles in our journal. We are being called for stories not just by the medical press, but also increasingly by reporters from national organizations such as the Wall Street Journal and CNN. We are overhauling our web site to include a

section for public and press education. Our past President, Joseph Babb, M.D., FSCAI is chair-elect of the Council of Cardiovascular Organizations, an important new body fostering unprecedented cooperation between all cardiovascular affiliated Societies.

### **A New Look**

As you know, we have changed our name to "Cardiovascular" from "Cardiac" to better emphasize our role in caring for all cardiovascular disease including extra-cardiac (much of the impetus for that change came from this journal's editor-in-chief, Dr. Chris White). We are updating our logo while at the same time maintaining the historic representation of Forsmann's original catheterization radiograph for our official Seal. Our updated web site (spearheaded by Dr. Bonnie Weiner) and public material will reflect this new look. We are changing, we are growing, but we remain committed to our fundamental principles of education, standards and advocacy. I look forward to your continued participation and to serving you through out the remainder of my term.