

"With an outward view and an inward heart"

The year of our diamond anniversary finds us in the best international status ever reached by the Argentine Society of Cardiology (SAC) in its history.

Our Society is a full Member of the World Heart Federation, the Inter-American Society of Cardiology, and the South American Society of Cardiology, and a fellow member of the European Society of Cardiology, and the American College of Cardiology. Our Argentine Cardiology Foundation, which is the community branch of SAC, is also a full Member of the World Heart Federation, and a benchmark of the American Heart Association for cardiopulmonary resuscitation in our country. At our Congress, several joint activities are performed with visiting prestigious international societies which enrich us with their scientific contributions.

An exceptional event will be achieved this year. For the first time in our history, we will participate abroad, in joint sessions with the societies organizing the three most important cardiology congresses in the world. At the congress of the American College of Cardiology, held in Chicago in March, the joint session addressed aortic syndromes and vascular disease; in August, we will participate in a roundtable on heart failure at the congress organized by the European Society of Cardiology in Munich, and in November, we will share a session with the host society at the congress of the American Heart Association, in Los Angeles, to discuss research studies conducted by members of our society.

We believe our international participation is no coincidence. Just to mention a single detail, our Argentine Congress of Cardiology is positioned, according to the number of participants, immediately below the three largest congresses mentioned above.

At the regional level, we will participate as Member Society at the South American Congress of Cardiology, to be held in August in Asunción, and we are also working actively in the organization of the Inter-American Congress of Cardiology 2013, which we have been honored to host.

This brief summary casts no doubt on the political and scientific weight of our Society at the international level.

But we should bear in mind that the goal of the SAC is to improve the standards of cardiology in our country and expand knowledge.

A constant concern of the SAC is that all the country has access to cardiologists who are updated in the advances of the specialty. The activities carried out not only at our headquarters but also at the 36

SAC Regional Districts, with the participation of local colleagues and usually guest professors, are a way to achieve this goal. The latest means of communication, which we are gradually incorporating, will support this task, but we do not plan to abandon on-site activities, as we believe they have a special significance.

The annual Regional Districts National Conference, with rotating venues, helps the District responsible for the event to acquire organizational skills and actively engage with local organisms and their community. It is redundant to make comments on the Argentine Congress of Cardiology; we believe it offers a wide variety of activities for all those colleagues eager to acquire information on cardiology.

The Argentine Society of Cardiology Continuous Update Program (PROSAC), which has been available for several years, allows physicians – even those far from urban centers – to keep updated. The program includes written material and electronic formats concerning topics of interest for cardiologists, and awards points for the specialist recertification. As opposed to other programs, this one is written in "Argentine Spanish" by colleagues from our sphere, aware of our national reality and who are not at all influenced by the pharmaceutical industry.

There are also training courses for nurses and technicians to acquire and update skills in cardiological practice.

What has been mentioned above is just a brief summary of the educational effort for health agents.

This task is complemented with intense educational activity for the community. This work is performed by our Argentine Cardiology Foundation, the community branch of the SAC, which includes several programs on health care standards for the population, such as smoking cessation and healthy diet, programs to raise awareness on risk factors and vulnerable populations, and the creation of cardio-protected areas that include training on cardiopulmonary resuscitation, among others. All these programs are designed with pedagogical care to allow their understanding and applicability in the general community.

The establishment of foreign relationships, "the outward view" must help us to learn, imitate, or even excel in those aspects that we consider positive, and not only show off awards. It must be useful to apply what we have learned in all our community and thus turn to our "inward heart". That is our mission.

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President of the Argentine Society of Cardiology - 2012