

## SAC Reloaded

*SAC recargada*

August 20, 2020

In the last President's Letter, exactly two months ago, I referred to the dramatic growth of the pandemic and the failure to see the peak in our country.

Unfortunately, I cannot say the peak has been reached yet.

Nevertheless, on this occasion I will not address the health situation, but the activity of these past months in the Society.

Clearly, the situation was a tremendous challenge which generated a surprisingly great adaptive response, both from our staff and from participants in the various academic activities offered by our Institution.

The first and essential response was the implementation of remote internal and external activities, with a synergistic participation of all the areas and sectors that make up the Society.

For example, ARI played a central role through a reformulation and redesign of the website to be used as a tool for communication and teaching. The calendar for all the activities was adapted. The districts' activity was integrated with the head office in joint action with the corresponding area. An exclusive section of the website was also developed for updates on COVID-19.

Two tools gained unusual importance in the functioning of the Society: webinars and Zoom meetings.

Webinars were used in multiple activities: symposia, conferences, round tables, panel discussions and the biannual course for residents.

Forty-two regular webinars of the Society were organized by the board of directors and commercial management since March 20, with 20,670 participants and an average of 520 attendees per session (21 were dedicated to COVID-19).

The Scientific Council sessions were held using the Zoom or YouTube platform, and twenty seminars were conducted, with an average total attendance of 101 participants (range 27-330). The enthusiasm and energy all the Councils have dedicated to this activity, organized by their coordinators and directors, has been really surprising.

SAC PAIS Districts also used this modality with twenty-three activities and an average audience of 441 participants.

There was a remarkable increase in the number of visits to the SAC website compared with 2019, with

participation of 15 countries.

During this year, a social media dissemination strategy was started using Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn, and the SAC became the scientific society with the highest level of participation in social networks. Twitter was selected for the dissemination of live events and SAC conferences. The Society's account, with 15,600 followers, increased by 32% and reached 174,000 people in July.

SAC Mobile is an application with its own material where news, consensus, webinars and notifications are presented. A download link was added and in July the application reached 6,200 users with 39,600 sessions.

The teaching activity was intense through the Society's courses: the usual onsite courses were held online (Doppler echocardiography, Electrophysiology, CT and MRI, Exercise stress test and training and Stress echocardiography) with the participation of 157 students. Seventeen online courses of different topics were carried out with 1,098 students enrolled by June 23rd. Seven courses have opened for the second time since July 20th with 107 participants. Two new courses on comorbidities in heart failure and cardiovascular rehabilitation for kinesiologists have started.

The total number of participants in the different teaching modalities increased by 30% compared with the previous year.

I would also like to emphasize the success of the two-day International Conferences organized by the District of Tucumán with high national and international academic level and a record number of participants. Similarly, the Multi-imaging Conference held at the end of July aroused great interest, with 1,963 participants connected for three days to a scientific program of exceptional quality and which is just a preview of the real Imaging Congress to be held in November.

In the field of inter-society relations, the SAC is working on two SAC-FAC consensus statements on heart failure that will be presented and published online and in journals before the end of the year. They will surely constitute a historical milestone as they will be the first guidelines drawn up by both Societies, which have also been working together in two registries: the ARGEN-IAM-ST registry, whose five-year results were presented in a webinar, and the RACCO-

VID registry which is under development.

In the international arena, three webinars are scheduled with the Argentine Chapter of the ACC and two with the NY Chapter, besides participating in the training program for fellows and residents and in leadership meetings with new authorities of the College.

Similar meetings will be scheduled with the ESC and the AHA, as well as with Spanish and American societies.

We are currently actively collaborating in the Inter-American Society of Cardiology (IASC) programs, such as the World Heart Day and an immunization summit on respiratory diseases and their relationship with cardiovascular diseases, along with emerging leaders' registries and programs.

Our relationship with the World Heart Federation is also based on continuous collaboration with the presentation of candidates for the Emerging Leaders Program, webinars and the publication of an editorial in the Global Heart journal.

The Society continued to be highly involved in national health policies through a joint document with twenty-five societies that was submitted directly to the Minister of Health, alerting him of the collateral damage of the pandemic. This document and the preceding ones were extensively covered in several inter-

views on radio, television and graphic media.

Finally, we have recently decided to hold the entire Argentine Congress online. This is a highly innovative activity with a very ambitious scientific program. In addition, we expect to count with high technical quality in pre-recorded and live transmissions with the usual presence of national and international speakers. We expect a large commercial exhibition and all the events and meetings that normally take place during the traditional congress will be carried out online.

Despite the many drawbacks that this health and social situation has generated, and far from being intimidated, the SAC has multiplied its efforts, resulting in significant increases in all the activities.

Probably, and besides the tragic consequences with the high cost in lives, morbidity and socioeconomic damage, this pandemic may have brought about progress in communications, breaking down geographic boundaries and changing the general attitude towards new ways of academic and social interaction.

Surely, many of these changes are here to stay and constitute a qualitative leap into the future.

Until next time...

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President of the Argentine Society of Cardiology