

ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC REPORT 2002 - 2003

ESC WORKING GROUP

ON ECHOCARDIOGRAPHY (#7)

The 2002-2003 annual report will focus on the current core areas of WGE activities: Membership; Financial Status; Euroecho; ETP courses; The European Journal of Echocardiography; the ESC Annual Congress; European Accreditation on Echocardiography; Development of a web site.

Current WGE Nucleus Membership (as of 31st.August 2003)

Chairman	Fausto J Pinto (Lisbon, PT)
Chairman Elect	Alan G Fraser (Cardiff, GB)
Past Chairman	George R Sutherland (Leuven, BE)
Secretary	Genevieve A Derumeaux (Rouen, FR)
Treasurer	Ariel Cohen (Paris, FR)
Chairman Educational Sub Committee	Frank Flachskampf (Erlangen, DE)
Member - Educational Sub Committee	Marco Campana (Gussago, IT), Mauro Pepi (Milan, IT)
Chairman Research and Scientific Sub Committee	George Athanassopoulos (Athens, GR)
Member - Research and Scientific Sub Committee	Jose Zamorano (Madrid, SP), Helene von Bibra (Munich, DE)
Editor European Journal of Echocardiography (ex officio)	Jos R T C Roelandt (Rotterdam, NL)
Chairman of the Assessment of Accreditation Committee (ex officio)	Kevin Fox (London, GB)

Prof Ariel Cohen and Dr. Frank Flachskampf will reach their terms this year. Therefore an election process is under way to replace them. For the first time we will have electronic voting so a larger component of our membership can participate in the elections.

WGE Membership

The WGE membership was 1535 by August of the year 2003. This represented an increase of 500 since December 2000.

Euroecho 6 –Munich 4-7 Dec 2002

The Euroecho 6 meeting was held in Munich. There were a total of 1627 registered participants (including 308 exhibitors), which represents the largest number ever. Representatives from over 60 countries converged to what is now established as the most important annual Echocardiography meeting in Europe. Germany, United Kingdom and Italy were the three top countries in terms of participants and Italy, Poland and Turkey were the top three in abstract submission.

The Edler Lecture, entitled "How cardiac ultrasound has improved our understanding and management of ischemic heart disease", was given by Professor Cees Visser (Amsterdam, The Netherlands).

The Euroecho Lecture, entitled "Implications for echocardiography of new medical technologies", was given by Professor Richard L Popp (Stanford, USA).

Joint Scientific Sessions were also held with several working groups of ESC: Valvular Heart Disease, Myocardial and Pericardial Disease, Cardiac Magnetic Resonance; Cardiac Function and with The American Society of Echocardiography.

A parallel Basic Clinical Teaching Course in Echocardiography was also held during the Scientific Sessions. The DICE sessions continued to be very successful.

Euroecho 7 - Barcelona December 4-7 December 2003.

This is currently the main echo meeting in Europe and is becoming one of the most attended meetings around the world. We will continue to improve and expand it so it will be our cornerstone for education, teaching, scientific presentations, technological developments in the field of ultrasound in Cardiovascular Medicine.

The programme of EuroEcho 7 has been shaped during the last Nucleus meeting, in the respect of the main goals that the WG has considered as a priority: education, teaching, up-date in recent scientific and technological developments in the field of cardiovascular ultrasound.

Two special themes have been selected by the WG for this year: Diastolic function and Congenital Heart Disease. The ESC Working Group on Ventricular Function will co-host the 3rd European Diastology meeting (held in collaboration with the ESC Educational Committee) and there will be joint sessions with the American Society of Echocardiography (on hand held devices) the Association of European Pediatric Cardiologists (AEPC) and the ESC Working Groups on Grown-up Congenital Heart Disease (GUCHD), Valvular Heart Disease, Peripheral Circulation, Cardiac Rehabilitation and Exercise Physiology, Myocardial and Pericardial Disease. There will be also a special session dedicated to the 50 years of Echocardiography and 150 years after Christian Doppler's death. Continuing last EuroEcho meetings' successful experiment, on Wednesday, prior to the Opening Ceremony, *a meeting on Stress Echocardiography* will be held in collaboration with the *Working Group on Echocardiography of the Spanish Society of Cardiology*.

In addition, a series of Teaching Courses will be held in parallel prior to the Opening Ceremony. These will feature *Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonance for Echocardiographers* (in conjunction with CMR WG), *Transoesophageal and Perioperative Echocardiography* (in conjunction with EACTA), *Congenital Heart Disease* (in conjunction with GUCHD and AEPC) and on *Basic Research in Ultrasound*. All will take place on Wednesday December 3rd, 8:30am-4:00pm, prior to the Opening Ceremony which will begin at 4.30pm. Following the Opening Ceremony, there will be the General Assembly where all members are invited to go..

The *Edler lecture* will be given by *Miguel-Angel Garcia Fernandez (from Madrid)* and the *Euroecho lecture* by *Arthur Weyman (from Harvard University, Boston)*.

The successful DICE sessions will continue, where case presentations highlight difficult diagnoses or clinically significant findings. They will be organised by *National Working Groups on Echocardiography and other ESC Working Groups*. This year we will also have two non European DICE sessions organized by Argentina and a set of African countries, continuing our efforts to expand EuroEcho beyond European boundaries.

This year, Euroecho 7 presents two innovations :

- WGE Grants : In order to encourage the participation of young investigators (under 35 years) to the Euroecho meetings, the WG Nucleus has provided 40 Grants of 500 Euros .
- Examination for European Accreditation on Echocardiography : After last year successful pilot exam in Munich, the WGE has decided, within the ESC framework, to pursue the process of creating an European Accreditation on Echocardiography. Therefore, a exam sub-committee has been created , chaired by Kevin Fox and involving Nucleus members and representative from National Societies.

This year, we will run the first formal examination, which will take place on Saturday afternoon after the end of the Euroecho meeting.

The next EUROECHO meetings will be held in Athens/Greece (EUROECHO 8; 2004) and Florence/Italy (EUROECHO 9; 2005).

Courses 2002-03

During the year, two courses were organized by members of the WGE; one on Transesophageal Echocardiography in Florence, organised by Frank Flachskamp and one in Talin, organised by Alan Fraser. Both were well attended and successful. The WG cosponsored the Contrast Echo meeting that was held in London in July.

The European Journal of Echocardiography

The link between Euroecho and EJE was fundamental for the initial steps of the journal. It proved to be a wise decision since the journal is thriving, with its inclusion in Index Medicus and shortly with an Impact Factor. In order to keep it on the road we have just decided at the nucleus to extend the link of the Journal with Euroecho, therefore all paying registrants will get the journal for 1 year. This represents an important financial commitment by the WG, particularly because from 2004 there will be 6 issues/year instead of the current 4 issues. This is the main reason why we will have to increase the registration fee for Euroecho, which was kept the same over the last two years.

To submit papers please write to:
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The Netherlands.

ESC - Berlin - Sept 2002:

WGE had 7 WG sessions at the Berlin meeting; 3 Focus sessions and 4 other sessions held jointly with other Working Groups (in which WGE is not the main organizer). This represents a significant fall in the number of sessions compared to previous years despite a significant increase in WG Membership.

Accreditation on Echocardiography in Europe:

This represents the major new development of the WG during the current leadership. This is a very important issue which is currently being discussed, and in some cases already implemented, across Europe among the different medical disciplines. We undertook the task of developing an accreditation system on echocardiography in Europe. There are several reasons why this should be done, which can be summarize under the concept of improving and guarantee the quality of European echocardiography. This will be a pure voluntary procedure and it will be done within the frame of ESC. In order to discuss this process an Accreditation Committee on Echocardiography was created, which includes representatives of the following national groups/societies which either have an accreditation system already running or underway: France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Romania, Spain, United Kingdom, Turkey. All other European countries will be consulted in due time and informed on the developments of the process. We had our first meeting on February 1st at the Heart House where we had the chance to discuss several issues, including the different systems already existing, as well as agreeing on a common denominator for a European process. It was also decided to pursue not only accreditation in adult echocardiography, but also on transesophageal echocardiography (in cooperation with our anesthesiology colleagues of EACTA) and pediatric echocardiography (in cooperation with our pediatric cardiologists of AEPC). It was created an examination committee to elaborate the exam and Kevin Fox was appointed to chair this committee. In Munich a pilot exam was administered to a group of colleagues that volunteered to help us to develop the exam. Now we are working to have the first official examination this year in Barcelona. In preparation for this exam we will also run for the first time an extramural teaching course in Vienna on the 2 to 4th of October. This has been organized by the still Chairman of Educational Committee (Frank Flachskampf) and will involve several European colleagues.

In addition we have already started an official joint committee with EACTA (European Association of European CardioThoracic Anesthesiologists) regarding accreditation on transesophageal echocardiography. A meeting was recently held in Prague, during the EACTA annual meeting, where several issues were discussed and the year of 2004 was defined as the possible launching year of the process. A similar joint venture with the Association of European Pediatric Cardiologists (AEPC) is currently being developed.

Evolution to the European Association of Echocardiography (A registered branch of ESC)

The WG on Echo has formally applied to be one of the first to evolve into an Association. This will represent a major step forward for the echocardiographic community in Europe since it will allow us to develop a stronger structure in Europe, although still within the body of ESC.

Prof. Fausto J Pinto
Chairman WG on Echocardiography