



European Heart Rhythm Association



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With the important changes to the statutes of the European Society of Cardiology voted at the occasion of the ESC Congress 2003 in Vienna, the possibility for better and more far-reaching development in the different areas of expertise in cardiology were created and the way for the official creation of Associations opened. As a consequence, and in view of the growing importance of cardiac rhythmology, the European Heart Rhythm Association was created out of the merged Working Groups on arrhythmias and cardiac pacing. The aim of this new entity shall be **to promote the development of expertise in the field in order to improve the quality of life of the European population by reducing the impact of cardiac arrhythmias.**

EHRA shall also help members to be recognised as experts in the field of clinical electrophysiology and pacing, offering diplomas based on education and examination, to be responsible for the rhythmology aspects within the ESC and accredit the scientific and educational value of congresses or meetings in Europe and therefore be the place where members' opinions can be made public.

The two nuclei, affiliated in the cluster organisation of the ESC, decided to elect a President, to define a name and a logo.

The Constitutional Board (CB) was nominated to work, in a creative and nonconflicting process, on how to structure this association in order to optimally fulfil its educational, research and clinical mission as well as to define the strategic goals.

In regular meetings with the Advisory Board (the members of the two former nuclei), the constitutional process was finalised so that the statutes can be presented and voted at the first general assembly of all the Members of the association which will take place during the ESC meeting in Munich this year. Former Members of the Working Groups as well as National Delegates have been contacted and have to confirm their interest to become active Members of the Association.

In order to advance rapidly with the work and with the hope to have a large contribution of new and younger colleagues, Task Forces were created. They will work for a limited period on a specific topic such as: Membership and National Societies, International Relations, Education, Database (incl. PM registry), Quality Assurance, Accreditation in Electrophysiology, Communication and Web Site. New Task Forces may be created if necessary while some will be transformed into Committees with missions of longer duration.

According to the mission statement the most important part of this whole exercise is to serve and assist doctors, nurses, technicians, administrators and industry involved in the field of rhythm management, from basic research to bedside and health politics, in order to improve the care given to patients suffering from cardiac arrhythmias. EHRA shall be an association to serve its members in achieving this common goal.

During the structural changing period from WG to Association, the EUROPACE 2003 was held in Paris, December 4-7. The attendance was of over 2,500 participants and industry key players were all present, not only with an important and informative exhibition but also in multiple symposia devoted to review critically therapy-specific topics. The high quality scientific programme attracted the participants and their conclusion was that this meeting is where the European electrophysiologist can learn rhythmology from basics to bedside, have a lively exchange with basic researchers and discuss the most innovative papers. We are all thankful to Prof. Sam Levy for having driven this event to a landmark for 2003 and by this confirmed the strong need amongst our community for the importance and need of this unique event.

EUROPACE is the official congress of EHRA. EUROPACE 2005 will be held June 26-29 in Prague. Original scientific information is published through its official journal Europeace.

EHRA will also be the source for important information in our field, like databases on prevalence of arrhythmias and Sudden Death in our population, use of devices and interventions etc. Together with the preparation of guidelines and quality standards, this information will help members for their private and hospital planning strategy.

Finally, EHRA will represent within the European Society of Cardiology the interests of rhythmology and coordinate the exchange of information with National Societies and political authorities.

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