

**HIGHLIGHT ON SWITZERLAND  
'Working Group of Pacing and Electrophysiology'**

**Presentation and Strategy of the Working Group**

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**Short summary of the EP National Cardiac Society / EP Working Group history**

The Working Group of Pacing and Electrophysiology was founded in 1980. It is affiliated to the Swiss Society of Cardiology, and its principal aim has been to promote quality of care in the domain of rhythm disorders in Switzerland. The 10 Committee members represent the different linguistic regions, university and regional hospitals as well as the public and private sectors. Currently, the Working Group is currently composed of 309 members who have an interest or activity in the field of rhythm disorders. Annual statistics in device implantation have been published since 1975, and the Working Group has developed an online registry for device therapy and ablations which is obligatory since 2013, in order to promote quality control. In addition, the Working Group publishes guidelines for gaining competency in the field of rhythmology according to standards set by EHRA, and has been the first country (since 2011) to make the EHRA exam mandatory for performing device follow-up/implantation or electrophysiological procedures. The Working Group also provides for educational needs by organizing the annual "Swissrhythm" congress and an annual device course. The Committee also lobbies the healthcare authorities with reimbursement issues, defending the interests of patients and its members.

**Health care**

(Health care system as far as it has relevance for EP)

The healthcare system is composed of public and private sectors. Both overlap in that public hospital may cater for private patients, and vice-versa. State funding is complemented by private insurance plans (which are obligatory for all residents). According to the EHRA White Book, (Raaitkainen et al, EP Europace 2015), and according to the 2014 EHRA report Switzerland is in the top 5 European countries regarding the numbers of centres performing device implantation per capita and in the top 3 as regards catheter ablation.

### **Electrophysiology activities**

An annual “Swissrhythm” congress is organized over two days and combines state of the art lectures, case presentations and workshops. The target audience is cardiologists with an interest in rhythmology. Faculty from the neighbouring countries (France, Germany, Austria and Italy) are invited, in order to promote exchanges between Working Groups.

An annual 1-day CME course on device troubleshooting is organized for cardiologists performing follow-ups. Sessions on rhythmology are organized within the realm of the annual Swiss Society of Cardiology scientific sessions.

### **Aims for the future** (the 5 coming years)

There is a need to provide a legal framework for performing device and electrophysiological procedures, as well as to better define competencies which entitle toward reimbursement. This will ultimately serve to improve quality of care provided to the patient.

### **Main Electrophysiology and Arrhythmias activities**

- **Campaigns**

The Working Group has successfully lobbied towards obtaining reimbursement for remote monitoring and also for the wearable cardioverter defibrillator

- **Projects**

The Working Group is planning on using data from the national registry for various projects (device longevity, trends in procedures etc.)

- **Education**

The General Cardiology curriculum includes rotations in device clinics and the electrophysiology lab.

- **The future**

- Needs

*(What are the main strategic needs for Electrophysiology and Arrhythmias?)*

There is a need to provide a legal framework for performing device and electrophysiological procedures, as well as to better define competencies which entitle toward reimbursement. This will ultimately serve to improve quality of care provided to the patient.

- Possibilities

The recognition of sub-specializations in cardiology (device specialist and interventional electrophysiologist), based upon the EHRA curriculum, would be a very important step forward.

- Obstacles

The National Society wishes to avoid having too many sub-specialities (e.g. interventional cardiology, imaging, rhythmology etc.)

- Plans (the 5 coming years)

Continue to:

- promote quality of care
- provide education in the field of rhythmology
- extend the online registry
- defend the interests of our members in the context of growing economic constraints

- **Role of EHRA**

*(In which way can the EHRA and/or the EHRA National Cardiac Society Committee network assist?)*

To continue to provide excellence in education and certification

Despite its small size, the Swiss EP community has been actively contributing to EHRA's activities over the years, and is well represented within the association!

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