

EDITORIAL

From the 25th to 29th of August 2018, the European Society of Cardiology hosted the annual ESC congress in Munich again. This year, a total of 33 000 health care professionals attended the 4.5-day event, one of the most successful cardiology meetings ever. The attendees came from more than 150 countries and enjoyed almost 600 sessions running in parallel in 30 rooms. Importantly, more than 10 000 scientific abstracts were submitted and 4 461 were selected for oral or poster presentation. Among the top 10 abstract-submitting countries were Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Japan, the United States, and China. These facts underscore the transition of a European congress into a worldwide, global meeting!

More than 1500 faculty members from over 80 different countries had active roles at the ESC congress 2018 in Munich. Importantly, a further increase to 25% of all faculty was noted in the number of women involved in the program.

The opening ceremony on the 26th of August highlighted the progress that has been made over the last decades in cardiovascular medicine. Eugene Braunwald elegantly summarized the enormous progress in lipid-lowering therapy, which was only possible through the intensive collaboration between physicians, researchers, and the pharmaceutical industry. Another highlight was Barbra Streisand's welcome address to our delegates. The ESC gold medals were awarded to Ottavio Alfieri, Evgeny Shlyakhto, and Marc Pfeffer for their enormous contributions to academic medicine and science. A significant number of travel grants were given to young researchers and clinicians to spend time in a center of excellence in Europe.

The facilities of the congress center in Munich were excellent, and 9 villages covered all the important topics in the entire spectrum of cardiology: electrophysiology, heart failure, valvular heart disease, coronary artery disease, coronary intervention, hypertension, prevention, basic science, and cardiac imaging. Excellent state-of-the-art overviews were provided by luminary speakers from all over the world. In the oral abstract presentations, a new interactive app was introduced enabling the audience during the sessions to submit their questions, which could then be addressed in the subsequent discussion.

More discussions took place in the popular "hubs" (open areas in the congress center, where the audience is seated around the speaker and interactive discussions take place), a concept introduced several years ago by Keith Fox.

A specific forum for new developments in digital health was created, where technology meets cardiology and where attendees could learn about the increasing

possibilities and opportunities in this field, including telemedicine, telemonitoring, mobile apps, and many more applications.

Much attention was paid to the area where the poster presentations took place: open, spacious areas with colorful lighting and soft music, inviting participants to enter into lively discussions.

An overwhelming exhibition area was created, where delegates could learn about the latest developments in the pharmaceutical and medical device industry, as well as the rapidly evolving possibilities in (noninvasive and invasive) imaging technology.

The spotlight of the ESC congress 2018 was “heart valve disease” and many sessions were dedicated to the diagnosis and treatment of valvular heart disease (specifically aortic stenosis and mitral regurgitation, but also endocarditis and rheumatic heart disease). With the increasing interest in transcatheter heart valve therapy, a significant part of the program involved the innovations in this field, with a focus on expanding indications for transcatheter aortic valve replacement and MitraClip. A highlight was the Andreas Gruentzig Lecture given by Martin Leon on the past, present, and future of transcatheter heart valve therapy.

Innovations in cardiology were discussed extensively in the “innovation corner,” and a special moment was the first Paul Hugenholtz Lecture, given by Francesco Maisano.

Furthermore, four new guidelines were presented at this year’s congress on highly relevant clinical topics, including myocardial revascularization, hypertension, syncope, as well as pregnancy and heart disease. In addition, the fourth edition of the universal definition of myocardial infarction was released.

Finally, the most important, exciting new science was presented in the traditional Hotline sessions, with specific sessions on the latest new trials in pharmacotherapy, coronary interventions, electrophysiology and devices, heart failure, heart valves, and imaging. Several of these trials will have an impact on the practice of cardiology. Here is a short summary of some of the leading trials:

- The GLOBAL LEADERS trial (16000 patients) failed to show any benefit of 23 months of ticagrelor after 1 month of DAPT following PCI over standard treatment to prevent adverse outcome during 2-year follow-up.
- The ATTR-ACT trial (almost 450 patients, follow-up 30 months) illustrated the benefit (event-free survival) of tafamidis in patients with transthyretin amyloid cardiomyopathy.

- The CAMELLIA-TIMI 61 trial (12000 patients, follow-up 3.3 years) demonstrated the cardiovascular safety of lorcaserin in obese patients.
- The MARINER trial (more than 12000 patients, follow-up 45 days after hospitalization) did not show any benefit of rivaroxaban in preventing (venous) thromboembolic events after hospitalization.
- The COMMANDER HF trial (more than 5000 patients) did not show any benefit of rivaroxaban in patients hospitalized with heart failure during 21 months of follow-up.
- The SCOT-HEART trial showed that CT coronary angiography is an alternative to standard care in patients with chest pain and low-intermediate pre-test likelihood of coronary artery disease.
- The ARRIVE study (>12500 patients, follow-up 60 months) did not show any benefit of aspirin in patients with intermediate risk (based on traditional risk factors), but a trend towards lower prevalence of infarction in patients taking aspirin was noted.

Finally, much was also done for the physicians who could not attend the 2018 ESC congress in person: every day, the highlights were broadcast from the ESC TV studio and all sessions were recorded and can be reviewed at any time during the coming year in our ESC congress 365 program.

In the current issue of *Dialogues in Cardiovascular Medicine*, various experts in different fields of cardiology share their experiences at the 2018 ESC congress. They provide summaries of the different subspecialties in cardiology. Specifically, Martin Cowie reports on advances in (digital) technology, whereas Michel Komajda and others address novelties in prevention and treatment, and Filippo Crea summarizes the new ESC guidelines, the different ESC registries, and new important clinical trials presented at the 2018 ESC congress. In addition, Kim Fox and Roberto Ferrari provide an excellent comprehensive overview of studies in heart disease published in the major journals during the last year.

We hope you will appreciate these highlights of the 2018 ESC congress in the current issue of *Dialogues in Cardiovascular Medicine*! ■

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