

Editorial

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Published online: 5 March 2010
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The contributions of this special issue are based on presentations made at the 17th Annual Meeting of the Alpe Adria Association of Cardiology organized in Dresden, Germany on 8–9 May 2009. The lectures and symposia concentrated on *Cardiology 2009—Education, Research, and New Concepts* including allied disciplines. The symposium brought together experts in this field to evaluate the implications of current developments for the coming decades. We were honored to have a number of distinguished scientists, leaders in the area of experimental and clinical cardiology from the Alpe Adria Countries *Austria, Bavaria* as a part of Germany, *Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, the Slovak Republic, and Slovenia* (in alphabetical order); additional speakers were invited from Denmark, Greece, Russia, and Serbia. All together more than 15 nations were represented at this meeting. It was endorsed by the German Cardiac Society (DGK), the European Society of Cardiology

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(ESC), the European Heart Rhythm Association (EHRA), and the World Heart Federation (WHF).

In recent decades, significant advances have been made in the treatment of patients with cardiovascular diseases. These changes have resulted from not only international, seminal, multicenter, prospective clinical investigations dealing with the anatomic and physiologic foundations of these disorders, but also clinical studies of their natural history and outcome, and the application of new therapeutic approaches, including interventional technologies. This special issue of *Clinical Research in Cardiology* presents original scientific contributions that provide insight into future directions for innovative treatment. Important social and economic issues are brought into focus by the use of such advanced medical technology. These issues are considered in light of available information and anticipated developments in the state-of-the-art treatment of patients with cardiovascular disorders. Important new information is presented on myocardial infarction, heart failure, the heart and diabetes, and atrial fibrillation. Individual sections of this supplement are devoted to each of these areas.

Our effort to bring together this splendid array of information and to present it to the readers of this Journal would not have been feasible without the support of many persons: the international Alpe Adria Advisory Board, the international organizing committee, and the staff of the academic Praxisklinik Dresden. Generous and unencumbered educational grants from leading pharmaceutical and electrophysiological companies were instrumental in making this educational experience possible. Finally, we are indebted to those who authored the contributions for this special issue and whose efforts can only, in some minimal measure, be recompensated by the impact of the final product. We hope that this supplement will be a valuable tool for researchers

and clinicians alike. We are confident that this volume will assist in providing insight into optimal current treatment and future developments in medical technology for cardiovascular diseases.

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