

Review of the First European Meeting On Coronary Microcirculation and Hypertension 17–18 February 2017, Sinaia, Romania

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The ESC Working Group on Coronary Pathophysiology and Microcirculation welcomes everybody who shares an interest in clinical and basic research in the field of coronary pathophysiology from the large down to the terminal vessels. Clinicians as well as basic researchers in the field of vascular biology are welcomed. Although the activity of the WG has increased significantly during the last years, there was a growing need for a meeting which would allow the fundamental interaction between basic scientists and clinicians.

The First European Meeting On Coronary Microcirculation and Hypertension marked the first official event organized in Romania by the European Society of Cardiology. It was a joint effort on the part of the Coronary Pathophysiology & Microcirculation Working Group of the ESC, currently chaired by Professor Maria Dorobantu, the ESC Council on Hypertension and the Romanian Society of Hypertension.

The set-up of the event was undertaken by the Organizing Committee, represented by Professors Maria Dorobantu, Lina Badimon, Akos Koller, Dirk Duncker, Teresa Padro, Cor de Wit, and Antonio Coca. The meeting was held at the International Hotel in Sinaia, during the 17th–18th of February, 2017. Young specialists were granted accommodation and free access to the event, an endeavor supported by the Organizing Committee. Participation in the meeting was granted 9 European CME credits by the European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education.

The Conference commenced with the Opening Ceremony. During the Welcome Address, the attendees were greeted by reputed faculty members, influential personalities in the medical field, as well as the Minister of Health in Romania, Dr. Florian Bodog.

The following days, the 12 scientific sessions targeted various topics spanning the spectrum of coronary microcirculation, pathophysiology and hypertension, among which coronary microvascular physiology and pathophysiology, angina with normal epicardial coronary arteries, and assessment of coronary artery stenosis represented a few of the highlights. Over 50 speakers were invited from Romania and the international community (Spain, Italy, Serbia, Germany, Croatia, France,

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Sweden, Hungary, Kosovo, Netherland, Switzerland, the U.K.), presenting intriguing case scenarios experienced in practice, and novel areas of interest in basic research within the field. The intent was to bridge the perspective of the clinician with the currently undergoing studies in basic research, in trying to develop better and more efficient treatments, and to improve patient management and outcomes. Furthermore, laying the foundation of a joint international effort enhances the chances of reaching these aims.

The scientific sessions also involved discussions on a wide range of issues linking hypertension and coronary artery disease, including new evidence in ACE inhibition beyond blood pressure control, active organ protection in hypertension, the challenges in the management of hypertensive patients with multiple comorbidities, cardiovascular risk assessment, control and prevention of cardiovascular diseases, as well as advancements in imaging techniques (MRI as a tool for coronary microcirculation evaluation, PCI in conjunction with optical coherence tomography, angiography with 3D reconstruction, the role of contrast echocardiography in assessing microperfusion in ischemic heart disease).

A poster session and an exhibition for sponsors ran in parallel with the scientific sessions. The poster session comprised 26 presentations, competing for two prizes – first prize granted the winner the participation fee at the 2017 European Society of Cardiology Congress in Barcelona, and the second prize winner was rewarded the participation fee at the 2017 European Society of Hypertension Congress in Milan. The winners were announced during the Gala Dinner, held on the last day of the meeting.

The exhibition offered sponsors and practitioners alike a means of exchanging information on recent progress in cardiovascular disease, from novel therapeutic agents to state-of-the-art imaging modalities.

Another remarkable event was the launch of *Current Approach to Heart Failure*, a book published by Springer International, under the editorship of Professors Maria Dorobantu, Frank Ruschitzka and Marco Metra.

Overall, the Conference gathered over 300 participants, 130 cardiologists from Romania, 50 from abroad, as well as students supported by the Romanian Society of Hypertension. Of note, the ESC community of cardiologists was also represented by the ESC Scientists of Tomorrow, in the presence of Dr. Judit Cubedo (Spain) and Dr. Nicola Smart (U.K.), and the ESC Cardiologists of Tomorrow, in the presence of Dr. Saverio Muscoli (Italy).

The Conference was promoted through various media outlets, online and offline. In order to highlight the importance of the topics discussed, a press conference was also held, attended by journalists representing various outlets (print media, online journals and TV). In all, press coverage reported on topics discussed during the Conference that were of relevance to the general public.

Following the meeting, participants were asked to fill in a survey regarding the event. The majority found the material presented met their expectations and helped them improve their knowledge on patient care, with 55% of the participants stating the quality of the program was either excellent or very good. Among the most popular topics discussed were microvascular dysfunction in hypertension, blood pressure variability, left ventricular hypertrophy in hypertension, lipid metabolism and statin therapy, and role and limitations of angiography in coronary heart disease. The program was considered well-organized, balanced and diverse, and some noted the need to reach a wider audience, including a non-medical public, in order to raise awareness on the importance of the topics covered.

We hope that the success of the First European Meeting On Coronary Microcirculation and Hypertension will lead to more events organized in Romania by the ESC. The ESC Working Group on Coronary Microcirculation and Pathophysiology will continue to organize similar meetings aiming to promote the understanding, to address prevention and to improve diagnosis and treatment of impaired coronary perfusion.