

Editorial

The world is not short of medical journals, especially in cardiology where many publications deliver to their readership the most current advances in clinical and laboratory research. The challenge of keeping up to date with the flood of new studies often means that busy physicians do not have the time to reflect in depth on the progress and impact of a single topic of cardiological relevance. Journals abound with a potpourri of exciting but often unrelated investigations, and sometimes it is difficult to trace and fully appreciate the complex matrix of studies that, when combined, represent the current body of knowledge on a specific area of cardiovascular medicine. *Dialogues in Cardiovascular Medicine* seeks to address this problem.

Our editorial objective is to devote each issue of *Dialogues* to a single topic of clinical relevance, to explore it in concise detail, to place it into clinical perspective and identify pressing questions that dominate the field. We will do this with the help of undisputed experts, authoritative investigators who have made a major contribution to the development of a concept and to the fundamental understanding of the mechanisms and management of cardiovascular disease. Our aim will be to deliver to the practising cardiologist the very best overviews from the best of authors.

This first issue of *Dialogues* epitomizes our goals. Myocardial stunning is a phenomenon that was first characterized in the laboratory, and for the past 20 years, the cardiological literature has been enriched by many hundreds of papers describing painstaking experimental and clinical studies that, taken together, provide a remarkable insight into the pathophysiology of stunning. Although first recognized in the experimental laboratory, stunning is of great relevance to both the cardiologist and the cardiac surgeon; a thorough understanding of the essentials of stunning will undoubtedly improve patient management. However, busy surgeons and cardiologists rarely have the time to digest an enormous (and sometimes contradictory) literature, hence the birth of *Dialogues*.

In assembling this first issue of *Dialogues* we sought the help of a cardiologist who, without doubt, has made the greatest single contribution to our understanding of stunning. Over the past decade Roberto Bolli has published over fifty keynote papers on the subject, so who better than he to give, in the Lead Article, a concise overview of the relevance of stunning to the cardiologist.

No field is ever without conflict or controversy, and, however advanced, questions always remain, and thus it is with stunning. Roberto Bolli has therefore been asked to conclude his article with the three most important questions that a cardiologist might ask about stunning.

We have then invited three more experts to provide personal answers. In short, crisp Expert Answers to Three Key Questions, Philip Poole-Wilson shares his views on the clinical manifestations of stunning, Robert Bonow explains how it can be best detected and quantified, and Gerd Heusch addresses the means and importance of therapy. This will be the pattern that will characterize future issues of *Dialogues*.

Although our objective is to create concise and digestible overviews that will allow the essence of a major topic to be rapidly assimilated, we have no doubt that these articles will stimulate a deeper interest for many readers - if it does not, then we will have failed our editorial challenge. We will, therefore, also publish a selected Bibliography of One Hundred Key Papers to allow rapid access to the literature. Furthermore, each issue will contain Summaries of Ten Seminal Papers pertaining to the area under consideration.

We hope that this new publication will be a help to cardiologists worldwide, and we are indebted to the Servier Research Group for providing a generous educational grant to support this venture, a further demonstration of their commitment to advancing knowledge in cardiovascular medicine.

Roberto Ferrari and David J. Hearse
Editors in Chief