

Foreword



Tom De Potter

Tom De Potter is Associate Director at the Cardiovascular Center, OLV Hospital, Aalst, Belgium. He was Chair of the European Heart Rhythm Association Young Electrophysiologists Community since it was founded in 2013 until 2017, and was co-Chair of the National Cardiac Societies Committee of the European Society of Cardiology (ESC) from 2017 to 2018. Currently he is a Member of the ESC Heart Academy. He has focused on a developing a multi-modality imaging approach to support complex arrhythmia treatment, using and combining existing and experimental technologies, such as intracardiac echography, 3D mapping and navigation and rotational angiography. This has resulted in the arrhythmia unit at OLV Hospital becoming one of the few European training centres for ventricular tachycardia ablation and the only centre worldwide for training physicians on a minimal radiation workflow for atrial fibrillation ablation. This imaging expertise has been translated to the structural heart programme, and the arrhythmia unit is a selected training site for left atrial appendage (LAA) closure and a study site for existing and novel devices for LAA closure. He has published nearly a hundred articles and is Associate Editor for European Heart Journal – Case Reports. Recently, he has been involved in producing educational video content including interviews and surgical operations and has been an invited speaker at scientific meetings across the world.

This edition of *European Journal of Arrhythmia & Electrophysiology* features a selection of reviews in atrial fibrillation that examine and expand the knowledge base on the mechanisms of disease and its effective management. In addition, there is a timely practical guide suited to reinforcing the core skills for implanting electronic devices. Martin Borggreffe sheds light on sudden cardiac death – it is clear that risk stratification remains a major unresolved challenge and that prevention with a multi-disciplinary approach, for a phenomenon affecting millions every year, may offer great benefits to individuals and to society alike.

With the release of the ‘European Heart Rhythm Association (EHRA) practical guide on the use of non-vitamin K antagonist oral anticoagulants in patients with atrial fibrillation’, Hein Heidbuchel presents the rationale and history of the developments and, most importantly, an overview of the new guidance for a condition with equally devastating consequences and equally large potential for preventive therapy. While there is increasing evidence for the initiation of non-vitamin K antagonist oral anticoagulants, there is a background of prescribing uncertainty, especially in the context of polypharmacy, and a lack of head-to-head data supporting the selection of specific agents – this new guide is particularly welcome in assisting physicians in decision-making for daily questions.

As physicians and their healthcare systems seek to optimise resource usage, there is discussion on the use of electronic and mobile health technologies, their benefits, integration into existing systems and the regulatory considerations in their application. With increasing technological possibilities, and their associated expenses, optimised resource allocation is set to be one of the most rewarding fields of research for the next decade. In an expert interview, Martin Cowie discusses the use of electronic and mobile health in chronic heart failure.

Looking at emerging technology that seeks to move from academic interest to clinical practice, Michael Derndorfer and Helmut Pürerfellner examine the evidence and remaining questions for high-density mapping catheters, examining their role in daily clinical interventions as well as in advancing basic insights in arrhythmia mechanisms.

Particular thanks to the authors who have contributed to this edition and produced insightful, thought-provoking and clinically relevant contributions to help improve cardiac disease outcomes. I hope you find its content both intellectually stimulating and useful for your practice. □