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December 2017

Dear Members of the AECVP,

This is my second newsletter as President and I look forward to 2018 with our new board. We congratulate Cristina Basso, Jytte Banner, Heike Göbel, Guilia d'Amati, Patrick Bruneval, Ivana Kholova, Samuel Rotman, Stephen Preston and Allard van Der Wal on their election. All are very experienced and contribute greatly to the Association. We thank Guilia d'Amati for hosting the board meeting in Rome on Saturday, 27 January 2018.

Regarding the activity of 2017 and looking forward to 2018, we are in for a very busy time. At European Society of pathology we had 2 seminars on myocardial infarction and infiltrative cardiac disease which were well attended. Next year in Bilbao we will be doing a slide seminar with infectious disease and the autopsy section with Cecile Alfsen and Gregor Gorkiewicz. These collaborative working group meetings are always very popular and well attended. We are also arranging seminars on myocarditis and complications following cardiac procedures. At European Society of Cardiology in Barcelona the association was represented by a session on aortic disease and genetics. In 2018 in Munich we will again be doing a hands-on session as well as seminars. With Joaquin Lucena we are invited to participate in International Symposium on SCD and II Latin American Symposium on SCD will be held at the Barceló Solimar Hotel in Varadero (Cuba), November 16-19, 2018. Dr. Luís A. Ochoa, President of the Local Organizing Committee, has asked for scientific contribution from the AECVP. I been invited to speak at the European Heart Rhythm Association (EHRA) and heart rhythm Association (HR) in USA on sudden cardiac death next year and will speak on our AECVP guidelines and highlight the work that we have done so successfully which brings me to our next guideline project.

I call on all AECVP members to be part of the working group to establish criteria for diagnosis of a normal heart and for the diagnosis of cardiomyopathy at autopsy. Members must be actively involved in autopsy work and state how many PMs they do yearly. We need practical working pathologists who understand the challenges of diagnosing the normal heart and cardiomyopathies at autopsy. This will not be a cross over into endomyocardial biopsy. We need both general pathologist and forensic pathologists. I would also advise that we involve a USA forensic pathologist and Australian pathologist in this group to get an international viewpoint. After the board meeting in Roma, a panel for guidelines will be established (deadline 28th of February). We will need a core writing team of 2-4 members to lead on writing the guidelines. Then this working group will have regular meetings, in 2018 at ECP in Bilbao and then in Lausanne. The writing team will communicate via Skype with further meeting in January 2019 and completion by ESP 2019. This will be a natural step from the SCD guidelines and expanding our expertise and help to pathologists. Diagnosing what is essentially a normal heart and avoiding underdiagnosis and under diagnosis of cardiomyopathy is the biggest challenge. I have noted in my day to day practice where I get large numbers of referral hearts from working autopsy pathologists. This guideline/guidelines will detail what we mean by macroscopic and microscopic normal measurements, normal anatomy and histology, hypertrophy, degenerative changes, myocyte disarray, vascular changes, fat etc. The SCD



guidelines mention these in tables, but what we mean by these terms can be vague with ill-defined definitions as to dilatation, thinning, hypertrophy, fatty infiltration etc. I think we can provide a clear document which will help working pathologists and improve PM quality. Whether we have one guideline for the normal heart and a separate guideline on cardiomyopathy remains to be established at the board meeting.

We are also planning future guidelines on ischaemic heart disease (Katarzyna Michaud and Allard van der Wal) which will be actively discussed at the board meeting also. Patrick Gallagher and Jytte Banner will be presenting results of autopsy practice in Europe. Annalisa Angelini and Helen Doran will lead on the role of the autopsy in congenital heart disease.

We also in the planning stages for the Biennial meeting in Lausanne in October 2018 organised by Katarzyna Michaud in which the topics are on sudden arrhythmic death, cardiomyopathies, coronary artery disease and cardiac failure. There will be a pre-congress meeting on post-mortem imaging arranged by Virtangio@. I am also delighted to announce that Professor Gaetano Thiene has been awarded the Mike Davies award for outstanding achievement in cardiovascular pathology which will be presented at Lausanne. He is one of the founding fathers of our organisation and richly deserves this award. The title of his talk will be "*The development of Cardiovascular Pathology as a distinct discipline: from gross anatomy to microscope and molecular gene sequencing*". Three keynote talks will be given by Hugues Abriel, Thomas F. Lüscher and René Prêtre. We look forward to seeing you all in Lausanne. More details concerning the abstract submission, registration and preliminary program will be available in February on the webpage of the Association <http://www.aecvp.org/>.

With our Clinical cardiology academic group at Saint Georges Hospital, London and in association with the inherited cardiac conditions (AICC) we are planning an international meeting on sudden cardiac death which will be held at the Royal Society of medicine in early December 2018 in London. I will keep you informed of developments since this should be of interest to many members.

I wish you all a happy Christmas and New Year,

Mary N Sheppard
President AECVP