

## President's Page

# Broad Goals of the HCS for the Reduction of Mortality and Morbidity

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In recent years, the Hellenic Cardiological Society, as the representative of its approximately 2500 members, has created an infrastructure for high-level scientific research, as well as social programmes for raising the awareness and knowledge of citizens about prevention in health care. In my first article as President of the HCS, I would like to set out the new initiatives and broad goals of our Society, now and in the future.

### General goals of the HCS

The general goals of the HCS are the reduction of mortality and morbidity from cardiovascular diseases. These goals will be attained through supporting and training young cardiologists, research, informing the public, social programmes, the Society's consultative role with the Ministry of Health, and redesign of the website. These initiatives will be reinforced by the organisation of international congresses, regional congresses in all parts of Greece, and our participation in the largest cardiology congresses abroad, where the HCS maintains a regular and significant presence.

### Broad goals centred on the individual

In the context of the continuing changes in the human life cycle, social discrimination, and to an even greater degree the economic crisis that is currently ravaging Greek society, the citizen's need for social care and welfare stands out as a compelling need, especially for the weakest.

Everyone, not only the government, has their own share of responsibility for achieving a cohesive society, in the present and in the future, focused on the

interests of children, women, the elderly, and all our fellow citizens.

Economically developed countries and scientific societies place emphasis on prevention in health care, aiming to prevent sickness before it occurs. This has proven beneficial at the individual level, while at the same time significantly reducing the massive sums of money spent on treatment.

In my view, the HCS needs to be given an anthropocentric dimension, collaborating on a regular basis with municipalities, councils, and local community authorities, with parents and schoolchildren, both through our regional congresses and via the various programmes we plan to instigate.

We have the knowledge and the will to inform and to support our fellow human beings, our fellow citizens, the ordinary people, and to contribute decisively to a carefully planned and organised network of preventative health care.

### The case of the young cardiologist and the fellow

At the same time, we need to stand by the young cardiologists who are trying to learn and to survive in the unfavourable economic environment that currently prevails in Greece. A concerted effort is needed, together with proposals to the government aimed at supporting young cardiologists who are forced to try their luck by seeking a professional future abroad.

As part of this endeavour, among other things, we will intensify our efforts to create a comprehensive and user-friendly Cardiological Map, in which we have collated data concerning hospitals with cardiology departments, available cardiologists and fellows, their previous service, the divisions of each clin-

ic, primary health care centres, as well as cardiologists in private practice in each region. All this will enable young cardiologists to have an overview of what is happening throughout the country and to evaluate their prospects for practising their profession.

In addition, we will intensify our efforts in the following directions:

- A unified programme for the training of fellows, with uniform material
- Standardised specialty examinations
- Free participation for young cardiologists in the European Examination in General Cardiology
- Continuing medical education

### **Drawing up a common policy with scientific societies in Greece and abroad**

Recently, we held meetings with board members of core scientific bodies, in order to arrive at a minimum set of common goals and initiatives on crucial topics that concern the Greek scientific societies.

Collaboration, the exchange of creative views, and interaction with other core scientific societies is a complex undertaking, But if successful, it is of great value, because it can establish a “union” of forces with a greater influence on the realisation of solutions in the crucial area of health. At the same time, an extension of our international relations through our participation in the scientific activities of the ESC, ACC, and WHF will contribute to reinforcing our position, as well as keeping us up to date with practices and actions that we can use as a “guide” in Greece. Furthermore, we are seeking out young cardiologists in all the Working Groups, with suitable scientific

qualifications, who would like to participate in the activities of both the HCS and the ESC.

The recent Panhellenic Congress of Working Groups in Ioannina, the Regional Congresses in Volos and Xanthi, as well as the successful initiatives undertaken by our Society in recent years, during the presidencies of Dr. Kallikazaros and others, with their Boards, have shown that we are able to expand our activities.

Nowadays, the citizen is plagued by words like “economy”, “financial crisis”, “poverty”, “unemployment”. These words express the magnitude of the problem, but at the same time they may sometimes create a climate where we are scared to act or to follow new paths.

I firmly believe that an awareness of the situation we are living through should not be allowed to distract us, as citizens, as scientists, as societies. On the contrary, it should serve as a springboard, a motivation to act more decisively, with specific goals, related to scientific research and the reduction of mortality and morbidity from cardiovascular diseases.

The above outline represents just a part of what we intend to implement, as our plans include a whole series of actions at every level.

Of course, we are a scientific society with specific goals and priorities, which are defined by our constitution. However, we also need to stand up for our community, which is not just an abstract concept.

The social entity within which we exist and act consists of fellow human beings of every age and class, whom we are able to support and help.

With this vision and with these goals we will proceed steadfastly, now and in the future. With unity, creativity, fortitude and effectiveness.