Dear Colleagues,

The Israel Heart Society (IHS, www.israel-heart.org.il) is a formal society of the Israel Medical Association (IMA), and acts as a formal representative of the cardiology community in Israel. The aims of our society are to augment the professional and scientific knowledge of therapy and prevention of heart diseases in Israel. The IHS is a formal member of the European Society of Cardiology (ESC) and the World Heart Federation, and in close collaboration with the American College of Cardiology (ACC), as recognized by ACC Israeli Chapter. All IHS members are automatically ESC members, and Israeli cardiologists serve in senior positions within the ESC.

The IHS was founded in November 26, 1952 in Haifa and currently has 676 active members. The IHS board consists of: President, President elect, past President, Secretary General, 4 board members representing middle, south, north, and Jerusalem provinces, and representatives of cardiothoracic surgery and pediatric cardiology. Currently, the IHS has 11 very active Working Groups all led by Chairmen and Secretaries: Interventional Cardiology, Intensive Cardiac Care, Electrophysiology and Pacing, Cardiovascular Epidemiology and Prevention, Cardiac Rehabilitation, Nuclear Cardiology and Cardiac Imaging, Echocardiography, Cardiology in the Community, Heart Failure, Myocardial and Pericardial Diseases, Cardiovascular Pharmacology, and a committee for experimental cardiology and basic sciences. We are currently in the process of establishing a Working Group of young cardiologists (part of the ESC Cardiologists of Tomorrow project). The IHS is supported by several pharmaceutical and device companies as a formal industry round table of the IHS. The IHS is also supported by the Friends of the IHS (FIHS), which was founded in 2005 by Douglas P. Zipes and has many senior world-renowned cardiologists from USA and Canada. The aim of FIHS is to promote cardiovascular research in Israel and to collaborate with North American cardiologists.

1. Professional Activities
The IHS has a special professional Committee for the Ministry of Health “basket” for approval of novel drugs and technologies in the field of cardiology. We also perform professional screening and consultation for the Israel Ministry of Health. The IHS is responsible for the national Cardiology Board examination and certification, and for determining the curriculum for cardiology training. We have very close academic collaborations with the ESC and the ACC. The IHS has published 27 position papers on various aspects of cardiology and 15 guidelines (IHS usually adapts the guidelines published by the ESC).

2. Educational Activities
The IHS is strongly involved with cardiology education in Israel. We conduct an annual advanced 3-day cardiology course for senior residents as preparation for their final board examinations. This course consists of up-to-date, state-of-the-art lectures in all aspects of cardiology, including case reviews. Also, an annual update day for community physicians is a great opportunity to involve family physicians in the latest advancements in the field of cardiology. The IHS provides fellowship grants, including the Mayo Clinic award (for clinical fellowship at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota), the Merck Fellowship award (given annually to a young cardiologist to support a 2-year clinical fellowship), and the Anna Ruth and Mark Hasten Fellowship grant (for clinical fel-
lowship at the Krannert Heart Institute in Indianapolis, Indiana). We also distribute supporting grants for young cardiologists who are presenting their original works at major cardiology scientific meetings such as the ESC, ACC, and AHA meetings. Several modest basic research grants are also provided by the IHS. The IHS also elects annually candidates for the Kellerman’s basic research young investigator award, the Neufeld awards for the most important original publication and the most distinguished publication of the year, the Michele Mirowski award for excellence in cardiology, the Richard, Hilda and Ezra Meltzer Memorial award for the best publication in non-invasive cardiology, and the Daniel Shiran Memorial award for “the best” resident in cardiology.

3. Research and Scientific Activities

The Acute Coronary Syndrome Israeli Survey (ACSIS) is a 2-month biennial ACS Survey conducted since 2000 in all 26 cardiology departments in Israel. The objectives of these surveys are to assess the management and prognosis of patients with ACS in Israel, to assess guidelines’ implementation in daily practice, and to compare the present practice of ACS management with data from previous surveys. Demographic, clinical, and outcome data are collected. Over the past 2 decades more than 100 peer-reviewed scientific papers have been published. We have shown a dramatic decrease in mortality from ACS from 2000 to 2010, because of the implementation of evidence-based therapies by all hospitals in Israel and the nation-wide 24/7 availability of primary percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) for patients with STEMI. Figure 1 shows in-hospital mortality and 30-day mortality and MACE rates from 2000 to 2010 in patients admitted with ACS. In 2010, additional data on all cardiac interventions performed in patients were included in the main ACSIS (ACSIS-PCI). We were able to show a 30% rate of transradial access, 40% rate of drug-eluting stent use, and 50% rate of aspiration during primary PCI. Furthermore, the IHS (via its working groups) conducts several additional surveys and registries, including valvular and coronary intervention registries (with the ESC), heart failure survey, electrophysiology (EP) device registry, and transcatheter aortic valve implantation (TAVI) registry.

The hallmark of the HIS’ scientific activities is the annual 2-day meeting, which takes place in April–May with the collaboration of the Society of Cardio-Thoracic Surgery (www.israelheart.com). It is attended by approximately 1,500 cardiologists and health professionals. The meeting includes 3 very important joint sessions with the ESC, ACC and AFICARDIO (Association of France and Israeli Cardiologists). We are usually blessed with world-renowned guest speakers from Europe, USA, and Canada. The meeting also has a large industry exhibition, including the formal ESC booth (Figure 2).
4. Future Directions
The IHS is open and welcomes any future collaboration with international societies. Research-wise we are planning to extend our national TAVI Registry (by the Working Group on Interventional Cardiology), to conduct a national 3-vessel disease Registry (in collaboration with the Israel Cardio-Thoracic Surgery Society), to repeat ACSIS in 2013 after a community educational intervention during 2012, to enlarge the current EP Devices Registry, and to conduct original Israeli multicenter clinical studies. In education, our aim is to provide research grants for a returning young cardiologist; this grant will be dedicated for young cardiologists after finishing their fellowship and upon returning to Israel to support the continuation of research in Israel, to support residents who are going to formal fellowship programs in North America, Europe, and Israel, and to further promote cardiology activities among family physicians and the general community (mainly web-based).

5. Partnership With the Japanese Circulation Society (JCS)
We are honored for the opportunity to present the IHS to the readers of the Circulation Journal. JCS and IHS have many common characteristics in terms of innovation in cardiovascular medicine. A partnership between IHS and JCS is possible via annual meetings creating joint sessions and by inviting guest speakers for cardiology meetings in Japan and Israel. We hope that our future partnership will be longstanding and fruitful.

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