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European Heart Rhythm Association Young Electrophysiology Community: introducing our National Ambassadors of Italy, Turkey, and Poland

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Introduction

The European Heart Rhythm Association (EHRA) *Young Electrophysiology (EP) Community* was formed in 2013 to facilitate, enhance, and accelerate the development of early career electrophysiologists.[1]

The Young EP Community has a special feature that is the initiative of the so-called National Ambassadors, national leaders, who lead the spread of the young EP initiative and raise the membership, providing special events for the young EPs of the given country. With the help of the National Ambassadors, we were able to reach out to the different countries and have local contacts. Currently, we have over 500 registered members from 72 countries, 30 of which are officially represented in the Young EP Community by National Ambassadors, many of whom have made significant efforts to build our community.

In this communication, we would like to provide personal perspectives of National Ambassadors from Italy, Turkey, and Poland, who have done an enormous work in their respective countries to build the Young EP community and provide programs for them. We appreciate their outstanding efforts, and we hope that they will stand as examples for years to come.

Italian Young Electrophysiologists Group—Laura Vitali Serdoz

In 2011, the former President of AIAC, the Italian Association of Arrhythmology and Cardiac Stimulation (Associazione Italiana di Aritmologia e Cardiostimolazione), Prof. Maria Grazia Bongiorni supported the creation of an 'AIAC Young' working group with the purpose of promoting the specific training and favouring the professional growth



of the young cardiologists or fellows in cardiology with interest in the field of arrhythmology, who were younger than 40 years.

The first committee coordinated a 'census' of the doctors working in the Electrophysiology/Pacing labs in Italy in 2012: 55% of doctors were > 45 years, 15% were < 35years, and 30% were >35 years <45 years. At that time, five prizes for young electrophysiologists (YEP) were given to the best communications. During the same congress, the first 'AIAC young' scientific session was organized with educational contents.

The AIAC young working group was active with educational content in the AIAC website and regularly has a dedicated session during the annual congress. In 2013, the group promoted a website-based survey regarding the training for pacing and electrophysiology: 22% of the colleagues participating declared that their started a specific training in pacing or electrophysiology as they were already consultant cardiologist in a hospital or university hospital. Moreover, the pacing centres demonstrated a more widespread diffusion and accessibility to training whereas the electrophysiology centres were more selected. The AIAC National Board started a fellowship program offering financial support for training in advanced pacing or electrophysiology in some selected and high-qualified Italian centres.

Since 2014, the working group initiated new projects, e.g. National registry for the unexplained sudden death in patients with structurally normal heart by echocardiography, and for patients with idiopathic ventricular fibrillation. On the other hand, the Pacing Team has

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established a scientific cooperation network aimed at the design and development of observational registries and multicentre prospective studies (i.e. a prospective, randomized study on ablate-and-pace therapy or an observational study on pacemaker programming, and a large population registry on arrhythmic storm). The Electrophysiology Team is actually working on an educational atlas book regarding basic and complex pacing manoeuvres in order to provide an updated, user friendly, and comprehensive tool to the fellows and young (and old) electrophysiologists facing the most common but also the rare arrhythmic disorders in the EP Lab.

We are thankful to the AIAC National Board that promoted and supported the creation of this working group and it is always supporting our initiatives. I personally hope that this short insight into our Italian reality could be helpful to all the young colleagues and the other national Ambassadors who are still developing their young working groups.

Turkish Young Electrophysiologists Group—Emin Evren Özcan



Considering its 80 million population, Turkey has an uncrowded arrhythmia community and YEP group is even smaller. Therefore, my main objective is to encourage young Turkish cardiologist on EP field and enlarge the EP community. I joined the group since the initiation of the National Ambassadors Group. I mainly use social media and local arrhythmia meetings to nurture the group.

Thanks to young EP sessions during the National Arrhythmia Meetings, our number is rapidly increasing however it is still far away from our target. Starting from the next year, an international EHRA young EP session will be organized to create global network between young cardiologists and we hope to increase the YEP and EHRA members. Social media is also a good tool to attract the attention of young cardiologists. We share and discuss interesting cases via LinkedIn EHRA YEP group.

Although there are some high-volume well-developed EP centres in Turkey, only a few young cardiologists are lucky to have a proper fundamental EP training. Grant and fellowship opportunities of EHRA are great hopes for young colleagues. Encourage them for application and help them during this process is also my pleasure. However, winning the grant is the first step, everything starts after that. I try to support each fellow in abroad. I share my experiences about working in abroad and EHRA certification exams. Turning back to home is another step. Developing a career and building a new EP laboratory is challenging in Turkey. Previous EHRA fellows network that we created is a good platform to discuss difficulties and solutions.

High number of applications for EHRA grant indicates the need of appropriate EP training. With the enormous support of Arrhythmia Working Group of Turkish Society of Cardiology, we work on a national EP fellowship program and nationwide standardization of centres.

Until 2014, Turkey page in EHRA White Book was a blank page. After rigorous work and collaboration of arrhythmia group, we managed to publish the data from Turkey.

I have been working in YEP group since 2014 and proudly serve as the first National Ambassador of Turkey. YEP is unique opportunity for international network, career development, initiative ideas, and strong friendships. I invite every young colleague to magical world of electrophysiology and YEP group is the best platform to start. Join us!

Polish Young Electrophysiologists Group—Paweł Balsam



The first event of Polish YEP was performed during the POLSTIM conference of Association of Heart Rhythm of Polish Cardiac Society in Wroclaw in June 2013. It was a PRO/CONTRA session with the attendance of Michal Pazdernik, David Duncker, Paweł Balsam, and Aleksander Bardyszewski. The session was chaired by Prof. Ewa Jankowska, Prof. Joseph Kautzner, and Prof. Marcin Grabowski. At this moment, it was joint session of Polish Cardiac Society 'CLUB 30' and European Society of Cardiology 'CARDIOLOGISTS OF TOMORROW'.

Next years we have had YEP sessions with the attendance of Laura Vitali Serdoz (YEP National Ambassador in Italy), Konstantinos Letsas (YEP National Ambassador in Greece), and Jedrzej Kosiuk (YEP National Ambassador in Germany). The sessions were chaired by Prof. Marcin Grabowski, Prof. Sebastian Stec, and Dr Piotr Lodziński. At this moment, the YEP sessions are fixed point of POLSTIM conferences of Association of Heart Rhythm of Polish Cardiac Society.

Actually there are over 30 members in Polish YEP group. We do communicate through a LinkedIn Polish YEP lounge which is similar to the YEP lounge of European Society. We also use Google groups to send messages. All of the Polish YEP members are encouraged to use the EHRA LinkedIn Young EP profile for communication.

At this moment, Association of Heart Rhythm of Polish Cardiac Society is planning to organize the theoretical and practical training for Polish YEP.

YEP group is a very valuable supplement of Polish and EHRA. Members of the Polish group are active in the clinical and scientific manner, we collaborate together in national programs like a registry of electoral storms and other. This is the reason why every YP should join their own YEP National group!

Conclusions

The above reports nicely present the diversity of experiences of building a Young Electrophysiology Community on the country level and the support that is available from the EHRA Young EP Community. We hope these unique experiences set an example and provide resources for other countries to build and maintain Young Electrophysiology Communities to promote and foster Young Electrophysiology professionals worldwide.

Conflict of interest: none declared.

Reference

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