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Dear All,

Welcome to the second edition of the Stent for Life Initiative Newsletter, which includes another series of exciting updates from countries involved in this initiative.

Many of you participated in the Stent for Life Initiative country and industry partner meeting at the EuroPCR Congress in May 2011. For those of you who could not join the discussion we include an article offering a summary of the meeting.

In this edition, you will find updates from the Stent for Life Initiative in France, where a targeted survey is raising public awareness of our activities, and in Egypt where the task force remains active and focused on improving access to p-PCI in a new political and social environment.

As many of you will be aware, the new Stent for Life Initiative website will be launched in time for the ESC Congress and includes a more comprehensive collection of information around our important work both at the central and country level.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your contribution to the Stent for Life Initiative over the past months. There has been significant progress made across countries and a new focus on public awareness that is expanding both the reach and impact of the Stent for Life Initiative.

Finally, while we are all gearing up for the quickly approaching European Society of Cardiology Congress in Paris, 27-31 August. I wish you all a restful and enjoyable summer holiday.

Steen Kristensen
Stent for Life Initiative Co-Chairman
During the recent EuroPCR Congress, on 18 May in Paris, the Stent for Life countries had the opportunity to meet with the Stent for Life Initiative industry partners, including Abbott Vascular, Boston Scientific, Iroko Cardio, Philips Healthcare, Medtronic, Stentys, Terumo and The Medicines Company.

The meeting provided an opportunity for the countries to present to industry the progress made at local level, and to engage with partners on how to generate stronger industry partnerships in individual countries.

Since time was limited, to help provide a more concise update, countries were grouped by region or similar local situations – Italy, Spain and Turkey together; and Bulgaria, Romania and Serbia. France and Egypt gave individual updates due to being unable to present at the previous Country Briefing Meeting in February. The presentations showcased the local successes, driven by the hard work and commitment from each of the countries.

In addition to the country updates:

- Steen Kristensen (Stent for Life Initiative Co-Chairman) provided an overview of where the Initiative is currently heading
- WCG (Communications Partner) provided an update on the communications activities, including the upcoming launch of the first Stent for Life Initiative Public Awareness campaign: Act Now. Save a Life.
- Portugal presented details of their local pilot public campaign in partnership with the local energy company Galp Energia

Following the diverse and interesting presentations, which were all met with enthusiasm, advice and questions from the industry partners, an open discussion took place enabling the countries to ask questions to the industry. These discussions continued at an intimate group dinner following the meeting.

Overall, the meeting was a huge success, providing valuable insights for all parties involved, and helping to generate an even stronger sense of pride to be involved in such a worthwhile and successful Initiative.

To view all the slides from the EuroPCR meeting, please click HERE.
All countries undergo social, economic and political changes in response to a variety of national and foreign pressures. A crucial advantage of the Stent for Life Initiative is that it is flexible enough to adapt to these developments and, when possible, leverage the new opportunities that arise. These changes may be minor political party shifts, a change in policy trends or a historically significant social and political revolution, as experienced by the Stent for Life Initiative team in Egypt in January 2011.

Since joining the Initiative in September 2010, Stent for Life Egypt has achieved many important milestones to improve patient access to the life saving indications of p-PCI. The local team hit the ground running in November 2010 by hosting the first meeting for their local Steering Committee and Task Force, as well as a session with the Minister of Health and Ambulance Service Manager. This meeting led to the development of a detailed action plan to outline how each of the local barriers would be overcome through engagement with key stakeholders (social, medical and political).

Then, on 25 January 2011, thousands of Egyptians took to the streets in Cairo to protest long standing concerns over the social, economic and political governance, particularly under the leadership of President Hosni Mubarak, who ruled the country for 30 years. The eyes of the world were on Egypt and the revolution continued for 18 days until, on 11 February 2011, the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak was announced, resulting in massive celebrations in Cairo’s Tahir Square.

Throughout this trying political time the Stent for Life Egypt team have continued to hope that the revolution could present new opportunities and channels for improving access and delivery of p-PCI.

“We have high spirits in the post-revolution environment, as there is an increased sense of responsibility toward both our beloved Egypt and its people,” said Dr. Ahmed el Shal, Stent for Life Egypt National Project Manager.

The implementation of the action plan was delayed due to initial social, administrative and political obstacles, but the team have now gained the necessary endorsement from key stakeholders in industry, government, and national organisations to move forward.

“We have high spirits in the post-revolution environment, as there is an increased sense of responsibility toward both our beloved Egypt and its people,”

— Dr. Ahmed el Shal
“More than 150 days have passed since the start of the revolution in Egypt, a time during which we as Egyptians were all profoundly affected,” said Dr. Ahmed el Shal. “However, things are starting to settle down now and this presents an excellent opportunity for all of us to work hard at achieving our goals both for the Stent for Life Initiative and for the future of our country.”

The team is now focused on implementing the action plan, including gathering baseline data for a national acute coronary syndrome (ACS) / acute myocardial infarction (AMI) registry, building a regional EMS network and infrastructure, launching a public awareness campaign, creating a database of current p-PCI practice patterns in Egypt, and developing a pilot “centre of excellence”.

Egypt will have a busy and eventful year ahead, but it is clear that the dedication of the team and aspiration to make a real difference in Egypt will go far in bringing these plans to fruition.
France: taking a step-wise approach to making change

In the last edition of this newsletter we took a look at the benchmarking France was undertaking; and in this edition, we capture some of the results and next steps.

In 2005, the FAST MI (French Registry of Acute ST-Elevation and Non ST-Elevation Myocardial Infarction) registry revealed a sub-optimal level of management for patients with acute MI (AMI). The nationwide registry, which included 223 centres and 1,714 patients over a one-month period and a follow-up one year later, assessed outcomes in STEMI patients, comparing thrombolysis with p-PCI. The registry showed that almost 40% of patients with acute MI did not undergo p-PCI or thrombolysis during the first few hours following a myocardial episode.

As a first step in addressing this situation, an assessment of the local care pathway was undertaken. Five representative regions in France were selected based on the following parameters: surface area, population density, hospital accessibility, number of non-stop PCI centres, and number of centres with intensive care units but no cath lab. In November 2010, a comprehensive registry was set-up enrolling all patients hospitalised within 48 hours after AMI onset. The registry included a total of 200 patients for a period of one month in the Nord, Essonne, Côte d’Or, Haute-Savoie and Haute-Garonne regions.

In the study population, 72% were male and a mean age of 63. The main risk factors were smoking (45%) and hypertension (44%), and 20% had a prior history of CAD.

The results of the registry revealed that while 71% of the patients made a call about their symptoms, less than 50% of these calls were to the Emergency Medical Services (EMS). The flow chart below shows the different mean times to treatment.

Compared to the 2005 registry, the new results showed that the number of patients that did not undergo revascularisation (PCI or thrombolysis) had dropped from 40% to 14%. Primary-PCI was performed in 64% of cases and thrombolysis in 22%.
“While the study showed an improvement from the 2005 FAST registry results, the new findings revealed that many patients were still not getting to a PCI capable centre in an optimal timeframe and that more focused efforts in this area needed to be made,” said Professor Martine Gilard, Stent for Life Country Champion, France.

As a second step to reinforce the importance of receiving the best treatment in the fastest timeframe, the French team held national and regional press conferences (in the five key regions) from March 2011. The goal of the press conferences was to reveal the results from the new registry and arm the media with the messages they need to communicate to the public the importance of calling the EMS as quickly as possible. The press conferences focused on the importance of quick assessment, appropriate management and transfer to the best treatment centre.

The upcoming steps for France are as follows:

- Developing a mobile application for use on cellular phones which explains what to do if you are experiencing chest pain
- Organising medical meetings to improve the management of AMI patients
- Sending letters to general physicians to make them aware of this problem and the Stent for Life Initiative
- Collecting new data in November 2011 in the same five key regions, enrolling all patients hospitalised within 48 hours after onset of symptoms in order to evaluate the impact of the public awareness tactics

If the results show a positive improvement in management of AMI patients, the same steps will be applied to all territories in France.

Stay tuned to find out the results of France’s step-wise efforts in 2012.
Under the auspices of the Italian Embassy in London, and with the strong facilitation of Prof C. Di Mario, a meeting was organised on Friday 1 July on the “Treatment of Acute MI infraction in Europe: review of current models and proposal of optimal common standards”. This meeting was part of an initiative of the Italian Embassy that continues the tradition of comparing the Italian and British approaches to various scientific problems and was also a very good opportunity to raise awareness on the Stent for Life Initiative.

Attending the meeting were representatives of:

- The highest level of the European Society of Cardiology (ESC) with the presence of Prof Roberto Ferrari, FESC, ESC Past-President
- European Association of Percutaneous Cardiovascular Interventions (EAPCI)
- Italian and British interventional Societies (SICI-GISE and BCIS)
- Danish, French, Spanish, Turkish and Serbian Cardiology Societies
- National or regional Health Service representatives of various European countries
- European Commission with the presence of Michael Hubel, DG Health & Consumers, on behalf of Antonio Tajani, European Commission Vice-President and Commissioner in charge of Industry and Entrepreneurship
- Stent for Life Initiative representatives from France, Italy, Spain, Serbia, Turkey

The meeting was hugely successful and interactive, with health economy being a major discussion topic. Several Stent for Life country champions presented impressive progress and implementation plans for their countries, and Michael Hubel gave an interesting lecture on health focus areas for the EU.

For further information, the meeting slides are available for download [HERE](#).
Stent for Life at ESC Congress 2011: 27–31 August

Let’s now look forward to another exciting meeting in Paris, at the upcoming European Society of Cardiology (ESC) Congress, 27–31 August.

**Stent for Life Symposium**

Stent for Life Initiative awareness will continue to expand over the upcoming months not only thanks to the initiatives of all participating countries but also through a dedicated symposium session during the Congress.

Don’t miss the session entitled *“Stent for Life: how to increase the penetration of primary angioplasty in Europe?”* chaired by Prof P. Widimsky, Past-Chair of Stent for Life Initiative, and Mr A. Tajani, European Commission Vice-President and Commissioner in charge of Industry and Entrepreneurship since February 2010.

**This symposium will take place on Sunday 28 August, 08:30–10:00 in Room Tunis, Zone F.**

The session will include the following presentations:

- Primary percutaneous coronary intervention: an extraordinary opportunity to improve service and reduce cost. Implementation in England and Wales. (H H Gray, Southampton, UK)
- The critical role of the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) in pre-hospital diagnosis and networking. (P Goldstein, Lille Cedex, FR)
- Growth but still uneven application of primary angioplasty in Europe: comparison of results of 2007 and 2010 surveys. (S D Kristensen, Aarhus N, DK)
- Networking and rapid transfer is still needed in geographical areas where fibrinolysis is the first step of treatment. (S Halvorsen, Oslo, NO)

**French public event**

ESC, in collaboration with the Paris City Hall, the French Cardiac Society, and the French Federation of Cardiology, is organising an ESC Public Event “Atout Cœur à tout âge” at the Paris City Hall on 28–29 August. The event aims to increase public awareness in France of initiatives aimed at improving cardiovascular health.

Stent for Life France is pleased to be part of this initiative and will encourage people to Save a Life by knowing the signs of a heart attack and acting quickly to call emergency medical services so the best treatment can be received in the fastest possible time frame.

**Don’t miss it!**
Stent for Life website gets a revamp!

The Stent for Life Initiative will have a new and improved website in August 2011, in time for the ESC Congress. The new website aims to inform members of the public, potential organisational and industry partners, and the interventional cardiology community about the important work of the Initiative to improve access to the life-saving treatment of p-PCI.

The website includes information on the initiative, offers scientific resources on p-PCI and highlights relevant news and event updates.

One of the new website features includes an interactive country map highlighting key details of each of the Stent for Life countries. This offers visitors a broad overview of the exciting activity taking place across participating countries. We encourage all countries to provide regular news and content updates to be added to their local pages. Please send any content updates to: stentforlife_comms@wcgworld.com

We hope you enjoy this new site and we are proud to give this important Initiative a real face and presence online.

Look out for the new site in August at: www.stentforlife.com

Submit your case: invitation from GISE

The Stent for Life Initiative will have the opportunity to demonstrate progress through a dedicated session during the GISE National Congress in Genoa, Italy, in October 2011. In the meantime, Stent for Life Italy and GISE would like to invite interventional cardiologists, up to the age of 40, to submit clinical cases to win a Best Young Interventional Case Award. The Italian Society of Invasive Cardiology will announce the winning case at the Society’s National Congress in Genoa, Italy, in October 2011. We look forward to seeing you at the SFL Session in Genoa in October!