SCMR President's Note

I would like to take this opportunity to share with the membership of the SCMR some of the exciting and important activities of the Society. In the last year and a half, the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors have taken time to focus on the Society goals and strategic planning. Broadly speaking, the vision for SCMR is to focus on excellence in education, training, standards, and research & development. In this president's note, I will focus attention on developments in education and certification.

From an educational perspective, the Annual SCMR Scientific Sessions continue to grow in size and effectiveness. Over the past decade, the meeting has grown from an attendance of 644 in 2003 held in Orlando to 1258 this year. This growth has paralleled our membership growth which has increased by 234% over a similar time span. More importantly, the annual meeting has been refined and enhanced in several specific ways to better promote and support the diverse needs of the broad membership of the SCMR. The success of tracks on clinical topics, cases, congenital, and technical developments provides extensive opportunities for all members in the society. The success of the SCMR/ISMRM workshop on Flow and Motion represents the first of many efforts to provide a high quality educational base for the technical work so critical to the advancement in the field. The SCMR website now offers online training that can be used to support level 1, 2 or 3 clinical training requirements.

Certification programs represent the next phase of addressing training and standards for clinical CMR. The SCMR has published standards for acquisitions and reporting for a wide range of clinical applications to improve the consistency and quality of clinical CMR studies. We expect standards later this year. The SCMR/ISMRM workshop on Flow and Motion represents the first of many efforts to provide a state-of-the-art and high quality educational base for the technical work so critical to the advancement in the field. The SCMR website now offers online training that can be used to support level 1, 2 or 3 clinical training requirements.

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At first glance, the wording in my last sentence may seem imprecise. However the statement that the “...exam will be available around the timing of the 2013 Annual SCMR Scientific Sessions…” represents some of the complexity of this next level of certification. In the US, board certification exams and educational programs are expected or required to have a level of independence that will require separation from the Society of one of the two functions: either education courses or the certification exam. We are working closely with the EuroCMR, ACC, SCCT, ASNC, and ACR to help ensure that our process meets the appropriate standards. We are fortunate to have members that have worked with these various societies and prior board certification exam development.

Finally, an SCMR/NHLBI sponsored CMR Course is scheduled for September 30 – October 1, 2012 at the National Institutes of Health. That course will be aimed to review CMR at a level appropriate for preparation for the certification examination but will also be an excellent review of the field.

Andrew E. Arai, MD
President, Society for Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonance
CMR has faced major and often unvoiced social barriers to its implementation on a global scale including turf wars between cardiology and radiology, a high initial investment meaning collaboration required, a reluctance of leading centres to support new competitor centres. Educational efforts to date have been focused on the delivery of CMR and the training of practitioners. We believed that this “supply side” education misses a point – effectively it is “preaching to the choir”. We believe that there is a major global lack of educational training for referrers in CMR and that if this could be resolved, and demand created, the technology would roll-out to the benefit of patients. We therefore set out to train the global cardiology and radiology community in CMR. Accordingly, within a volunteer/enthusiast environment, we developed the online CMR academy with the following points in highlight:

**Technology platform:** To guarantee educational quality, we used lectures which we recorded at conferences. Rather than shallow selected view movies of MRI scans, we sourced an online clientless full dataset system called Webpax.

**Authoring:** A team approach was developed to maximize ease of authoring. Consultant, senior trainee and Moodle technician were used to ultimately reduce question authoring down to 1 hour per case.

**Peer review:** A local then societal peer review system incorporating individuals at different skill levels and first language was created. A feedback and forum support system was initiated.

**International roll-out:** Board level approval was achieved and the course was launched. A key aspect is that access to the whole course would be free to anyone, anywhere – but if you wanted the certificate, you needed to join SCMR ($60 for trainees)

Access by other societies. To avoid a paywall, our approach was to medical societies. In initial discussions, the British Cardiovascular Society (BCS) purchased access for 3 years at a cost equivalent to the set-up cost. Negotiations are in progress with other societies aiming for maximum utility to the scientific and clinical community.

**New courses:** The next 3 courses will be ready by May 2012.

**Course performance**

**Users:** To date, in the SCMR only phase (1700 members), 490 users registered, 293 completed at least one module and 77 have been awarded certificates.

**Formal user feedback:** is a requirement of certification. Feedback has been excellent and it has been used to improve functionality. Of the last 100 responses, the overall course experience has been rated at 4.4 out of 5. The highest score was “as a way of learning”; the lowest category was “speed of loading” 4.0/5 – the only reply in the good rather than excellent category. This has been addressed through new advice on use and cut-down datasets where not essential to have all images.

**CMR referrals:** The country with the highest number of participating members has been the UK, despite being much smaller than the US. It is noteworthy that CMR documented referrals have been growing at 33% per year in the UK – far higher than the US where 'double digit' growth has never been achieved.

**MRI society engagement:** The SCMR society hosting this site has been motivated, in part by this course, to become an accreditation awarding body itself which will permit it to sponsor the CMR/CPD accreditation for this and future courses on the website. Within the committee structure of the society, the education and web committee are focusing on delivering 10 hours new educational content per year through the academy.

**Dr James Moon**

Reader/Honorary Consultant Cardiologist - Heart Hospital Imaging Centre, The Heart Hospital, UCLH and UCL