



SCHWEIZERISCHE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR HERZ- UND THORAKALE GEFÄSSCHIRURGIE

SOCIÉTÉ SUISSE DE CHIRURGIE CARDIAQUE ET VASCULAIRE THORACIQUE

SOCIETA SVIZZERA DI CHIRURGIA DEL CUORE E DEI VASI TORACICI

## **SGHC/SSCC: Newsletter, April 2023**

Dear members of the Swiss Society for Cardiac Surgery,

With this newsletter I would like to inform you about important things and news in the Swiss Society for Cardiac Surgery (SGHC/SSCC). In the past few months, the Board has been working intensively on a wide range of topics and has set important things in motion. On behalf of the SGHC/SSCC, I am pleased to be able to share some news with you today.

### **Heart Registry**

First of all, I would like to report that currently 10 hospitals have signed the contract to participate in the SGHC/SSCC Heart Registry. These are the following hospitals: Inselspital Bern, Herzchirurgie USZ-Triemli, Universitätsspital Basel, Les Hôpitaux Universitaires de Genève, Luzerner Kantonsspital, Instituto Cardiocentro Ticino, Hirslanden Bern, Hirslanden Klinik Aarau, Hirslanden Clinique Grangette and Herz-Neuro-Zentrum Bodensee AG. We hope that the other cardiac surgery clinics in Switzerland will also join the Heart Registry.

The Registry is of great importance for the future of cardiac surgery in Switzerland and its optimal representation by the SGHC/SSCC. Accordingly, the Board has decided that participation in the Heart Registry is mandatory. I would therefore like to ask you to participate. Our secretariat or the Board is available to answer any questions. The clinics already participating in the Registry will be contacted by the ISPM ("Institute for Social and Preventive Medicine" in Bern, which organises the registry) in the next few weeks and the further steps will be initiated.

### **MEBEKO**

As another important topic, the SGHC/SSCC has had repeated contact and discussions with MEBEKO in recent months regarding the (non-)recognition of foreign specialist titles for cardiac surgery. Due to various changes in guidelines as well as the agreement on the free movement of persons, which has not yet been updated by Switzerland and the EU, specialist titles for "cardiac surgery" from the EU are currently not automatically recognised in Switzerland (and vice versa). This has led to several cardiac surgeons from Germany and other EU countries not having their specialist title recognised in Switzerland.

The MEBEKO has now decided on 2 February 2023 that applications for recognition of a German specialist title in "cardiac surgery" in Switzerland will be examined again. This is possible if, in addition to the national board certificate, an EU Directive Conformity Certificate is also submitted. However, the automated recognition of EU specialist titles requires an update of the Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons, which will take time.

### **TAVI-BAG**

Another important issue in recent months was the BAG decision in 2022 to no longer finance TAVI interventions in patients with medium and low intervention risk. The BAG has thus actually prohibited the health insurance funds from reimbursing the costs of TAVI interventions in this patient population.

A task force consisting of SGK and SGHC jointly addressed the issue and made representations to the BAG. The SGHC and SGK are jointly of the opinion that TAVI interventions must be based on the guidelines of the European Associations ("EACTS", "ESC") and must then be paid for by the health insurance companies. However, this does not mean that, for example, TAVI indications should be extended to patients with a low surgical risk. This should only be possible in exceptional cases and after interdisciplinary determination of the optimal therapy in the heart team. The SGHC and the SGK are of the opinion that the importance of heart teams should be further increased in the future.

The BAG will decide on the TAVI issue and the proposal of the SGK and SGHC and inform the specialist societies of the decision in mid-2023. The SGHC/SSCC will inform the members about this in a timely manner.

### **SGNOR**

As a special feature, it should also be mentioned that the SGHC/SSCC is now planning, together with the Swiss Society for Emergency Medicine (SGNOR), to expand the range of basic specialist titles for the interdisciplinary focus "Emergency Medicine". This should enable cardiac surgeons in the future - based on the specialist title "cardiac surgery" - to obtain the interdisciplinary speciality "emergency medicine". This results in an expansion of the possibilities for all holders of the specialist title "cardiac surgery".

### **Cardiovascular Medicine**

The journal "Cardiovascular Medicine" (CVM) is the official national journal of the SGHC/SSCC from January 2023 on.

The journal is one of the most widely read medical journals in Switzerland with a focus on cardiovascular diseases and their therapeutic options. The journal is intended to be an important platform for the SGHC SSCC, on the one hand to inform members about innovations, dates and political status issues, and on the other hand to establish contact with referring physicians via scientific articles, review articles and continuing education articles.

Cardiovascular Medicine is sent every 2 months to all cardiac surgeons, cardiologists, angiologists, internal medicine specialists and general practitioners in Switzerland. The Editorial Board has been expanded by a cardiac surgeon Editor-in-Chief, Peter Matt, plus deputy, Luca Koechlin, in addition young cardiac surgeons from the public cardiac surgery clinics have been included in the Editorial Board.

### **Senning Lecture**

The "Senning Lecture" at this year's annual meeting of the SGHC SSCC and the associated honorary membership will be awarded to Prof. Carlos Mestres. This is for his services in the education and training of young Swiss cardiac surgeons in the past years.

### **SGHC SSCC Board**

Due to the resignation of the Treasurer and the change of the President Peter Matt to the function of "Past-President", there will be several changes in the Board of the SGHC SSCC on the occasion of the General Assembly. I would like to cordially invite you to the General Assembly on 21 June 2023. In the next few weeks we will send an invitation with the agenda to all members.

### **Annual Meeting and Surgeons Dinner**

Finally, I would like to cordially invite you to the annual meeting of the SGHC SSCC in Basel from 21-23 June 2023. I would like to ask all clinic directors and chief physicians of the various clinics to make it possible for as many members and especially junior members as possible to attend the congress. A large attendance of cardiac surgeons at the annual meeting is important for cardiac surgery in Switzerland.

In addition, I would like to cordially invite you to our "Surgeons Dinner". This will take place on 21 June 2023 near the Congress Centre, in the Don Camillo Restaurant. This year, for the first time, partners of SGHC SSCC members are invited to this event. This is to further enhance the importance of the event. Following the Surgeons Dinner, there will be a super event with live music and DJ directly below the restaurant together with the "Young Cardiac Surgeons" and the "Young Cardiologists" in the Sudhaus Basel - more about this in a separate invitation.

On behalf of the SGHC SSCC Board, I would like to thank you very much for your support and commitment to the Society.

Personally, I would be very happy to see and meet you at the [annual meeting](#) and events of the SGHC SSCC in Basel.

With best regards,  
On behalf of the board

Prof. Peter Matt  
Präsident SGHC

Prof. Christoph Huber  
Sekretär SGHC

Prof. Enrico Ferrari  
Vize-Präsident

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