

The British Cardiovascular Society Annual Conference, Manchester, 5–7 June 2017: a message from the VP for Education and Research

Clifford J Garratt

One of the first questions I am asked whenever a forthcoming British Cardiovascular Society (BCS) Annual Conference is being discussed is the proposed ‘theme’ of the meeting. Initially I found this surprising as the main function of the conference, at least as far as the programme committee and I are concerned, is to provide a reasonably comprehensive coverage of the latest developments in all the subspecialist areas of cardiology rather than focus on a particular area. The concept of a theme arose a few years ago as a means of adding interest to the programme and as a stimulus for generation of ideas for novel session titles. The theme needs to be both broad enough to have relevance across the cardiological spectrum and specific enough to grab the attention and interest of potential delegates. This year’s theme ‘Cardiology at the Extremes’ fulfils these requirements well and also opens up more possibilities in terms of exploring the interface between cardiology and aspects of ‘extreme medicine’ which the conference would not normally address.

THEME OF ‘CARDIOLOGY AT THE EXTREMES’

The conference will be opened by the President, Dr Sarah Clarke, followed by the opening lecture ‘Will the right (cardiovascular) stuff get humans to Mars: reflections of a space cardiologist’ delivered by Professor Benjamin Levine (figure 1). Professor Levine has a unique background in space medicine, serving as a coinvestigator on four spacelab missions (SLS-1, SLS-2, D-2 and Neurolab), the MIR space station and recently was the PI of a large cardiovascular experiment on the International Space Station. This year’s Paul Wood Lecture will be delivered by Professor Harlan Krumholz (Personalised medicine and computational cardiology—enhancing cardiovascular

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Figure 1 Professor Benjamin Levine.

care and health in the next era). Professor Krumholz (figure 2) is the Harold H Hines, Jr Professor of Medicine and Director of the Yale Center for Outcomes Research and Evaluation, one of the first and most productive research units dedicated to improving patient outcomes and promoting better population health. The Strickland Goodall Lecture (Exploring the extremes of myocardial injury) will be delivered by Professor Michael Marber (figure 3).

COLLABORATION WITH THE BRITISH HEART FOUNDATION

The strong collaboration and partnership with the British Heart Foundation (BHF) continues for 2017. Professor Nicholas Morrell will facilitate the BHF ‘Bench-to-Bedside’ session on ‘Extreme phenotypes in pulmonary arterial hypertension: from genes to novel therapies’. The session will consist of four talks on different aspects of the condition, all presented by members of the same research unit, encompassing basic, translational and clinical aspects of pulmonary hypertension. The purpose of the session is to provide a coordinated, in-depth review of current knowledge of the condition and also to give an insight into the vision and organisation of a successful clinical research department. The ‘National Training Day’ programme



Figure 2 Professor Harlan Krumholz.

will pause at this time to allow trainees (and potential clinical researchers of the future) to attend this particular session.

CARDIOLOGY AND ‘EXTREME MEDICINE’

Animal ecophysiology and zoologist Professor Craig Franklin (figure 4) will delve into field-based physiology and argue that the heart of one particular creature is the most sophisticated and complex in the animal kingdom, allowing it to survive both on land and underwater. Squadron Leader Gaz Kennedy from the Royal Air Force (RAF) Centre of Aviation Medicine discusses the personal experience of high-onset G training and clinical assessments of pilots in the fast jet flying environment.

Regular attenders at the BCS Annual Conference over the last few years will be aware that we try and deliver ‘something completely different’ in the auditorium on the Tuesday afternoon. Last year, it was the very successful presentation by wildlife photographer Andy Rouse on ‘The power of photography to convey a message and inspire’. This year’s renowned polar photographer Sue Flood (figure 5) will deliver a talk on some of her extreme adventures in the polar regions. This is



Figure 3 Professor Michael Marber.



Figure 4 Professor Craig Franklin.



Figure 5 Sue Flood.

accompanied by a presentation from Mr Martin Thomas and Dr Jan Till, who raise the possibility that the renowned polar explorer Ernest Shackleton may have suffered from an undiagnosed heart condition.

COLLABORATION WITH THE BRITISH SOCIETY OF CARDIOVASCULAR RESEARCH AND BRITISH ATHEROSCLEROSIS SOCIETY

The 'basic science track' is provided by the British Society for Cardiovascular Research (BSCR)/British Atherosclerosis Society (BAS) Spring meeting, integrated into the first 2 days of the conference. This part of the meeting is always extremely well attended and of very high quality in terms of scientific content. This year, the meeting focuses on New Frontiers in Cardiovascular Science with sessions including (1) understanding the cross-talk between adipose tissue and the cardiovascular system: translating basic science to clinical practice, (2) cardiac and arterial ageing, (3) leukocytes in cardiovascular inflammation: resident and infiltrating cells and (4) diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Collaborative sessions between basic and clinical scientists

continue for 2017 with a highlight session on 'Will stem cell research change clinical practice?' organised jointly by the BCS, the BSCR and the BAS.

COMPREHENSIVE COVERAGE OF ALL THE NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN CARDIOLOGY AND CARDIOVASCULAR SCIENCE

- ▶ *National training day*: including Endocarditis MDT-Live, Cardiology in the ITU and a special joint session with the Royal College of Physicians featuring the President, Jane Dacre.
- ▶ *Imaging*: dedicated imaging track; abstract poster sessions; integrated imaging content in the highlight sessions of the programme; sessions on cardiac sarcoid, cardiac amyloid and the investigation of stable chest pain; many imaging hot topics.
- ▶ *Arrhythmias*: sessions on prediction of sudden death and enigmas in arrhythmias: arrhythmia abstract sessions; discussion of arrhythmia clinical cases (MDT-Live); an AF update, cardiac syncope and driving and 'Who needs an implantable device in 2017?'. There will be a whole track of arrhythmia hot topics throughout the 3 days.
- ▶ *Intervention*: British Cardiovascular Intervention Society sessions on myocardial infarction and percutaneous management of structural heart disease; sessions on acute coronary syndromes in the post-troponin era and assessment of patients with suspected stable angina; British Heart Valve Society session on tricuspid valve disease: abstract sessions and a whole track of interventional hot topics throughout the 3 days.
- ▶ *Heart failure*: sessions on landmark trials in heart failure and heart failure crises. An 'innovations in cardio-oncology' session linked with heart failure abstracts and a whole track of heart failure hot topics throughout the 3 days.
- ▶ *Adult congenital heart disease*: sessions on pulmonary hypertension, pregnancy MDT-Live and aortopathies, together with abstracts and hot topics.

- ▶ *Clinical science and translational research in the innovations in clinical cardiology track*, including the Michael Davies Early Career Award.
- ▶ *Basic science*: abstract poster sessions, the John French lecture and basic science 'hot topics'.
- ▶ *Hypertension and stroke*: joint sessions with the British and Irish Hypertension Society and the British Association of Stroke Physicians.
- ▶ *Education for revalidation (EAR) sessions* including 'Top 10 Trials' and 'Life Long Learning' and the ever-popular BCS quiz hosted by Rod Stables.
- ▶ *Multisession tracks* dedicated to patients (Cardiovascular Care Partnership (UK) (CCPUK)) and healthcare scientists.
- ▶ *International sessions* in association with the European Society of Cardiology, American College of Cardiology and Irish Cardiac Society.

Finally, I continue to be hugely impressed by the willingness of cardiologists and cardiovascular scientists, both from the UK and internationally, to give time and effort to the planning of this meeting. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the help of the BHF team, and the staff, officers and programme committee of the BCS. The full programme and booking for lifelong learning, simulation, imaging village and the annual dinner are available online at www.bcs.com. I have absolutely no doubt that this year's conference will be the most enjoyable and educational yet.

Competing interests None declared.

Provenance and peer review Commissioned; internally peer reviewed.

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