Arrhythmia & Electrophysiology Review – Do we Need Another Journal?

Demosthenes Katritsis

Editor-in-Chief, *Arrhythmia & Electrophysiology Review*

Director, Department of Cardiology, Athens Euroclinic, Greece and Honorary Consultant Cardiologist, St Thomas' Hospital, London, UK

A search of the web reveals at least 200 cardiology journals in English, over 10 of which are dedicated review journals. What is the need, therefore, for an additional regular publication, particularly in the era of widely accessible electronic information? Perhaps this issue is more easily addressed in relation to contemporary electrophysiology and management of arrhythmia. With the advent of genetics, ablation techniques, electrode technology and anti-arrhythmia devices, our knowledge on the diagnosis and therapy of arrhythmia is expanding at a rate not always matched by an equal pace of dissemination.

A scholarly review by an expert on the subject provides a systematic presentation of background knowledge derived from multidisciplinary and diverse faculties such as molecular biology, genetics and clinical epidemiology. It also summarises findings of randomised clinical trials (RCTs) and guidelines and recommendations from learned societies that may occasionally escape the attention of even the well-read, up-to-date but busy clinician.

Hippocrates, the father of scientific medicine, has taught us that we should rely on facts and clinical observation rather than theory regarding the manifestations of disease and effects of therapy and in 1943, Sir Austin Bradford Hill introduced the concept of the RCT in his seminal paper on tuberculosis.¹ However, RCTs, as John Ioannidis has indicated with his devastating critique, are not infallible.² They are hampered by human bias, statistical over- or under-interpretation, commercial interests and methodological inaccuracies that may not be initially obvious. The astute scientist who reviews the data may pick up their limitations and draw our attention to caution that is always needed in science and provide the balanced view that is closer to the truth. Reviews, therefore, are not merely systematic presentations of data. They inevitably reflect the experience and clinical wisdom of the expert author(s) and more importantly, their critical view of available information that may not be easily interpretable.

We do hope that *Arrhythmia & Electrophysiology Review* will prove such a forum for scholarly articles that should be carefully peer-reviewed and edited in the true spirit of Henry Oldenburg, the long-time secretary of the Royal Society who suggested peer-reviewing of scientific citations as early as the 17th century.³ To these ends, it may facilitate the art of evidence-based clinical practice for the management of the patient with arrhythmic disorders. ■

-
1. Hill AB. Streptomycin treatment of pulmonary tuberculosis: a Medical Research Council investigation. *BMJ* 1948;769–73.
 2. Ioannidis JP. Contradicted and initially stronger effects in highly cited clinical research. *JAMA* 2005;294:218–28.
 3. Luscher TF. Good publishing practice. *Eur Heart J* 2012;33:557–61.