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## EDITORIAL

# Congenital Heart Disease in Colombia and Worldwide<sup>☆</sup>



## Cardiopatas congénitas en Colombia y en el mundo

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All over the world 135 million children are born each year; of these, 1 in every 33 live births is affected by a congenital anomaly, which in turn generates 3.2 million disabilities per year.

One third of these abnormalities are cardiac, and a prevalence of 0.5 to 9 is estimated per 1,000 live births. The conclusion, therefore, is that approximately 1.3 million newborns in the world has congenital heart disease, a fact that leads to a high mortality due to improper treatment during the first year of life, especially because most (90%) live in poorest countries.

In Latin America, 54,000 children are born each year with congenital heart disease and of these, 41,000 require some treatment, but unfortunately only 17,000 are intervened.

In Colombia, where approximately 150 children per million inhabitants should undergo surgery, only 2,434 are intervened, which corresponds to 52 surgeries per million, which forces to take actions that favor this large number of children who will not have the opportunity to receive some kind of appropriate and timely care.

On the other hand, scientific societies are created for specific purposes and have been functioning correctly, usually isolated, but also have acquired obligations over the community, especially when they achieve to integrate with

the policies of the state to take joint action concerning the improvement of care to the community.

Socioeconomic conditions and globalization have made that several companies with similar purposes join to organize high-impact scientific meetings, with the aim of expanding the latest developments and knowledge to those responsible for treating the sick, in this case the children with heart disease.

This has occurred during the IX International Symposium of the Colombian Society of Cardiology and Cardiovascular Surgery, the World Society for Pediatric and Congenital Heart Surgery (WSPCHS) and American Society of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiovascular Surgery.

Jointly be brought together leaders and organizers, and supported by the pharmaceutical industry could be carried out this scientific event with the participation of 34 international speakers from 9 countries, with the highest academic level, recognized for its leadership in pediatric cardiology and cardiovascular surgery. All conferees accepted the invitation and on their own came to Cartagena where they shared with the participants the most recent academic knowledge in the treatment of heart disease in children. 44 lectures were presented and global issues were discussed, such the possibility of organizing and implementing a global database, which could begin in Colombia with the support of the University of Alabama in Birmingham under the leadership of Dr. James Kirklin.

These three societies were able to hold their annual members meeting and discuss many important topic, related

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to their mission and vision and reviewed their commitments acquired with the community.

The participation was unmatched, as they came from 14 different countries and regions such North America, Central America, South America, Europe and Asia. There were altogether 99 scientific papers from 7 countries, of which 99 were selected and evaluated by 3 international and nationals' peers. Those that obtained the highest score were chosen for oral presentation (25) during the scientific sessions, giving them the opportunity to be discussed by the experts. The other papers were presented and discussed as a poster. The best papers were awarded.

This research work was highlighted and the academic work from different centers and Institutions, especially from

Colombia that are training the new generations of pediatric cardiologists, surgeons and other related specialists, had the chance to show to the world what Colombia is doing a very important effort to increase the good quality research work.

Upon completion of the event letters of thanks from all the speakers, in which they highlighted the great scientific level, the quality of the organization, and the affection and kindness of our people.

For the participating societies was a unique experience for the results of this joint effort; for doctors and specialist, was a great opportunity to have had at home the world leaders in the field; and for our patients, a great benefit by upgrading the persons responsible for their health and of their families.