Section Steering Committee: Organization and Structure of ACC Member Sections

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Over the summer, I represented the Cardiovascular Imaging Section and Leadership Council at the first in-person Section Steering Committee (SSC) meeting and thought I would share with you what I learned at the meeting.

Established earlier this year, the SSC includes the chairs of all member sections, the Assembly of International Governors, the Board of Governors, and the Credentialing and Membership Committee. Chaired by Athena Poppas, MD, FACC, former chair of the Women in Cardiology Member Section, the SSC facilitates discussion across member sections to share best practices, ensure consistency of governance and engagement, and understand the unique needs for these areas. Because each section is composed of and caters to a variety of cardiovascular subspecialties, this structure offers unique opportunities for participation within the College.

BACKGROUND: SECTION STEERING COMMITTEE, COUNCILS, AND MEMBER SECTIONS

The SSC was established by the Board of Trustees to provide a formal structure for section leaders to champion the needs and priorities of ACC member sections. In short, sections allow members to aggregate around certain interests (clinical or professional interests, as well as practice settings). Currently, more than 18,000 members have opted to participate in at least 1 of the College’s member sections. These sections include well-established clinical subspecialties, including interventional and adult congenital and pediatrics, as well as practice settings such as academics. Sections also exist for heart failure and transplantation, geriatrics, and women in cardiology. In addition to the Academic Cardiology Member Section, the College has formed sections for fellows in training and early career members.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE JULY 2013 SECTION STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

In addition to the chairs of the member sections and aforementioned groups, several members of the presidential team, as well as our new CEO, Shalom Jacobovitz, were able to attend the SSC meeting. They reported on the progress of the College’s strategic plan, and noted the following 5 overarching themes the Board of Trustees will consider as they work toward a final living document: transformation of care, data, purposeful education, membership, and public and population health. Attendees were invited to comment and ask questions about this plan and the College’s vision going forward. More about the College’s strategic planning process can be found in the July 2013 issue of JACC.

We also heard from Steve Kerchner, the College’s chief digital officer, about the College’s digital strategy, which aims to improve existing member value and quality of care and drive effective sharing of information in the digital space. The Cardiovascular Imaging Section has created a digital engagement work group to work with the College and provide input on CardioSource as these efforts move ahead. Please contact us at imagingsection@acc.org if you would like to propose cardiovascular imaging content for CardioSource.

Being in the same room also afforded section chairs opportunities for frank discussion about best practices, collaborations across sections and our responsibilities to meet the needs of corresponding section members, as well as our obligation to demonstrate effectiveness and accomplishments. Additionally, meeting with the other section leaders was a great opportunity to recognize the potential to collaborate across the house of cardiology. Leadership from the Board of
Governors, the Fellows in Training Section, and Early Career Section discussed potential areas of overlap with the Cardiovascular Imaging Section’s interests. Other councils with focuses on clinical issues including heart failure and transplantation, surgery, and geriatrics also indicated interest in working with the Cardiovascular Imaging Section.

The College’s member sections are a great conduit to facilitate members’ ability to participate in ongoing activities that address their professional priorities. The sections should aid in communication, networking and collaboration, and sharing relevant information. Participating in the SSC meeting exposed me to a number of initiatives other groups are working on and also provided an opportunity to share information about the Cardiovascular Imaging Section’s activities to the leaders of the other sections. It also gave me an opportunity to initiate discussions that will allow cross-section initiatives. I was glad to have the opportunity, and I look forward to working with other groups as we move forward.

For more information on the Cardiovascular Imaging Section, please visit cardiosource.org/imaging. Interested in getting involved? Please e-mail imagingsection@acc.org with your interests and background on your expertise.