Statement from the European Society of Vascular Surgery and the World Federation of Vascular Surgery Societies

Transatlantic Inter-Society Consensus Document (TASC) III and International Standards for Vascular Care (ISVaC)

The original TASC document was published in the Journal of Vascular Surgery and in the European Journal of Vascular Surgery in 2000. The update (TASCI) was published in 2007. It had been intended that a further update (TASC IIb) would follow with publication in 2011, but this version was abandoned. The TASC group then embarked on a new version to be called TASC III. However there are ongoing and fundamental disagreements between TASC and both the European Society for Vascular surgery (ESVS) and the Society for Vascular Surgery (SVS) about process, industry involvement and transparency.

In Budapest in September 2013 there was a meeting between the SVS, ESVS and the World Federation of Vascular Societies (WFVS) at which the three societies withdrew from the TASC III process. ESVS, SVS and WFVS recognise the need to define, produce and promote the highest international standards for vascular care. Around the world, the specialists primarily responsible for acute and long term care of patients with peripheral vascular disease are vascular surgeons. Their breadth of expertise is unique, ranging from conservative through endovascular to open surgical treatments. Typically the patient journey is for the remainder of life and often involving all three modalities of care. Setting standards across the world for optimal care of this group of patients resides principally with vascular surgeons.

To achieve these goals to the maximal benefit of patients, the three societies resolved that, with the involvement, input and collaboration of other disciplines, they will generate and publish internationally agreed standards (ISVaC) for care in all aspects of vascular disease which are evidence based and free from industry influence. To begin this major and complex process, each society has nominated one Vascular Surgeon with the appropriate skills to a three-man Overview Group. Its purpose will be twofold; (i) to determine processes for the setting, definition and provision of Standards and (ii) to determine how to involve clinicians and societies from other disciplines.

In the first instance this will be by determining Topics and guiding membership of Topic Steering Groups, each with direct responsibility for the organisation and generation of International Standards. The three-man group includes Professor Andrew Bradbury, Birmingham UK, Professor Philippe Kolh, Liège Belgium and Professor Michael Conte, San Francisco USA.

The SVS and ESVS simultaneously announce and commit to this new venture in our two journals.

Jean-Baptiste Ricco, President ESVS*
Professor George Hamilton, Past President ESVS
Simon Parvin, Secretary General ESVS
Martin Veller, President WFVS
Jan Brunkwall, Secretary WFVS
And with the active involvement of:
Professor John Wolfe, London UK
Professor Henrik Sillesen, Copenhagen, Denmark
Professor Hans-Henning Eckstein, Munich, Germany
Professor Robert Fitridge, Adelaide, Australia

* In this process the ESVS represents national vascular societies from Europe. The WFVS represents the Australian and New Zealand Society for Vascular Surgery, the Japanese Society for Vascular Surgery, the Vascular Society of India, the Vascular Society of Southern Africa, the Asian Society for Vascular Surgery, and the Latin American Society of Vascular Surgery and Angiology. SVS represents national, regional and local vascular societies in North America.

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1078-5884/$ — see front matter
http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ejvs.2013.11.009