

FROM THE ACC

President's Page: Zeroes, San Jose, Phoenix, Dallas, San Diego

While the answer to the question “What do San Jose, Phoenix, Dallas, and San Diego have in common?” may not be uppermost in your mind, it has great relevance to our mission. We have become inured to the rather ubiquitous notion of zeroes—lots of zeroes. Most recently, our politicians have struggled to understand the enormity of \$1,500,000,000,000—a struggle which at this time appears to have rendered them paralyzed. The threat that we can be swamped by the enormity of zeroes is very real. The chance to make a difference in zeroes, however, is also very real.

In September, Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen G. Sebelius announced the launch of Million Hearts, a new public-private initiative aimed at preventing 1 million heart attacks and strokes over the next 5 years.

The Million Hearts effort focuses on 2 approaches: 1) encouraging Americans to make healthy lifestyle choices by reducing smoking, sodium intake, and artificial trans fat consumption; and 2) improving attention to evidence-based measures that are known to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, referred to by Million Hearts as the “ABCS” (Aspirin for high-risk people, Blood pressure control, effective Cholesterol management, and Smoking cessation).

Under the leadership of Janet Wright, MD, FACC, formerly head of the American College of Cardiology’s (ACC’s) Science and Quality division, the program has taken form. The consortium behind this endeavor, in addition to the ACC, includes: 1) public sector institutions, such as the Centers for Disease Control, the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, the Food and Drug Administration, the Health Resources and Services Administration, the National Institutes of Health, the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; 2) professional societies including the American Medical Association, the America’s Health Insurance Plans, the American Pharmacists’ Association and the American Pharmacists’ Association Foundation, the National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations and the Alliance for Patient Medication Safety, the National Community Pharmacists Association, the YMCA, and the American Heart Association; and 3) the private sector with large companies, such as Walgreens and others. Tools used in this effort include screening programs, fitness programs, and educational opportunities using a variety of media.

The ACC, led by Bill Oetgen, MD, FACC, Senior Vice President for Science and Quality, will play a central role in encouraging awareness of Million Hearts by both our 40,000 members and the patients through distribution of educational and informational material via print and online vehicles like *Cardiology*, *CardioSource.org*, and *CardioSmart*. The PINNACLE Registry also will be used as a resource and an avenue for specific member-directed educational efforts.

By reaching out to our cardiac care associate members, the College will also tap into a wealth of patient care expertise that is unique to nurse practitioners, physician assistants,



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and pharmacists. These are the care providers who can both reinforce learning and provide the specific care needed to improve compliance with the ABCS.

Our elected leadership and executives will forge new bonds of cooperation with Million Hearts public and private supporters to reach the program's goals. They will also work to engage sister organizations of primary care provider groups in the Million Hearts network. This is most important because so much of the care Americans receive is from primary care physicians, and some of the earliest and most effective preventive care for cardiovascular disease takes place in their offices.

On the technology side, the ACC will make the PINNACLE Registry available as a readily accessible tool to track long-term results by observing changes in national cardiovascular mortality statistics faster. The registry can generate and report monthly and even weekly de-identified compliance statistics. Use of the PINNACLE Registry, should make it possible to identify educational interventions for physicians that most effectively improve their Million Hearts performance.

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bers, and our friends, and the College is fully committed to its success. The strategies mentioned here are but the tip of the iceberg. As ACC members learn about this program and become personally engaged in it, we are certain that more ideas will flow. We encourage those ideas and ask that you share them with us as they arise.

What then does this have to do with zeroes, San Jose, Phoenix, Dallas, and San Diego? These are cities in the United States with populations of approximately 1,000,000. Imagine preventing enough heart attacks and strokes over the next 5 years to populate cities the size of these four. Join the team—the Million Hearts is one great chance to make a difference.

From your ACC to you!

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