

## Introduction Outcomes 2002

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In this issue, we bring you highlights from the sixth Outcomes meeting held at the Casa Marina resort in Key West, Florida, from May 22 through May 26, 2002. In addition to these Proceedings, selected highlights from the meeting lectures will be available for viewing and comment at [www.hsforum.com](http://www.hsforum.com).

This year again there was an increase in registrations with over 200 participants from research and clinical sites throughout North America, as well as from Germany, Sweden, The Netherlands, United Kingdom, Italy, Belgium, Austria, New Zealand and Australia. Registrants included cardiac and vascular surgeons, anesthesiologists, perfusionists, neurologists, neuropsychologists, cardiologists, nurses, and psychometrists, as well as various industry representatives. In many cases, several members of the same research team were participating, such shared experiences being recognized an important factor in enhancing research efforts and collaborations.

The multidisciplinary, international nature of this meeting has consistently afforded an engaging forum in which to discuss issues related to brain protection for patients undergoing a variety of cardiac, vascular, and related surgeries. In addition to state-of-the-art lectures and research papers from leading North American, European, and AustraloAsian medical research centers, another important feature of Outcomes 2002 was the opportunity to join invitational focus group luncheons and dinner meetings. These industry-sponsored events included scientists and phase I project development specialists representing various pharmaceutical, biotechnological, physiological monitoring, and information technology industries. Many of those participating in these informal dialogues felt them to be an important link in recruiting and developing industry-based research contracts and funding.

Given this mix of expert clinicians and scientists, as well as the consistently high levels of attendance for all sessions, the discussion and debate at the various lectures and scientific abstract presentations was very high. Audience participation was uniformly strong throughout the meeting, audience interaction and discussion being facilitated and encouraged by the program format. The separate Poster/Discussion sessions were arranged topically and were structured to stimulate discussion from both the session Chairs and the audience. The insightful nature of the comments made during these sessions was felt by most of the presenters to provide invaluable feedback and assistance both in interpreting their current work as well as in stimulating ideas for further studies.

As has been observed previously, a remarkably consistent feature of these meetings is the number of new scientific papers dealing with issues raised during the previous year's

meeting. Having focused on methods to improve outcome after traditional on-pump surgery last year, including work from Wake Forest University showing improved outcomes associated with use of a single aortic cross clamp, the London, Ontario group this year demonstrated that new cerebral lesions were visible on Diffusion Weighted Magnetic Resonance Imaging and were similarly present after both on-pump and off-pump surgery where aortic partial aortic occlusion clamps were employed. Consistent with this, the group from Utrecht reported the results of their important trial showing only limited differences in cognitive outcomes comparing off-pump and on-pump surgery. Last year's meeting emphasized the role of cerebral lipid microemboli, and this year there were several papers discussing new techniques for differentiation of embolic materials, a report of a technique for removal of lipids from shed blood, and a description of fat microemboli in cerebrocortical vessels from the University of Toronto group.

Various perfusion techniques were reported with several new studies focused on provision of cerebral protection during circulatory arrest in adults. A combined antegrade and retrograde perfusion technique was reported by the group from Baylor, who also discussed techniques for regional spinal cord monitoring and selective perfusion of the renal arteries during throacoabdominal surgery. There were several reports focusing on the impact of surface modified bypass circuits, and a comparison of various pulsatile perfusion pumps was also reported.

Lastly, we must acknowledge the efforts of all those individuals without whose assistance none of this would have been possible. The support of Stan Horton PhD and others from Bayer Pharmaceutical, in providing an unrestricted educational grant to help support both the Outcomes meeting as well as the publication of these Proceedings, is gratefully acknowledged. The efforts of our own staff from both Wake Forest University and University Hospital Campus — London Health Sciences Centre, were outstanding. A particular thanks to the audio-visual team from E-Media Medical Educationals who seamlessly coordinated various computer-based, conventional slide, and video presentations. Their efforts were favorably commented upon by many of the meeting participants. Ultimately, thanks for the overall success of this Outcomes meeting, as well as for the high quality of the scientific papers as published in these Proceedings, must go to all those participants, registrants, lecturers and staff who contributed so much to the success of this year's program. Thanks to you all. We hope to see you next year at Outcomes 2003, May 21 to 25, 2003. For further information, registration, and abstract submission details visit our website at [www.outcomeskeywest.com](http://www.outcomeskeywest.com).