

Editorial

More CME – is this for me?

CME is best known as the Chicago Mercantile Exchange and can be found at <http://www.cme.com/>. In accordance to its web site, CME is the largest US futures exchange and by most measures the most diversified and innovative global financial services marketplace in the US. CME serves the risk management needs of the world through a diverse range of futures and options of futures on its electronic trading platform and trading floors.

Interestingly enough, engaging in a risk management strategy, one does not fully understand, is equivalent to taking some sort of risk. This also holds true for our fields of interest, namely thoracic and cardio-vascular surgery, where the management of patient risks is necessary to stay out of trouble. A higher-level understanding – which in turn requires continuing education or better Continuing Medical Education (CME) in our case – is certainly a sensible approach to provide better patient care. As a matter of fact, reducing the exposure to weaknesses in our medical knowledge may also allow for a reduction of the necessary hedging of financial risks.

In contrast to other medical specialities, updating surgical know-how is quite a complex and somewhat composite process as it has to include knowledge, certainly but not exclusively. Cumulated experience and surgical skills are at least as important but not so easy to provide. Some of this latter part can be acquired in the animal lab [1] or in hands-on workshops (e.g., <http://www.heartlab.org/>) where teaching and personal practice is possible based on specially designed workbenches which are nowadays made available for various procedures [2,3].

For the theoretical part of our side, there is now the possibility to participate in the Continuing Medical Education system jointly organized by the *Annals of Thoracic Surgery*, the *Journal of Thoracic and Cardio-vascular Surgery*, and the *European Journal of Cardio-thoracic Surgery* in cooperation

with CTSnet (<http://www.ctsnet.org/>) and HighWire Press. As per this issue, the *European Journal of Cardio-thoracic Surgery* (like the two other journals participating in this initiative) will make available with each issue an open access article in combination with an outline of learning objectives, a series of questions, as well as the solutions to the answers which can be found in the selected article.

David J. Wheatley, Glasgow, UK, has been appointed Associate Editor CME of the *European Journal of Cardio-thoracic Surgery* and the first CME questions-and-answers session [4] is now available on-line at <http://cme.ctsnetjournals.org>: make sure the hedging positions are still limiting your exposure!

References

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