

Farewell to an exceptional colleague and friend

R. A. Lerch steps down as editor-in-chief – F. Mach takes over

Thomas F. Lüscher

Cardiology, University Hospital, Zürich



René Lerch

After many years of service, René A. Lerch, former Professor of Cardiology at the University of Geneva and President of the Swiss Society of Cardiology stepped down as editor-in-chief Romandie for *Cardiovascular Medicine* at the end of 2015.

René Lerch has contributed enormously to Swiss cardiology in the course of

his career. Immediately after his studies in medicine at the University of Zurich, he became a resident in the Cardiology Division at the Medical Policlinic of the University Hospital in Zurich, then run by Wilhelm Rutishauser. He continued his training in internal medicine and cardiology in Zurich and then under the leadership of Burton E. Sobel at Washington University in St. Louis Missouri. Upon his return to Switzerland he became a senior cardiologist at the Cardiology Centre of the University Hospital in Geneva, again under the leadership of Wilhelm Rutishauser. In 1992, he was named Professor of Cardiology as well as Director of the Research Laboratory on Myocardial Biology and of the Echocardiography Laboratory in Geneva. At the end of his career at the University Hospital in Geneva he also served as Acting Chief of the Cardiology Centre. He has been active in many professional societies, in particular the Swiss Society of Cardiology and the European Society of Cardiology. In the Swiss Society of Cardiology he was member and later honorary member of the Working Groups on Heart Failure, Echocardiography and Cardiovascular Biology, as well as WATCH. From 1998 he was board member and from 2004 to 2006 President of the Swiss Society of Cardiology and helped to shape our professional society. Specifically, he was member of the board during the important period when the board certification for cardiology was submitted to and later accepted by the Swiss Society of Physicians FMH, a truly important contribution to our specialty. After his presidency, he served as a cardiology delegate at the Swiss Society of Physicians FMH

for the evaluation of training centres and as a council member of the Swiss Heart Foundation.

In 2000, it was a pleasure to nominate and welcome an experienced colleague such as René Lerch as successor of Patrice Delafontaine as editor-in-chief Romandie of our official journal *Cardiovascular Medicine*. Ever since, he has committed time and effort to developing the then young journal into what it is today. Indeed, we are proud that together with René Lerch we could make *Cardiovascular Medicine* one of the most read medical journals in Switzerland, with a strong focus on education thanks to the publication of well-balanced review articles as well as sections on imaging, ECGs, arrhythmias and alike.

It was, regrettably, René Lerch's own decision to leave the position as editor-in-chief. With this editorial, we would like to thank an exceptional colleague and friend. René Lerch will stay member of the editorial board as Senior editor.

We are happy that, as of 1st January 2016, François Mach, Professor and Chairman of Cardiology at the University Hospital in Geneva, has agreed to follow René Lerch as editor-in-chief Romandie of *Cardiovascular Medicine*. With François Mach we will again be able to work with a well-known and experienced cardiologists and cardiovascular researcher of high standing who will help us to further develop our journal and motivate young cardiologists in particular to publish their work in our journal.



François Mach

Correspondence:
Professor
Thomas F. Lüscher, MD
Cardiology,
University Hospital
CH-8091 Zürich
Cardiotf[at]gm.ch