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## GUEST EDITORIAL

The 9th Annual Conference of the Pakistan Society of Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgeons (PSCVTS) was held in March 29-31, 2013 at and with collaboration with the Aga Khan University Hospital Karachi. It was for the very first time that a private institution was charged with the responsibility to conduct the society's national conference. The conference was a three day event. There were two themes for the conference, Quality assurance and Education and training. There were two workshops on the first day and a live video telecast from Bangalore in India. Workshops on extracorporeal membrane oxygenation and vascular anastomoses were facilitated by Medtronic and Ethicon respectively and the mitral valve repair video telecast was facilitated by St Judes. The conference was formally inaugurated on March 29, 2013 by the President of the Aga Khan University and the audience was addressed by Professor Masood Hameed Khan (Vice Chancellor of Dow University of Health Sciences), Professor El Nasir Lalani (Dean of Research at Aga Khan University), Prof Rukhsana Zuberi (Associate Dean of Education at Aga Khan University), Prof Riaz Anwer Khan (President of PSCTS) and a vote of thanks was given by Dr. Shahid Sami. Dr Muneer Amanullah was responsible for conducting the proceedings. The second day started with Dr Faisal Cheema (an AKU Alumnus working at Columbia University New York) talking about Quality Assurance in Cardiac Surgery followed by talks from major Cardiac Centers in Pakistan about their databases. The afternoon session had cardiac and thoracic presentations followed by simultaneous sessions on congenital and vascular surgery. The last session was dedicated to poster reviews and presentations. Prizes were awarded to the three top entries. This was followed by the Society meeting and a gala dinner. The third and last day started with a talk from Dr. Rizwan Azami, the Vice President of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Pakistan (CPSP) on Education and Training. This was again followed by talks from all training institutions of Pakistan about their structured training programs. The next two sessions were devoted to Cardiac anesthesia and critical care nursing and cardiac perfusion.

The conference themes will help clear the vision of the PSCVTS regarding these issues of quality assurance and Education and Training of residents in our specialty. The tool to ensure quality assurance is a database. One of the aims of the society must be to ensure that all centers performing cardiac surgery should have a robust database with reporting to the Society. This whole activity should be monitored by the PSCTS to ensure minimum standards across Pakistan. Structured resident training in Cardiac Surgery has to be in CPSP approved positions and programs have to be visited periodically by the CPSP Cardiac Faculty to ensure compliance with teaching and evaluation objectives set out by the CPSP.

If these objectives are met, the conference would have achieved its purpose.

**HASANAT SHARIF**