

Spotlight on Italian Association of Hospital Cardiologists (ANMCO) activity in the 2-year period 2021-2023

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The Italian Association of Hospital Cardiologists (ANMCO) is a national scientific association established in 1963. Since then, this scientific association has progressively grown in terms of membership and the number of activities and initiatives aimed at promoting good clinical practice in cardiovascular disease management.

In this short report, we summarise some of the main activities held over the last biennium under the guidance of the ANMCO President Prof. Furio Colivicchi.

The biennium started in May 2021 with the assignment of the new ANMCO board of directors (*Figure 1*) and with the launch of the strategic plan called Next Generation ANMCO, a comprehensive plan conceived by Prof. Colivicchi with the aim of offering new opportunities to members and provide a brighter future to Italian cardiology after the dark years of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The educational project ‘Next-generation ANMCO: towards a clinical research network’¹ is one of the first initiatives promoted by the ANMCO President and implemented under the guidance of Aldo Maggioni, director of the ANMCO Research Centre. Thanks to this training school, nearly 100 young cardiologists from all over Italy were engaged in designing clinical research projects. This project has further fostered the involvement of young Italian cardiologists in ANMCO activities and strengthened their cooperation with the research centre.² Due to the relevance of this project, a report of its aims and organization was published in the *Cardiopulse* section of the *European Heart Journal*.¹
- The framework of the Next Generation strategic plan includes ‘ANMCO CERT’, a programme for the certification of specific professional skills in some areas of cardiology: cardiac pacing; heart failure; cardiological intensive care; preventive cardiology and rehabilitation; and digital cardiology.³ This is an innovative service made available in 2022 to ANMCO members free of charge.

- With approximately 100 published manuscripts including almost 30 ANMCO position papers, practical guidance, and consensus documents on different fields of cardiology, such as cardio-oncology,⁴ imaging,⁵ dyslipidaemia,⁶⁻⁸ heart failure,⁹⁻¹⁴ acute coronary syndromes,^{7,15} and focusing on patient management pathways,⁹⁻²⁴ new drugs,²⁵⁻²⁷ and implantable devices,²⁸ the last biennium is one of the most prolific ever for the ANMCO board and bodies from an editorial point of view.
- Among the flagship projects of the Next Generation ANMCO plan, there is the Cardio Sentinel ANMCO, devised by Prof. Furio Colivicchi. This project has brought together 300 key opinion leaders with distinguished scientific and professional profiles who have contributed to three surveys: (i) prescriptive appropriateness of direct oral anticoagulant (DOAC) use in clinical practice; (ii) the future of diagnostic imaging in cardiology; (iii) intensive care unit and COVID-19. The goal of this project is to have the pulse of the most relevant topics in cardiology in order to propose solutions or develop initiatives aimed at addressing emerging needs.
- ANMCO National Audit initiatives are further activities started during the last 2 years. By collecting aggregate data from the real world, a clinical audit allows the evaluation of the efficacy, efficiency, safety, and appropriateness of the clinical-care processes. Overall, clinical audits represent useful tools for introducing and implementing scientific evidence and guidelines in clinical practice. Furthermore, by monitoring clinical activities over time, these initiatives may contribute to maintain the achieved improvement. APPRO-FA EVO Audit is the first ANMCO National Audit initiative realised in 2022 and was focused on the appropriateness of the use of DOACs in Italian hospital heart centres. Although this initiative found that appropriate DOAC use was reported in about 90% of prescriptions, it showed that there is still room for clinical practice improvement.

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Figure 1 2021-2023 ANMCO board of directors.

- The ANMCO WEB initiatives launched during the last 2 years include the creation of a website dedicated to digital cardiology: ‘the cardiology of today and of the future’. The national commission for digital cardiology, appointed by the ANMCO board of directors, has made a number of contributions, especially in the fields of telecardiology and artificial intelligence, and also in terms of the legal aspects for the implementation of these practices.
- Following the successful experience of the PONTE project held in Puglia, which aimed to create shared pathways between hospital cardiologists and territorial physicians for the management of chronic heart diseases with high epidemiological and prognostic impact, the PONTE HT project was proposed at a national level. With this project, ANMCO provides to all interested heart centres a web platform that contains an electronic medical record connected to modules for the outpatient management of patients with heart failure, coronary syndrome, and atrial fibrillation. This service offered by ANMCO also allows for the collection of homogeneous and comparable data and the evaluation of the health care assistance provided by each facility.
- The national project ‘Club delle UTIC’ was launched 2 years ago with the aim of creating a community of cardiologists who take care of patients with acute heart diseases in critical care settings. The goal of this project was to satisfy the training needs of those who are preparing to work in a critical care setting and who want to improve their cultural background in topics that are not strictly cardiological. Therefore, a network of Italian cardiologists who actively interact to exchange experiences and skills was created. One of the products currently underway by the Club delle UTIC is the UTIC Decalogue: 10 reviews dealing with 10 major topics of cardiological intensive care.¹¹ A number of webinars and tutorials were also held by the Club delle UTIC. Furthermore, two successful national conferences were held in Florence, one in 2022 and the other in 2023, which were of great importance to the cultural growth of all hospital professionals involved in the cardiovascular emergency setting.
- Almost 50 virtual educational events were also offered to the cardiology community. Twenty-four webinars were held by different working groups, 13 from the Club delle UTIC and 8 from the Digital Cardiology working group.

Overall, 2 years of intensive activity have brought the association closer to its members’ needs, to patients affected by cardiovascular disease, and to all public and private stakeholders of the Italian healthcare system.²⁹

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Data availability

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