

# Letter from the President of CACI

## Carta del Presidente del CACI

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Dear colleagues,

I am writing these lines in our Journal with the intention of maintaining an open dialog with all CACI members.

In my last communication, I mentioned that we were able to meet with the Argentine Minister of Health, Dr. Mario Russo, following our private agreement with **Cardiología Unida** group (formed by SAC, FAC, CAC, CACCV, FCA, ACVAA, FCVAA, SADEC, and CACI).

As part of this group, we also had meetings with the Argentine Health Association (UAS), an entity composed of all privately funded health insurance companies, with the participation of all their representatives. Initially, the meetings were led by Claudio Belocoppitt and later by Dr. Hugo Magonza, with the goal of advocating for improvements in fees paid to physicians.

Our wish was to achieve a second meeting with the Minister of Health, since the issues related to Interventional Cardiology were not resolved: low medical fees, a 700-% increase in the price of biomedical supplies, and a 1500-% increase in the price of pharmaceutical supplies, among others. Despite repeatedly requesting a new meeting with the Minister to address these issues, there was no response.

As CACI, we decided to found a group that would provide advice to the President and the Board of Directors: the **Crisis Committee**, consisting of renowned past CACI presidents and members such as Dr. Alberto Pocoví, Dr. Alejandro Palacios, Dr. Rubén Kevorkian, Dr. Humberto Bassani Molinas, Dr. José Amadeo Álvarez, and Dr. Alejandro Cherro.

This Committee recommended launching a press campaign to raise awareness about our great concern, since our specialty will be at serious risk if no action is taken.

We hired a public relations consulting firm, and, in May, we launched the first phase of the campaign, titled *Interventional cardiologists warn that they will not be able to implant stents or perform angioplasties in the medium term*. Being a *bombshell*, such news had the desired impact, although the main issue may have been interpreted as a shortage of stents when, in reality, our specialty will be at risk if no immediate action is taken. Despite multiple radio and television interviews in national and international media, the outcome was disappointing: we received no concrete response.

We decided to keep moving and go further, because, if no one addressed our concern, there would be no results. We then intensified the campaign by conducting a survey within CACI, which showed delays in the delivery of biomedical supplies, low fees, and the growing intent of many professionals, both young and old, to emigrate from the country. Surveys conducted by SAC and FAC gathered similar results.

This led us to a second press campaign with two key messages: (1) *Emergency care is at risk*, and (2) *A two-day monitor shutdown*, during which we did not provide regular services, postponing the treatment of scheduled patients. Again, we gave several radio/TV interviews with great media coverage, and on the last day of the monitor shutdown, we received a call from the Ministry to coordinate our long-awaited meeting.

We had agreed on a meeting for the last week of September, but, to our surprise, Dr. Mario Russo resigned before that date.

We have done a lot, but there is still much to be done. SOLACI-CACI Congress took place recently; during that event, we shone as a country both scientifically and socially. All speakers and companies were very pleased with the results of such a long-awaited challenge.

I thank the Congress President, Dr. Diego Grinfeld (former CACI President), and the Head of the Scientific Committee, Dr. Carla Agatiello, for such excellent Congress, for its organization and for being proof of all the good things we can do together.

We also celebrated the *International Day for Interventional Cardiology* with an event held in the CACI auditorium. In addition to commemorating the annual celebration proclaimed by the United Nations, as a second part, we advanced dialog with academics from Buenos Aires University (UBA) and privately funded universities, and, as a third part, we expressed our demands as a union alongside SAC and FAC.

I do not want to conclude by saying we have achieved nothing, because the truth is that we have made significant progress. The creation of new committees strengthens our structure and fills us with hope to continue onwards. We are working to consolidate the provincial associations with the goal of turning CACI into a federation, which will allow us to eventually move away from the current module model for our fees.

This is just the beginning of a long journey. We are still standing and moving forward.

Let's keep working! Warm regards,

**Dr. Juan Fernández**

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