Cardiovascular diseases are the main focus of research in Latin America, as they are responsible for 31% of all causes of death. Although cardiovascular mortality leads the causes of death in most countries of the region, there is a great variability with countries such as Peru, showing a rate of 143 deaths per 100,00 in comparison with Guiana, which has 595 deaths for 100,000 inhabitants. The high aggregation of cardiovascular risk factors, asymmetry in economic conditions, access to health and the Chagas disease endemic in the region contribute for a large burden of cardiovascular disease that could be prevented.

The behavior of research in the cardiovascular area in Latin America is studied internationally. Borracci et al. and collaborators assessed the scientific publications in Latin America between 1987-2006 and demonstrated that the production is concentrated in few countries: Brazil, Mexico and Argentina are responsible for 80% of all publications. In the 20 years analyzed, Brazil led the scientific production in the region in all years, presenting a proportional growth in the quantity of articles that was very superior to that of other countries, especially after 1998, coinciding with inducing policies of the Higher Education Personnel Improvement Coordination (“Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior”, CAPES). The annual growth of publications on cardiology in Brazil was of 15% during the period, in comparison with 11% and 9% in Mexico and Argentina, respectively. Despite this quantitative growth in the number of Brazilian publications, a correspondence in its quality is not observed: a great part of the Brazilian publishing is made in journals of the country itself. Studies show that one fourth of the Brazilian publications were made in national journals of low impact factor, while only 6% of the publications from Chile, for example, were made in Chilean journals. Similarly, the comparison of the average of the impact factors of the Brazilian cardiologic publications of the same period was inferior to the average of the publications from Argentina and Chile.

The publication of the locally produced cardiovascular research is essential for Latin America, because the unique characteristics of its population and the particularities of the risk factors and endemics found here create a constant necessity for agile research and broadcasting of this information. In contrast, the inducing policies for search of publications in high-impact magazines contribute for journals with local characteristics to be considered of a lower priority for publication. Colantonio et al. clearly demonstrated the challenge of cardiovascular scientific production in Latin America, because the articles produced here have had a smaller growth in the number of citations than those produced in other regions. The search to increase the quality and visibility of the scientific publications in Latin America has stimulated the adoption of various strategies, such as the internationalization of the journals, with publications in English and the diversification of the editorial
Board, as well as the stimulus to increase international collaboration among authors from various countries. In a recent publication in Nature, Jonatham Adams shows the importance of international collaboration, even for countries with tradition in research: the simple presence of a single Foreigner author in an article published by British authors increases the number of citations of an article in 52%, while the presence of at least one Foreigner in articles published by North Americans increase their citations in 36%.

Following the objective set many years ago by the leaders of the Cardiology Society of Rio de Janeiro, o its journal, initially called “Revista da SOCERJ” (“SOCERJ Journal”), and, later, “Revista Brasileira de Cardiologia” (“Brazilian Cardiology Magazine,”) was progressively transformed from a publication of a regional scope into an international publication, meeting new inclusion and permanence criteria in the largest database in Latin America, SciELO, and is currently known as the International Journal of Cardiovascular Sciences (IJCS). As the result of a continuous, hard work by directors, editors, reviewers and technical staff, the SciELO Advisory Committee, in its 46th Meeting on May 2016, granted a favorable opinion to the entry of the International Journal of Cardiovascular Sciences (IJCS - Online) to SciELO Brazil.

By virtue of changes in the nature of IJCS and the opportunity to strengthen and develop the national scientific production, an agreement between the Cardiology Society of Rio de Janeiro (SOCERJ) with the Brazilian Cardiology Society (BCS) was proposed. BCS is the responsible for “Arquivos Brasileiros de Cardiologia” (“Brazilian Cardiology Archives”), the main journal in the national cardiology area, so IJCS became controlled by SBC and, thus, both journals joined forces and comprise a single portal, sharing the same management, aligning their strategies in order to complement the necessity of the Brazilian and international researcher requiring journals that are agile, trustworthy and of visibility for their scientific production. With this action, IJCS shall enjoy all editorial framework that enshrined the Brazilian Cardiology Archives, and may lever its quality. This situation, as emphasized by a recent editorial, provides the elevation of the impact factors of all journals involved, and it must benefit cardiovascular Science as a whole, especially the production in Latin America, highlighting Brazil.

This is our response to the immense challenge we face. To reduce cardiovascular mortality. For such, we need good health policies grounded on solid scientific information published and qualified journals, with visibility. We call upon the researchers in the cardiovascular area to publish their scientific production in the IJCS and to evaluate its content critically. Your collaboration is indispensable for our initiative.

References