

Self-Reported Health and Outcomes in Patients With Stable Coronary Heart Disease

Ralph A. H. Stewart, MD; Emil Hagström, MD, PhD; Claes Held, MD, PhD; Tom Kai Ming Wang, MBChB; Paul W. Armstrong, MD; Philip E. Aylward, MBChB; Christopher P. Cannon, MD; Wolfgang Koenig, MD; José Luis López-Sendón, MD, PhD; Emile R. Mohler, III, MD; Nermin Hadziosmanovic, MSc; Susan Krug-Gourley, PhD; Marco Antonio Ramos Corrales, MD; Saulat Siddique, MRCP; Philippe Gabriel Steg, MD; Harvey D. White, DSc; Lars Wallentin, MD, PhD; on behalf of the STABILITY Investigators*

Background—The major determinants and prognostic importance of self-reported health in patients with stable coronary heart disease are uncertain.

Methods and Results—The STABILITY (Stabilization of Atherosclerotic Plaque by Initiation of Darapladib Therapy) trial randomized 15 828 patients with stable coronary heart disease to treatment with darapladib or placebo. At baseline, 98% of participants completed a questionnaire that included the question, “Overall, how do you feel your general health is now?” Possible responses were *excellent*, *very good*, *good*, *average*, and *poor*. Adjudicated major adverse cardiac events, which included cardiovascular death, myocardial infarction, and stroke, were evaluated by Cox regression during 3.7 years of follow-up for participants who reported excellent or very good health (n=2304), good health (n=6863), and average or poor health (n=6361), before and after adjusting for 38 covariates. Self-reported health was most strongly associated with geographic region, depressive symptoms, and low physical activity ($P<0.0001$ for all). Poor/average compared with very good/excellent self-reported health was independently associated with major adverse cardiac events (hazard ratio [HR]: 2.30 [95% confidence interval (CI), 1.92–2.76]; adjusted HR: 1.83 [95% CI, 1.51–2.22]), cardiovascular mortality (HR: 4.36 [95% CI, 3.09–6.16]; adjusted HR: 2.15 [95% CI, 1.45–3.19]), and myocardial infarction (HR: 1.87 [95% CI, 1.46–2.39]; adjusted HR: 1.68 [95% CI, 1.25–2.27]; $P<0.0002$ for all).

Conclusions—Self-reported health is strongly associated with geographical region, mood, and physical activity. In a global coronary heart disease population, self-reported health was independently associated with major cardiovascular events and mortality beyond what is measurable by established risk indicators.

Clinical Trial Registration—URL: <http://www.ClinicalTrials.gov>. Unique identifier: NCT00799903. (*J Am Heart Assoc.* 2017;6:e006096. DOI: 10.1161/JAHA.117.006096.)

Key Words: coronary artery disease • general health • prognostic studies

From the Auckland City Hospital, Auckland, New Zealand (R.A.H.S., T.K.M.W., H.D.W.); Department of Medical Sciences Cardiology and Uppsala Clinical Research Center, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden (E.H., C.H., N.H., L.W.); Canadian VIGOUR Centre, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada (P.W.A.); South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute, Flinders University and Medical Centre, Adelaide, Australia (P.E.A.); Cardiovascular Division, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, MA (C.P.C.); Deutsches Herzzentrum München, Technische Universität München, Munich, Germany (W.K.); DZHK (German Centre for Cardiovascular Research), partner site Munich Heart Alliance, Munich, Germany (W.K.); Department of Internal Medicine II-Cardiology, University of Ulm Medical Center, Ulm, Germany (W.K.); Hospital Universitario La Paz IdiPaz, Madrid, Spain (J.L.L.-S.); Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA (E.R.M.); Metabolic Pathways and Cardiovascular Therapeutic Area, GlaxoSmithKline, King of Prussia, PA (S.K.-G.); San Jose Satellite Hospital, Naucalpan de Juárez, Mexico (M.A.R.C.); Punjab Medical Center Jail road Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan (S.S.); Département Hospitalo-Universitaire FIRE, AP-HP, Hôpital Bichat, Paris, France (P.G.S.); Sorbonne Paris Cité, Diderot University, Paris, France (P.G.S.); NHLI Imperial College, ICMS, Royal Brompton Hospital, London, United Kingdom (P.G.S.); FACT (French Alliance for Cardiovascular Trials), an F-CRIN Network, INSERM U1148, Paris, France (P.G.S.).

*The STABILITY Investigators are listed in Appendix S1, which is available at <http://jaha.ahajournals.org/content/6/8/e006096/DC1/embed/inline-supplementary-material-1.pdf>

Correspondence to: Ralph A. H. Stewart, MD, Auckland City Hospital, Green Lane Cardiovascular Services Park, Road Grafton, Auckland 1142, New Zealand. E-mail: rstewart@adhb.govt.nz

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Clinical Perspective

What Is New?

- In patients with stable coronary heart disease, geographic region, mood, and lifestyle risk factors are strong determinants of self-reported health.
- Self-reported general health is a strong independent predictor of cardiovascular mortality, noncardiovascular mortality, and myocardial infarction.

What Are the Clinical Implications?

- General health should be considered in addition to traditional risk factors when estimating the risk of adverse cardiovascular events.
- It is possible that interventions that improve general health, either at the individual or general population level, will also lower cardiovascular risk.

An important goal of management of patients with stable coronary heart disease (CHD) is to improve physical, mental, and/or social well-being. Consequently, it is relevant to consider the overall general health of the patient when deciding on a management strategy. Better understanding of the determinants of general health and of how general health may influence the risk of adverse clinical outcomes has the potential to improve clinical decisions.

General health is usually considered to be a patient-centered measure.¹ It can be assessed by asking patients about their physical, mental, and social functioning and other aspects of quality of life using questionnaires such as the Short Form-36² and the EQ-5D.³ The simplest assessment of health can be obtained by asking a single question: “How is your overall health?” In large epidemiological studies, the response to this simple question predicted both total and cardiovascular mortality.^{4–6} Few studies, however, have evaluated the clinical importance of this simple indicator of overall health in CHD patients.^{7–9} In addition, the primary determinants of self-reported health in patients with stable CHD are uncertain.

The aims of this study were to describe the most important factors associated with self-reported health and to evaluate its independent association with outcomes in patients with stable CHD who participated in the global STABILITY (Stabilization of Atherosclerotic Plaque by Initiation of Darapladib Therapy) trial.^{10,11}

Methods

Study Population

The STABILITY trial (ClinicalTrials.gov identifier NCT007-99903) was a global outcomes trial designed to determine

whether darapladib, a specific inhibitor of lipoprotein-associated phospholipase A₂, would reduce the risk of cardiovascular death, myocardial infarction, and stroke in patients with chronic CHD.¹⁰ In total, 15 828 participants from 39 countries were randomized. All patients had chronic stable CHD, defined as prior myocardial infarction, prior coronary revascularization, or multivessel CHD confirmed by coronary angiography. In addition, patients had to meet at least one of the following cardiovascular risk criteria: age ≥60 years; diabetes mellitus requiring pharmacotherapy; high-density lipoprotein cholesterol <1.03 mmol/L; current or previous smoker, defined as ≥5 cigarettes per day on average; significant renal dysfunction (estimated glomerular filtration rate ≥30 and <60 mL/min per 1.73 m² or urine albumin:creatinine ratio ≥30 mg albumin/g creatinine); or polyvascular disease (CHD and cerebrovascular disease or CHD and peripheral arterial disease). Darapladib did not influence the risk of major adverse cardiac events (MACE).^{10,11} More detailed descriptions of the study design and population were published previously.^{10–12} All patients provided written informed consent, and the relevant ethics committees in each participating country approved the study, in accordance with the Helsinki Declaration.

Baseline Clinical Assessment and Questionnaire

At baseline, 15 528 participants (98%) completed a lifestyle questionnaire. This included the following question: “Overall, how do you feel your general health is now?” Possible responses were *excellent*, *very good*, *good*, *average*, and *poor*. Because only a small proportion of participants responded with excellent and poor, results are presented for 3 groups (1) excellent or very good, (2) good, and (3) average or poor.

In addition to the cardiovascular risk criteria needed for study inclusion, the following information was recorded at baseline: age, sex, diagnosis of hypertension, history of congestive heart failure, prior myocardial infarction, prior percutaneous coronary intervention or coronary artery bypass grafting, and New York Heart Association functional class. Body mass index was calculated in kg/m². Geographic regions of enrollment were North America, South America including Mexico, Western Europe including Australia and New Zealand, Eastern Europe and Asia including South Africa. These country groupings were chosen primarily by geographic location but also considered the similarity of race, culture, and gross domestic product of countries.

On the lifestyle questionnaire, patients indicated whether they lived alone and the number of years of education completed, classified as <8 years, 8 to 12 years, *trade school*, or *college or university*. Financial stress and home- and work-related stress were graded as *never or rarely*, *sometimes*, *often*, or *always*. Depressive symptoms were assessed from

the questions “How is your current mood?” (denoted as “depressed mood”) and “Have you lost interest in activities or hobbies that normally give you pleasure?” (denoted as “loss of interest”), with possible responses of *never or rarely, sometimes, often, or always*.¹³ Physical activity was assessed from the total hours of moderate-intensity (4 metabolic equivalents) and vigorous-intensity (8 metabolic equivalents) physical activity during an average week.^{14,15} A healthy diet was classified using a Mediterranean diet score based on responses to a simple food-frequency questionnaire.¹⁶ The number of remaining teeth was recorded. Tooth loss was classified as ≤ 25 teeth.¹⁷

Hemoglobin, white blood cell count, creatinine, low-density lipoprotein cholesterol, high-density lipoprotein cholesterol, triglycerides, and C-reactive protein were measured at a Quest Diagnostics Clinical Laboratory. In addition, blood samples were obtained from 14 577 patients at baseline and stored until biochemical analysis. Lipoprotein-associated phospholipase A₂ was measured at diaDexus Inc. High-sensitivity troponin T, NT-proBNP (N-terminal pro-B-type natriuretic peptide), cystatin C, interleukin 6, and growth differentiation factor 15 were measured by an electrochemiluminescence immunoassay using a Cobas e 601 analyzer (Roche Diagnostics) at the Uppsala Clinical Research Center Laboratory in Uppsala, Sweden.

Clinical Outcomes

The primary end point of MACE was the composite of cardiovascular death, myocardial infarction, or stroke. Secondary end points were total mortality, cardiovascular mortality, noncardiovascular mortality, myocardial infarction, stroke, major coronary events, and hospital admission for heart failure. Clinical outcomes were adjudicated by a committee. The event definitions and main results of the study were presented elsewhere.^{10,11} The median follow-up time was 3.7 years (interquartile range: 3.5–3.8 years). Vital status was complete for 99.3% of patients and 99.6% of total possible follow-up time.

Statistical Analysis

The baseline characteristics were summarized, with categorical variables presented as count and proportion and continuous variables presented as mean and standard deviation. To investigate differences across the 3 groups of patients, the categorical variables were compared with the χ^2 test. Continuous variables were compared with Mann–Whitney nonparametric tests.

To investigate the associations between different covariates and self-reported health, multivariable ordinal logistic regressions were used due to the ordinal nature of the dependent variable (excellent or very good, good, average or

poor). The results of the regression analyses are presented as adjusted odds ratios (ORs) and 95% confidence intervals. The ORs describe the associations of different covariates with decreasing levels of self-reported health. Standardized ORs are presented for all continuous variables. All biomarkers were based on a 1-SD increase, ORs for body mass index and Mediterranean diet score were based on a 1-U increase, and ORs for physical activity (metabolic equivalent in hours per week) is based on a 50% increase. To evaluate the relative strength of association of different covariates with self-reported health, χ^2-df was plotted.¹⁸ This statistic allows comparison of predictors with different parameters, with a higher number indicating a stronger association.

Associations between self-reported health and the study outcomes were assessed using Cox proportional hazards regression models and expressed with hazard ratio and 95% confidence interval. The underlying proportional hazards assumptions of the Cox proportional hazards models were verified by Schoenfeld residual tests. Using a multivariate model, we adjusted for demographic variables (age at randomization, sex, geographic region), psychosocial measures (depressed mood, loss of interest in hobbies, financial stress, stress at work or home, years of education), lifestyle risk factors (body mass index, smoking status, physical activity,¹⁵ Mediterranean diet score,¹⁶ attendance at cardiac rehabilitation), disease markers at baseline (diagnosis of hypertension, congestive heart failure, significant renal dysfunction, prior myocardial infarction, prior coronary revascularization [percutaneous coronary intervention or coronary artery bypass grafting]), prior multivessel chronic heart disease, diabetes mellitus, polyvascular disease, tooth loss, New York Heart Association functional class), and biomarkers (low-density lipoprotein cholesterol, high-density lipoprotein cholesterol, hemoglobin, high-sensitivity troponin T, interleukin 6, growth differentiation factor 15, triglycerides, estimated glomerular filtration rate [using the Chronic Kidney Disease Epidemiology Collaboration formula], creatinine, white blood cell count, high-sensitivity C-reactive protein, NT-proBNP, cystatin C, and lipoprotein-associated phospholipase A₂ activity). The covariates included in the model were prespecified based on previous analyses from the STABILITY trial.^{16,17,19,20} Kaplan–Meier curves were constructed for MACE by self-reported health groups.

All analyses were performed using SAS software version 9.4 (SAS Institute). For all statistical analyses, a 2-sided $P < 0.05$ was considered statistically significant.

Results

The baseline characteristics of the study population are presented for participants reporting excellent or very good, good, and average or poor self-reported health in Table 1. A

Table 1. Demographic and Baseline Characteristics by Self-Reported General Health Levels

	Excellent or Very Good (n=2304)	Good (n=6863)	Average or Poor (n=6361)	Total (N=15 528)	Odds Ratio for one category decrease in health OR (95% CI)	P Value
Demographics						
Age, y						
Mean (SD)	65.2 (8.9)	64.7 (9.3)	63.7 (9.5)	64.4 (9.3)	0.88 (0.85–0.91)	<0.0001 [§]
Sex						
Female	294 (12.8)	1228 (17.9)	1378 (21.7)	2900 (18.7)	1.44 (1.34–1.56)	<0.0001
Race						
Black	40 (1.7)	157 (2.3)	164 (2.6)	361 (2.3)	1.40 (1.15–1.71)	<0.0001
Central, South, or Southeast Asian	104 (4.5)	531 (7.7)	528 (8.3)	1163 (7.5)	1.45 (1.30–1.63)	
East Asian or Japanese	150 (6.5)	421 (6.1)	951 (15.0)	1522 (9.8)	2.59 (2.33–2.88)	
Other	53 (2.3)	168 (2.4)	112 (1.8)	333 (2.1)	0.89 (0.72–1.09)	
White	1957 (84.9)	5586 (81.4)	4606 (72.4)	12 149 (78.2)	Reference group	
Geographic region						
Asia/Pacific	234 (10.2)	890 (13.0)	1429 (22.5)	2553 (16.4)	3.37 (3.05–3.71)	<0.0001
Eastern Europe	177 (7.7)	1436 (20.9)	1849 (29.1)	3462 (22.3)	3.30 (3.02–3.61)	
South America	217 (9.4)	662 (9.6)	440 (6.9)	1319 (8.5)	1.40 (1.25–1.58)	
Western Europe	737 (32.0)	2071 (30.2)	1546 (24.3)	4354 (28.0)	1.48 (1.36–1.60)	
North America	939 (40.8)	1804 (26.3)	1097 (17.2)	3840 (24.7)	Reference group	
Psychosocial measures						
Depressed mood						
Often/always	100 (4.4)	524 (7.9)	1148 (18.7)	1772 (11.7)	4.25 (3.82–4.74)	<0.0001
Sometimes	820 (36.1)	3000 (45.0)	3023 (49.2)	6843 (45.4)	1.84 (1.73–1.97)	
Never/rarely	1354 (59.5)	3142 (47.1)	1976 (32.1)	6472 (42.9)	Reference group	
Loss of interest						
Often/always	84 (3.7)	508 (7.6)	1107 (18.1)	1699 (11.3)	4.09 (3.67–4.55)	<0.0001
Sometimes	472 (20.8)	1979 (29.7)	2236 (36.6)	4687 (31.2)	2.00 (1.87–2.15)	
Never/rarely	1715 (75.5)	4174 (62.7)	2768 (45.3)	8657 (57.5)	Reference group	
Financial stress						
Often/always	205 (9.1)	895 (13.4)	1386 (22.6)	2486 (16.5)	2.44 (2.23–2.67)	<0.0001
Sometimes	633 (28.0)	2165 (32.5)	2114 (34.5)	4912 (32.6)	1.47 (1.38–1.57)	
Never/rarely	1424 (63.0)	3603 (54.1)	2630 (42.9)	7657 (50.9)	Reference group	
Lives alone						
Yes	302 (13.2)	897 (13.1)	862 (13.6)	2061 (13.3)	1.03 (0.95–1.13)	0.4556
No	1991 (86.8)	5941 (86.9)	5480 (86.4)	13 412 (86.7)	Reference group	
Stress at work or at home						
Often/always	312 (13.8)	1156 (17.3)	1513 (24.6)	2981 (19.8)	1.96 (1.80–2.14)	<0.0001
Sometimes	1027 (45.4)	3126 (46.8)	2898 (47.2)	7051 (46.7)	1.33 (1.24–1.43)	
Never/rarely	925 (40.9)	2400 (35.9)	1732 (28.2)	5057 (33.5)	Reference group	
Years of education						
9–12 y	710 (30.9)	2125 (31.1)	1897 (30.0)	4732 (30.6)	0.75 (0.69–0.82)	<0.0001
College/university	858 (37.3)	1923 (28.2)	1572 (24.9)	4353 (28.2)	0.60 (0.55–0.66)	
Trade school	347 (15.1)	1262 (18.5)	1205 (19.1)	2814 (18.2)	0.87 (0.79–0.95)	
<8 y	384 (16.7)	1513 (22.2)	1651 (26.1)	3548 (23.0)	Reference group	

Continued

Table 1. Continued

	Excellent or Very Good (n=2304)	Good (n=6863)	Average or Poor (n=6361)	Total (N=15 528)	Odds Ratio for one category decrease in health OR (95% CI)	P Value
Lifestyle risk factors						
Body mass index, kg/m ²						
Mean (SD)	28.5 (4.4)	28.9 (4.8)	29.2 (5.4)	28.9 (5.0)	1.09 (1.01–1.02)	<0.0001 [‡]
Smoking status						
Current smoker	269 (11.7)	1172 (17.1)	1362 (21.4)	2803 (18.1)	1.44 (1.32–1.58)	<0.0001
Former smoker	1298 (56.3)	3589 (52.3)	3060 (48.1)	7947 (51.2)	0.92 (0.86–0.99)	
Never smoked	737 (32.0)	2102 (30.6)	1939 (30.5)	4778 (30.8)	Reference group	
Mediterranean diet score						
Mean (SD)	12.8 (3.1)	12.0 (3.0)	11.7 (3.1)	12.0 (3.1)	0.93 (0.92–0.94)	<0.0001 [‡]
Physical activity (MET h/wk)						
Mean (SD)	60.7 (50.6)	55.2 (49.7)	46.8 (45.6)	52.6 (48.5)	0.90 (0.89–0.92)	<0.0001 [¶]
Attended cardiac rehabilitation						
Yes	966 (42.0)	2409 (35.3)	2037 (32.3)	5412 (35.1)	0.781 (0.734–0.831)	<0.0001
Disease markers						
Diagnosis of hypertension						
Yes	1512 (65.6)	4841 (70.5)	4759 (74.8)	11 112 (71.6)	1.34 (1.25–1.43)	<0.0001
Congestive heart failure at baseline						
Yes	223 (9.7)	1255 (18.3)	1857 (29.2)	3335 (21.5)	2.24 (2.08–2.41)	<0.0001
Significant renal dysfunction						
Yes	581 (25.2%)	2011 (29.3%)	2094 (32.9%)	4686 (30.2%)	1.27 (1.19–1.35)	<0.0001
Prior myocardial infarction						
Yes	1288 (55.9)	4069 (59.3)	3784 (59.5)	9141 (58.9)	1.07 (1.01–1.14)	0.0226
Prior coronary revascularization (PCI or CABG)						
Yes	1852 (80.4)	5222 (76.1)	4574 (71.9)	11 648 (75.0)	0.74 (0.70–0.80)	<0.0001
Prior multivessel chronic heart disease						
Yes	266 (11.5)	988 (14.4)	1084 (17.0)	2338 (15.1)	1.32 (1.22–1.44)	<0.0001
Diabetes mellitus						
Yes	677 (29.4)	2537 (37.0)	2801 (44.0)	6015 (38.7)	1.50 (1.41–1.60)	<0.0001
Polyvascular disease						
Yes	235 (10.2)	999 (14.6)	1101 (17.3)	2335 (15.0)	1.40 (1.30–1.53)	<0.0001
Tooth loss						
≤25 teeth	1593 (69.4)	5294 (77.9)	5193 (82.6)	12 080 (78.5)	1.61 (1.50–1.73)	<0.0001
26–32 (all)	701 (30.6)	1505 (22.1)	1093 (17.4)	3299 (21.5)	Reference group	
NYHA functional class						
Class II, III, or IV	120 (5.2)	856 (12.5)	1467 (23.1)	2443 (15.7)	2.63 (2.42–2.87)	<0.0001
Medications at randomization						
Aspirin						
Yes	2181 (94.7)	6385 (93.0)	5779 (90.9)	14 345 (92.4)	0.687 (0.613–0.770)	<0.0001
ACEI or ARB						
Yes	1632 (70.8)	5291 (77.1)	5036 (79.2)	11 959 (77.0)	1.301 (1.212–1.396)	<0.0001
Statin						
Yes	2243 (97.4)	6689 (97.5)	6174 (97.1)	15 106 (97.3)	0.892 (0.743–1.071)	0.2213

Continued

Table 1. Continued

	Excellent or Very Good (n=2304)	Good (n=6863)	Average or Poor (n=6361)	Total (N=15 528)	Odds Ratio for one category decrease in health OR (95% CI)	P Value
Beta blocker						
Yes	1728 (75.0)	5413 (78.9)	5117 (80.4)	12 258 (78.9)	1.206 (1.122–1.297)	<0.0001
P2Y ₁₂ inhibitor						
Yes	718 (31.2)	2214 (32.3)	2319 (36.5)	5251 (33.8)	1.203 (1.129–1.281)	<0.0001
Biomarkers						
LDL-C, mmol/L						
Mean (SD)	2.1 (0.8)	2.2 (0.8)	2.3 (0.9)	2.2 (0.9)	1.18 (1.14–1.21)	<0.0001
HDL-C, mmol/L						
Mean (SD)	1.3 (0.3)	1.2 (0.3)	1.2 (0.3)	1.2 (0.3)	0.88 (0.86–0.91)	<0.0001
Hemoglobin, g/L						
Mean (SD)	144.5 (12.3)	142.7 (13.8)	141.8 (14.7)	142.6 (14.0)	0.89 (0.87–0.92)	<0.0001
High-sensitivity troponin T, ng/L						
Mean (SD)	10.8 (9.3)	11.9 (12.2)	13.7 (23.2)	12.4 (17.2)	1.19 (1.14–1.25)	<0.0001
Interleukin 6, ng/L						
Mean (SD)	2.4 (2.0)	2.8 (2.9)	3.1 (3.2)	2.8 (2.9)	1.18 (1.14–1.22)	<0.0001
GDF-15, ng/L						
Mean (SD)	1415.2 (974.0)	1532.0 (1081.4)	1669.5 (1302.6)	1569.2 (1164.0)	1.17 (1.13–1.21)	<0.0001
Triglycerides, mmol/L						
Mean (SD)	1.6 (1.0)	1.8 (1.2)	1.9 (1.5)	1.8 (1.3)	1.17 (1.13–1.21)	<0.0001
eGFR (CKD-EPI), mL/min/1.73 m ²						
Mean (SD)	73.9 (16.3)	73.3 (17.1)	73.8 (18.2)	73.6 (17.4)	1.01 (0.98–1.04)	0.4384
Creatinine						
Mean (SD)	93.5 (19.4)	94.1 (24.1)	93.7 (23.7)	93.9 (23.3)	1.00 (0.97–1.03)	0.8168
White blood cell count (1×10 ⁹ /L)						
Mean (SD)	6.4 (1.7)	6.8 (1.9)	7.0 (1.9)	6.8 (1.9)	1.19 (1.156–1.232)	<0.0001
hs-CRP, mg/L						
Mean (SD)	2.4 (6.6)	2.8 (5.9)	3.4 (7.2)	3.0 (6.6)	1.12 (1.08–1.16)	<0.0001
NT-proBNP, ng/L						
Mean (SD)	267.6 (490.9)	345.4 (636.3)	431.9 (989.6)	368.2 (783.1)	1.21 (1.16–1.26)	<0.0001
Cystatin C, ng/L						
Mean (SD)	1.0 (0.3)	1.0 (0.3)	1.1 (0.3)	1.1 (0.3)	1.13 (1.10–1.17)	<0.0001
Lp-PLA ₂ activity, μmol/min/L						
Mean (SD)	173.6 (44.4)	175.4 (47.2)	176.5 (50.0)	175.6 (47.9)	1.04 (1.01–1.07)	0.0177

Values are mean (SD) and n (%) for categorical variables. Percentages refer to the percentage of patients in each level of self-reported health and of all patients who have the given characteristic. ACEI indicates angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitor; ARB, angiotensin receptor blocker; CABG, coronary artery bypass grafting; CI, confidence interval; CKD-EPI, Chronic Kidney Disease Epidemiology Collaboration; eGFR, estimated glomerular filtration rate; GDF-15, growth differentiation factor-15; HDL-C, high-density lipoprotein cholesterol; hs-CRP, high-sensitivity C-reactive protein; LDL-C, low-density lipoprotein cholesterol; LpPLA₂, lipoprotein-associated phospholipase A₂; MET, metabolic equivalent; NT-proBNP, N-terminal pro-B-type natriuretic peptide; NYHA, New York Heart Association; OR, odds ratio; PCI, percutaneous coronary intervention.

OR for 1-category decrease in self-reported health category: [†]OR based on 1-U increase, [§]OR based on 10-U increase, ^{||}OR based on 1-SD increase, [¶]OR based on 50% increase.

broad range of demographic, geographic, psychosocial, life-style-related, and conventional cardiovascular risk factors, disease markers, and biomarkers were associated with self-reported health. Thirty-two of these 38 covariates were

associated with self-reported health in univariate analysis, with $P<0.0001$.

Patients who self-reported poorer health were slightly more likely to be on an angiotensin-converting enzyme

inhibitor or angiotensin II receptor antagonist, a beta-blocker, or a P2Y₁₂ antagonist compared with those with better self-reported health (Table 1). Aspirin use was slightly less in patients reporting poorer general health. Statin use was similar by self-reported health. There was no difference in self-reported health at baseline according to allocation to darapladib or placebo, as expected by randomization.

Variables independently associated with self-reported health in a multivariable adjusted model are displayed in Table 2. The statistical strength of associations between different variables and self-reported health is compared in Figure 1. The strongest independent associations were with geographic region, depressed mood, and low physical activity. The geographic region with the best self-reported health was North America, followed by South America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, and Asia (Table 1). After adjusting for other covariates associated with self-reported health, persons from South America and North America had the best self-reported health, participants from Western Europe reported slightly worse general health, and those from Eastern Europe and Asia were much more likely to report poorer health (Table 2). A less healthy diet, obesity, smoking, diabetes mellitus, hypertension, exertional dyspnea, cardiovascular disease markers, and tooth loss were each associated with poorer self-reported health. Blood markers independently associated with poorer self-reported health were high-sensitivity cardiac troponin T, growth differentiation factor 15, interleukin 6, low-density lipoprotein cholesterol, and low hemoglobin. Age and sex were not associated with self-reported health in the fully adjusted model. Attendance at cardiac rehabilitation was not associated with self-reported health after adjusting for covariates (Table 2).

There was a stepwise increase in the risk of MACE with worsening self-reported health (Figure 2). The hazard ratios for adverse outcomes by self-reported health before and after adjustment for covariables are displayed in Figure 3A and 3B, respectively. Poorer self-reported health was associated with increased cardiovascular and total mortality, myocardial infarction, stroke, and hospital admission for heart failure (Figure 3A). After adjustment for all covariates, these associations were maintained for all outcomes except heart failure hospitalization and stroke (Figure 3B).

Discussion

In this study, which evaluated a global population of patients with stable CHD on optimal secondary prevention treatment, average or poor self-reported health was independently associated with a 2- to 3-fold increased risk of cardiovascular mortality and myocardial infarction compared with patients reporting very good or excellent health. These observations indicate that self-reported health is an important incremental

risk indicator of myocardial infarction and cardiovascular mortality in patients with stable CHD, despite optimal secondary prevention treatment. The association with a large number of prognostically important variables is consistent with the conclusion that self-reported health is a global health measure that both reflects the cumulative effects of a broad range of known risk indicators and indicates the importance of additional risk indicators not measurable by conventional methods.

A number of large studies have evaluated associations between self-reported health and mortality in general populations.^{4,6,21} In the UK Biobank cohort, which included nearly 500 000 volunteers and evaluated multiple clinical, biomarker, and genetic risk factors, self-reported health was the strongest single predictor of all-cause mortality in men and the third strongest mortality predictor in women after a cancer diagnosis and illness or injury.⁴ Meta-analyses of smaller studies have also been consistent in reporting associations between poorer self-reported health and cardiovascular and all-cause mortality.^{5,22} In a large Swedish general population cohort, poorer self-reported health was associated with a higher prevalence of multiple cardiovascular risk factors, and with an increased risk of myocardial infarction during follow-up over \approx 13 years.²¹

A systematic review of studies reporting the relationship between self-reported health and fatal and nonfatal cardiovascular outcomes²² identified 3 studies^{8,9,23} including 10 648 patients with known cardiovascular or ischemic heart disease. In this meta-analysis, patients with poor health compared with good or excellent health had a \approx 2.4 times higher risk of cardiovascular death, consistent with the current study. However these studies have limitations, including poor measurement of baseline risk factors and cardiovascular disease status, lack of detail on study methods, and poor ascertainment of disease status or severity.

Most previous studies reporting self-reported health have been undertaken in a single country. In the current study, which included patients from 39 countries and multiple regions of the world, self-reported health was strongly associated with geographic region and country of residence. These observations suggest that cultural or regional norms need to be considered when interpreting self-reported health. In addition, the large geographic differences in self-reported health changed after adjustment for covariates, suggesting that geographic differences in self-reported health reflect both differences in the burden of disease or symptoms and different perceptions of their impact on health. Socioeconomic²⁴ and international gradients²⁵ in adverse outcomes for patients with CHD persist despite adjustment for conventional cardiovascular risk factors and are well described. It is possible these could be explained in part by differences in general health.

Table 2. Covariates Independently Associated With Self-Reported Health in a Model Adjusting for All Other Covariates

Variables	Contrast	OR (95% CI)	Overall P Value
Demographics			
Age at randomization, y		1.080 (1.006–1.159) [†]	0.0330
Sex	Female vs male	1.175 (0.989–1.395)	0.0664
Geographic region	Asia/Pacific vs North America	4.795 (4.142–5.549)	<0.0001
	Eastern Europe vs North America	3.015 (2.651–3.427)	
	South America vs North America	0.866 (0.732–1.025)	
	Western Europe vs North America	1.647 (1.477–1.837)	
Psychosocial measures			
Depressed mood	Often/always vs never/rarely	2.214 (1.897–2.583)	<0.0001
	Sometimes vs never/rarely	1.408 (1.292–1.535)	
Lost interest in hobbies	Often/always vs never/rarely	2.625 (2.270–3.036)	<0.0001
	Sometimes vs never/rarely	1.502 (1.378–1.638)	
Financial stress	Often/always vs never/rarely	1.455 (1.287–1.645)	<0.0001
	Sometimes vs never/rarely	1.150 (1.054–1.255)	
Lives alone	Yes vs no	1.009 (0.905–1.126)	0.8676
Stress at work or at home	Often/always vs never/rarely	1.222 (1.081–1.382)	0.0024
	Sometimes vs never/rarely	1.136 (1.040–1.242)	
Years of education	9–12 vs <8 y	0.873 (0.783–0.974)	<0.0001
	Trade school vs <8 y	0.968 (0.856–1.094)	
	College/university vs <8 y	0.785 (0.700–0.881)	
Lifestyle risk factors			
Body mass index, kg/m ²		1.028 (1.019–1.037)*	<0.0001
Smoking status	Current smoker vs never/former smoker	1.285 (1.153–1.432)	<0.0001
Mediterranean diet score		0.959 (0.947–0.972)*	<0.0001
Physical activity, MET h/wk		0.916 (0.901–0.931) [§]	<0.0001
Cardiac rehabilitation	Yes vs no	0.962 (0.888–1.043)	0.3514
Disease markers			
Diagnosis of hypertension	Yes vs no	1.285 (1.181–1.399)	<0.0001
Congestive heart failure at baseline	Yes vs no	1.141 (1.001–1.301)	0.0481
Significant renal dysfunction	Yes vs no	1.061 (0.965–1.165)	0.2194
Prior myocardial infarction	Yes vs no	0.895 (0.825–0.971)	0.0076
Prior coronary revascularization (PCI or CABG)	Yes vs no	0.876 (0.797–0.962)	0.0055
Prior multivessel chronic heart disease	Yes vs no	1.228 (1.098–1.372)	0.0003
Diabetes mellitus	Yes vs no	1.229 (1.128–1.338)	<0.0001
Polyvascular disease	Yes vs no	1.272 (1.144–1.415)	<0.0001
Tooth loss	≤25 vs 26–32 (all) teeth	1.387 (1.262–1.524)	<0.0001
NYHA functional class	Class II,III, or IV vs no class/class I	1.554 (1.337–1.806)	<0.0001
Biomarkers			
LDL-C, mmol/L		1.092 (1.040–1.146) [‡]	0.0004
HDL-C, mmol/L		0.939 (0.898–0.982) [‡]	0.0062
Hemoglobin, g/L		0.951 (0.909–0.995) [‡]	0.0307

Continued

Table 2. Continued

Variables	Contrast	OR (95% CI)	Overall <i>P</i> Value
High-sensitivity troponin T, ng/L		1.081 (1.026–1.140) [‡]	0.0036
Interleukin 6, ng/L		1.070 (1.023–1.119) [‡]	0.0033
GDF-15, ng/L		1.070 (1.017–1.124) [‡]	0.0083
Triglycerides, mmol/L		1.050 (0.995–1.109) [‡]	0.0767
eGFR (CKD-EPI), mL/min/1.73 m ²		1.117 (0.971–1.286) [‡]	0.1219
Creatinine		1.131 (0.979–1.307) [‡]	0.0949
White blood cell count (1 × 10 ⁹ /L)		0.988 (0.949–1.028) [‡]	0.5541
High-sensitivity C-reactive protein, mg/L		1.009 (0.967–1.053) [‡]	0.6678
NT-proBNP, ng/L		1.049 (0.995–1.105) [‡]	0.0750
Cystatin C, ng/L		0.943 (0.885–1.006) [‡]	0.0750
Lp-PLA ₂ activity, μmol/min/L		0.965 (0.918–1.013) [‡]	0.1506

CABG indicates coronary artery bypass grafting; CI, confidence interval; CKD-EPI, Chronic Kidney Disease Epidemiology Collaboration; eGFR, estimated glomerular filtration rate; GDF-15, growth differentiation factor-15; HDL-C, high-density lipoprotein cholesterol; LDL-C, low-density lipoprotein cholesterol; LpPLA₂, lipoprotein-associated phospholipase A₂; MET, metabolic equivalent; NT-proBNP, N-terminal pro-B-type natriuretic peptide; NYHA, New York Heart Association; OR, odds ratio; PCI, percutaneous coronary intervention.

OR for 1-category decrease in self-reported health category: ^{*}OR based on 1-U increase, [†]OR based on 10-U increase, [‡]OR based on 1-SD increase, [§]OR based on 50% increase.

Both psychosocial and conventional cardiovascular risk factors have been associated with self-reported health in previous studies.^{7,21,22} In these studies, however, information on multiple covariates was more limited, and a detailed analysis of the relative importance of different factors was not undertaken. In the current study, depressive symptoms were strongly associated with self-reported health, consistent with an effect of mood on the perception of health and the impact of poorer health on mood. Stress from various causes and fewer years of education were also associated with poorer self-reported health. Other indicators of socioeconomic status were not assessed in this study. Lifestyle risk factors, including current smoking, physical activity, diet, and body weight, were relatively strong predictors of self-reported health.

The presence of clinical markers of cardiovascular disease or risk, including prior myocardial infarction, stroke, polyvascular disease, diabetes mellitus, and renal dysfunction, was associated with poorer self-reported health; however, the strength of these associations, as assessed by the χ^2 statistic, was generally less than that of psychosocial and lifestyle measures. Associations between self-reported health and blood biomarkers, some of which are powerful risk predictors, were generally weaker than those of clinical variables. Associations of self-reported health with low-density lipoprotein cholesterol, hemoglobin, interleukin 6, growth differentiation factor 15, and troponin T are consistent with an influence of multiple pathophysiological pathways.

There were modest differences in use of several evidence-based medications by self-reported health, but the reasons for these differences cannot be determined reliably in this observational study. Differences in medication use could be

explained by treatment indication, such as impaired left ventricular function, which is a stronger indication for beta blockers and angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors or angiotensin receptor antagonists, or effects of treatment on general health (eg, if beta blockers caused fatigue). A common association between medication use and other factors that influence health, such as socioeconomic conditions, geography, or medical care, is also possible.¹²

Study Limitations

The current study has a number of limitations. The degree to which the observed associations are causal cannot be established in this observational study. Despite the availability of a wide array of clinical and biochemical risk indicators and risk factors, there are still additional unmeasured risk factors, for example, details on all comorbidities, extent of coronary lesions, and genetic factors that were not included in the database. Furthermore, participants selected to participate in a clinical trial may not be representative of all CHD patients; however, the large geographically and culturally diverse study population and the internal consistency of the data suggest that results are likely to be broadly applicable. Additional strengths of the current analysis include the standardized assessment of multiple clinical, psychosocial, and lifestyle variables and near-complete ascertainment of outcomes.

This study described associations between self-reported health and a broad range of prognostically important variables. Our observation that many of these associations remained statistically significant after multivariable adjustment indicates that self-reported health captures a broad range of conditions affecting sense of well-being.

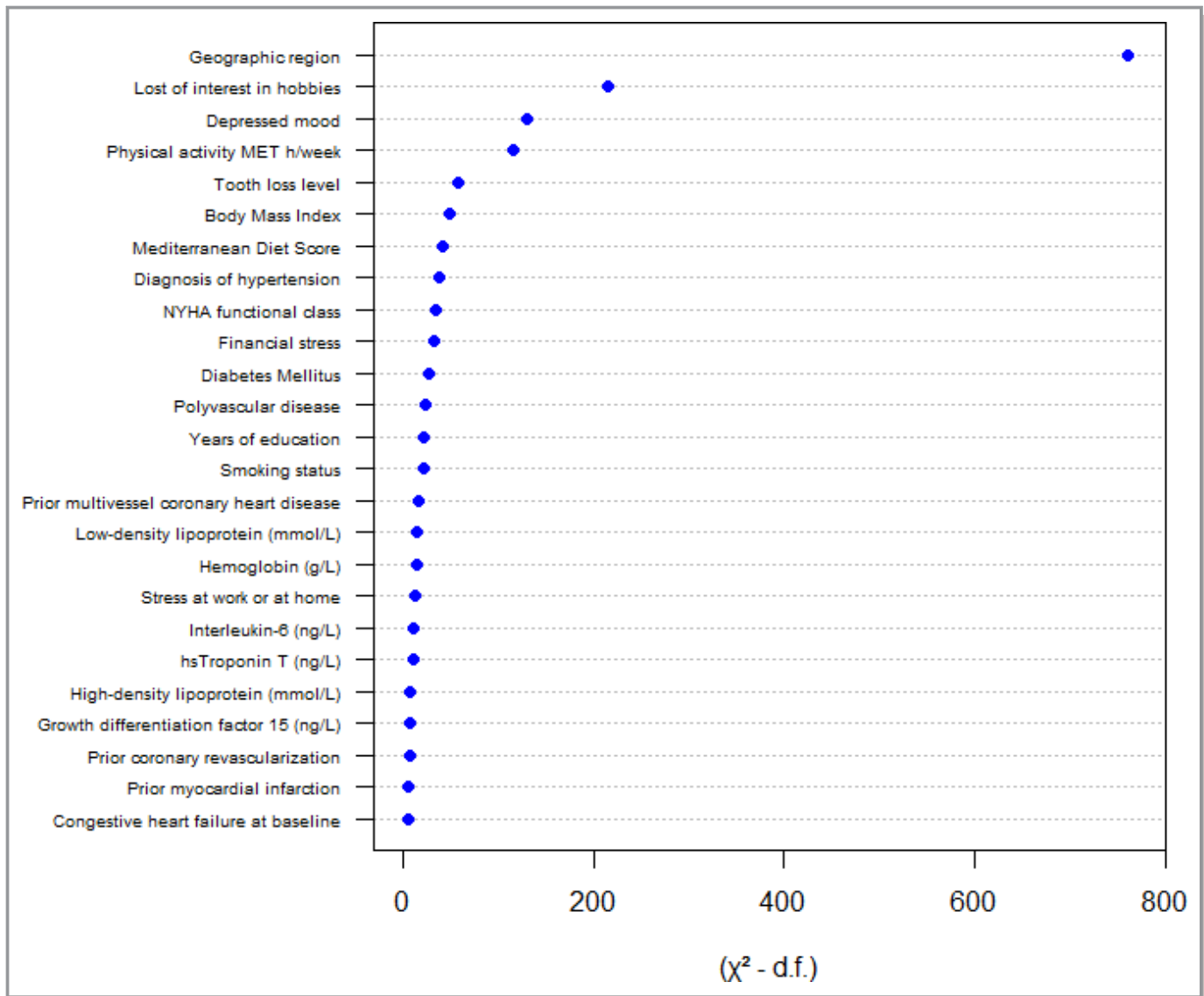


Figure 1. Relative strength of association with self-reported health of each variable included in the full model, as measured by the Wald χ^2 test minus the predictor degrees of freedom: $(\chi^2 - df) = \chi^2 - \text{predictor } df$. Higher values on the x-axis indicate a stronger association with self-reported health. hs indicates high sensitivity; MET, metabolic equivalent; NYHA, New York Heart Association.

Broad geographic regions were prespecified for the analysis, but chosen groupings are relatively crude indicators of the importance of cultural, medical, and socioeconomic differences between and within countries—a limitation that is likely to diminish estimates of the importance of geographic factors. Despite this, geographic region was a strong independent predictor of both self-reported health and MACE.

Study Implications

An assessment of self-reported health can be undertaken simply as part of almost any consultation. Poor or worsening self-reported health may occur for many reasons, both cardiac and noncardiac. This study suggests that poorer general health, whatever the reason, is associated with a higher risk of

MACE in patients with stable CHD. This raises the possibility that interventions that improve overall health could reduce cardiovascular risk.

Disease-specific patient-centered outcome measures, such as the Quality of Life After Myocardial Infarction Questionnaire²⁶ or the Seattle Angina Questionnaire,²⁷ may be more sensitive to the impact of cardiovascular disease on quality of life than on overall health.¹ Self-reported overall health is influenced by many factors. Compared with disease-specific tools, general health may be less sensitive to changes in symptoms directly related to, for example, CHD. Nevertheless, disease-specific measures have some disadvantages. They generally include more questions, are less comparable for patients with different medical problems, are more time consuming to administer, and may not

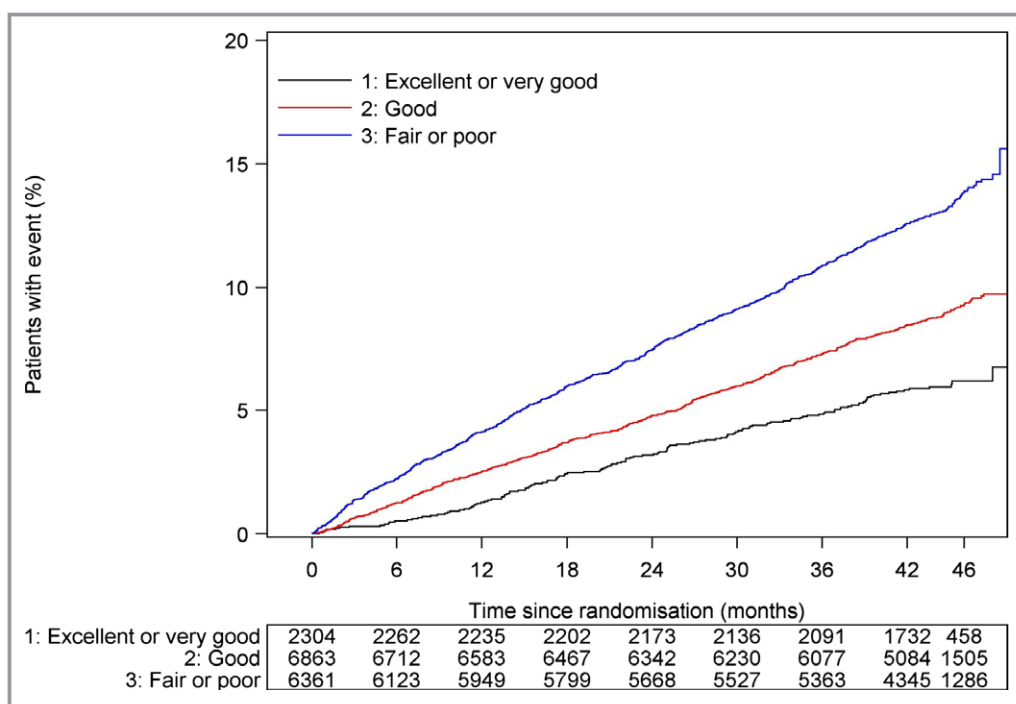


Figure 2. Kaplan–Meier plot of major adverse cardiovascular events by self-reported health at baseline.

capture the impact of non–disease-related factors on general health.

Because self-reported overall health is a powerful risk marker, considering it could better inform decisions about treatment or delivery of health care and discussions about risks to future health. Few studies have evaluated whether and how response to different treatments relates to self-reported health. Further research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of targeting health care based on assessment of self-reported general health.

Conclusions

In a global stable CHD population, self-reported health was strongly associated with geographical region, psychosocial variables, and lifestyle risk factors. Self-reported health was independently associated with MACE when adjusting for baseline characteristics including a wide array of prognostic biomarkers. These data support the conclusion that self-perceived health and psychosocial and lifestyle-related factors contribute to cardiovascular events beyond what is measurable by established risk indicators.

Author Contributions

Stewart, Held, Wallentin, and White designed the lifestyle questionnaire administered to STABILITY trial participants, which included the question on self-reported health, and

proposed the study analysis. Statistical analysis was undertaken by Hadziosmanovic. The manuscript was drafted by Stewart. All coauthors contributed to the design and management of the STABILITY trial. All authors contributed to critical review of the manuscript. Additional Contributions: Editorial assistance was provided by Susanna Thörnqvist, PhD, Uppsala Clinical Research Center (UCR), Uppsala University, Sweden, through funds from GlaxoSmithKline and secretarial assistance was provided by Michelle D’Souza, Auckland City Hospital.

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Disclosures

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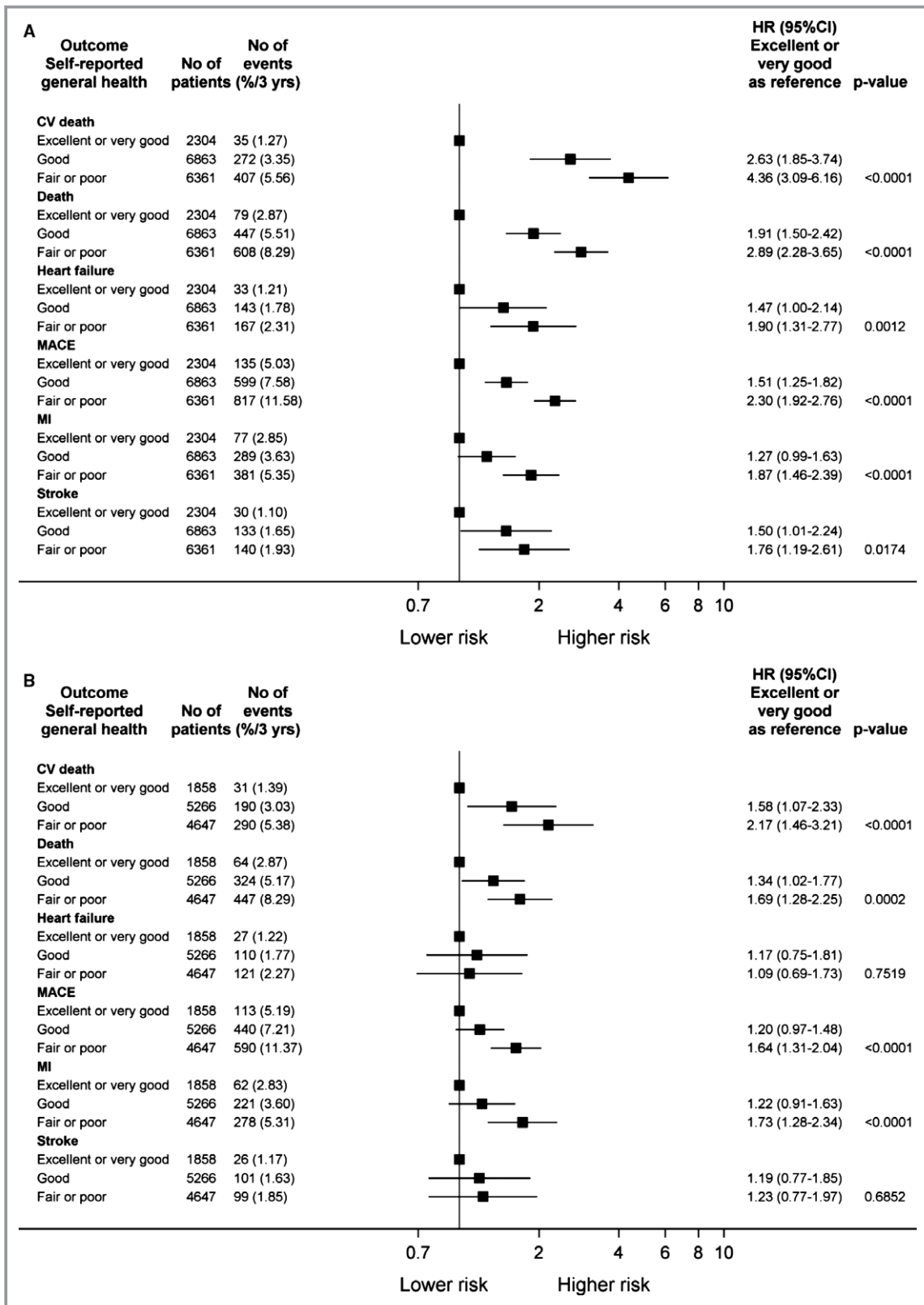


Figure 3. Adverse events by self-reported health at baseline adjusted (A) for treatment allocation only and (B) for all covariates. Hazard ratios (HRs) and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) are presented for each outcome for patients reporting good and average or poor health compared with the reference group that reported very good or excellent health. *Heart failure* refers to hospitalization for heart failure. CV indicates cardiovascular; MACE, major adverse cardiac events; MI, myocardial infarction.

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Supplemental Material

Appendix

STABILITY Trial – Organizational

STABILITY Executive Steering Committee members

Co-chairmen:

Harvey D White (Green Lane Cardiovascular Service, Auckland City Hospital, and Auckland University, Auckland, NZ; member of the VIGOUR Organization)

Lars Wallentin (Department of Medical Sciences and Uppsala Clinical Research Center, Uppsala University, Uppsala, SE; member of the VIGOUR Organization)

Members:

Andrzej Budaj (Grochowski Hospital, Warsaw, PL)

Christopher P Cannon (TIMI Study Group, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, MA, US)

Robert A Harrington (Stanford University, Stanford, CA, US; member of the VIGOUR Organization)

Ph Gabriel Steg (INSERM-Unité, AP-HP; Hôpital Bichat; and Université Paris-Diderot, Paris, FR; Royal Brompton Hospital, London, UK; member of the VIGOUR Organization)

GlaxoSmithKline Members:

Richard Davies (GlaxoSmithKline, King of Prussia, PA, US)

Elizabeth Tarka (GlaxoSmithKline, King of Prussia, PA, US)

STABILITY Executive Operations Committee members

Harvey D White (Green Lane Cardiovascular Service, Auckland City Hospital, and Auckland University, Auckland, NZ; member of the VIGOUR Organization)

Lars Wallentin (Department of Medical Sciences and Uppsala Clinical Research Center, Uppsala University, Uppsala, SE; member of the VIGOUR Organization)

Claes Held (Department of Medical Sciences and Uppsala Clinical Research Center, Uppsala University, Uppsala, SE; member of the VIGOUR Organization)

Ralph Stewart (Green Lane Cardiovascular Service, Auckland City Hospital, and Auckland University, Auckland, NZ; member of the VIGOUR Organization)

Olga Bucan (Green Lane Cardiovascular Service, Auckland City Hospital, Auckland, NZ)

Charlotta Elfström (Uppsala Clinical Research Center, Uppsala University, Uppsala, SE)

Rebekkah Brown (GlaxoSmithKline, Research Triangle Park, NC, US)

Lisa Hegg (GlaxoSmithKline, King of Prussia, PA, US)
Marie Jarosz (GlaxoSmithKline, King of Prussia, PA, US)
Sue Krug-Gourley (GlaxoSmithKline, King of Prussia, PA, US)
Jerry Rudman (GlaxoSmithKline, King of Prussia, PA, US) (Posthumous)
Peter Smith (GlaxoSmithKline, Research Triangle Park, NC, US)
Elizabeth Tarka (GlaxoSmithKline, King of Prussia, PA, US)

STABILITY Steering Committee members/ National Coordinators

Diego Ardissino (Azienda Ospedaliero-Universitaria di Parma, Parma, IT)
Paul W Armstrong (University of Alberta, Edmonton, CA, US; member of the VIGOUR Organization)
Alvaro Avezum (Dante Pazzanese Institute of Cardiology, São Paulo, BR)
Philip E Aylward (South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute, Flinders University and Medical Centre, Adelaide, AU)
Alfonso Bryce (Cardiogolf/Clinica El Golf, Lima, PE)
Hong Chen (Peking University People's Hospital, Beijing, CN)
Ming-Fong Chen (National Taiwan University Hospital, Taipei, TW)
Ramon Corbalan (Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile, Santiago, CL)
Anthony JDalby (Milpark Hospital, Johannesburg, ZA)
Nicolas Danchin (AP-HP and Université Paris Descartes, Paris, FR)
Robbert J De Winter (University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, NL)
Stefan Denchev (University Hospital Alexandrovska, Sofia, BG)
Rafael Diaz (ECLA Estudios Cardiológicos, Latinoamérica, Rosario, AR)
Moses Elisaf (University of Ioannina, Ioannina, GR)
Marcus D Flather (University of East Anglia and Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, UK)
Assen R Goudev (Queen Giovanna University Hospital, Sofia, BG)
Christopher B Granger (Duke University, Medical Center, Durham, NC, US; member of the VIGOUR Organization)
Liliana Grinfeld (University of Buenos Aires, School of Medicine, Buenos Aires, AR)
Claes Held (Uppsala Clinical Research Center, Uppsala University, Uppsala, SE)
Judith S Hochman (NYU Langone Medical Center, New York, NY, US)
Steen Husted (Hospital Unit West, Herning/Holstbro, DK)

Hyo-Soo Kim (Seoul National University Hospital, Seoul, KR)

Wolfgang Koenig (University of Ulm Medical Center, Ulm, DE)

Ales Linhart (Charles University in Prague, Prague, CZ)

Eva Lonn (McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, CA)

José López-Sendón (Hospital Universitario La Paz, Madrid, ES)

Athanasios J Manolis (Asklepeion Hospital, Athens, GR)

Emile R Mohler, III (University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, US)

José C Nicolau (University of São Paulo Medical School, São Paulo, BR)

Prem Pais (St. John's Medical Collage, Bangalore, IN)

Alexander Parkhomenko (Institute of Cardiology, Kiev, UA)

Terje R Pedersen (University of Oslo and Oslo University Hospital, Oslo, NO)

Daniel Pella (PJ Safarik University, Kosice, SK)

Marco ARamos-Corrales (San Jose Satelite Hospital, Naucalpan, MX)

Mikhail Ruda (Russian Cardiologic Research and Production Complex of Rosmedtechnology, Moscow, RU)

Mátyás Sereg (St. George Hospital, Székesfehérvár, HU)

Saulat Siddique (Shaikh Zayed Postgraduate Medical Institute, Lahore, PK)

Peter Sinnaeve (University Hospitals Leuven, Leuven, BE)

Piyamitr Sritara (Mahidol University, Bangkok, TH)

Ralph Stewart (Green Lane Cardiovascular Service, Auckland City Hospital, and Auckland University, Auckland, NZ)

Henk P Swart (Antonius Hospital Sneek, NL)

Rody G Sy (University of the Philippines, Manila, PH)

Tamio Teramoto (Teikyo Academic Research Center, Itabashi-ku, Tokyo, JP)

Hung-Fat Tse (University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong SAR, CN)

W Douglas Weaver (Henry Ford Heart and Vascular Institute, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI, US)

Robert Weiss (Maine Research Associates, Auburn, ME, US)

Margus Viigimaa, Tallinn (University of Technology, Tallinn, EE)

Dragos Vinereanu (University of Medicine and Pharmacy, University and Emergency Hospital, Bucharest, RO)

Junren Zhu (Fudan University, Shanghai, CN)

Independent Data Monitoring Committee members (IDMC)

Chairman: Rory Collins (University of Oxford, Oxford, UK)

Voting Members

Jeffrey Anderson (Intermountain Medical Center, Murray, UT, US)

David DeMets (University of Wisconsin–Madison, Madison, WI, US)

Peter Ganz (University of California-San Francisco, San Francisco, CA, US)

Peter Sandercock (Western General Hospital, Edinburgh, UK)

Michael Weber (SUNY Downstate College of Medicine, New York, NY, US)

Statistical Data Analysis Center

Department of Biostatistics and Medical Informatics, University of Wisconsin–Madison, Madison, WI, US

Staff Members

Marian Fisher (Director); Kevin Buhr, Scott Diegel, and Melissa Schultz (Contributing Statisticians)

Clinical End Point Classification (CEC) - Cardiology

Chairman - CEC Cardiology: Claes Held, Uppsala Clinical Research Center, Uppsala University, Uppsala, SE

Co-chairman - CEC Cardiology: Kenneth W Mahaffey, Duke Clinical Research Institute, Durham, NC, US

Adjudicators – CEC Cardiology

John H Alexander (Duke University School of Medicine, Durham, NC, US)

Sana Al-Khatib (Duke University School of Medicine, Durham, NC, US)

Tomasz Baron (Uppsala University Hospital, Uppsala, SE)

Olle Bergström (Växjö Hospital, Växjö, SE)

Cheryl Bushnell (Duke University School of Medicine, Durham, NC, US)

Christina Christersson (Uppsala University Hospital, Uppsala, SE)

Kai Eggers (Uppsala University Hospital, Uppsala, SE)
Bengt-Olov Fredlund (Sahlgrenska University Hospital, Gothenburg, SE)
Emil Hagström (Uppsala University Hospital, Uppsala, SE)
Ziad Hijazi (Uppsala University Hospital, Uppsala, SE)
Lovisa Holm Örndahl (Uppsala University Hospital, Uppsala, SE)
Stefan K James (Uppsala University Hospital, Uppsala, SE)
Tomas Jernberg (Karolinska University Hospital, Stockholm, SE)
Nina Johnston (Uppsala University Hospital, Uppsala, SE)
Renato D Lopez (Duke University School of Medicine, Durham, NC, US)
Rajendra H Mehta (Duke University School of Medicine, Durham, NC, US)
Kristin L Newby (Duke University School of Medicine, Durham, NC, US)
Örjan Nordmark (Uppsala University Hospital, Uppsala, SE)
Jonas Oldgren (Uppsala University Hospital, Uppsala, SE)
Matthew T Roe (Duke University School of Medicine, Durham, NC, US)
Katarina Saldéen (Sahlgrenska University Hospital, Gothenburg, SE)
Anna Stenborg (Uppsala University Hospital, Uppsala, SE)
Karolina Szummer (Karolinska University Hospital, Stockholm, SE)
Christoph Varenhorst (Uppsala University Hospital, Uppsala, SE)
Axel Åkerblom (Uppsala University Hospital, Uppsala, SE)

Coordinating Sites – CEC Cardiology

Uppsala Clinical Research Center (UCR), Uppsala University, Uppsala, SE (*Lead coordinating site*)
Duke Clinical Research Institute (DCRI), Durham, NC, US
GLCC Research Organization Ltd, Auckland, NZ

Staff Members – CEC Cardiology

UCR: Charlotta Elfström (CEC Project Lead); Ulrika Bodén and Pernilla Holmgren (CEC Coordinators); Christina Alm, Theresa Hallberg, and Margareta Forsman (CEC Monitors); Hanna Ljung and Camilla Svanberg (CEC Assistants)

DCRI: Patrick F Loeb (CEC Project Lead); Karen Atwater, Robert Baldwin, Maria Butts, Tuan Chan, Patricia Connolly, Gerry Esposito, Jacalyn B Hillier, Marla Jordan, Kathleen Lane, Debra Eckart

Kimberly O'Malia, Grace Ryan, Patsy Smitheran, Maunette Tait, and Sachin Vyas (CEC Monitors);
Jessy Frazilus (CEC Assistant)

GLCC: Olga Bucan, Sarah Douglas (CEC Project Leads); Caroline Alsweiler, Lorinda Ball, Ana Bucan,
and Laura Mackay (CEC Monitors)

Clinical End Point Classification (CEC) - Oncology

Chairman - CEC Oncology: Stephen Wiviott (Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, MA, US)

Adjudicators – CEC Oncology

Gretchen Gignac (Boston Medical Center, Boston, MA, US)

Wolfram Goessling (Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, MA, US)

Ephraim Hochberg (Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, MS, US)

Andrew Lane (Dana Farber Cancer Institute, Boston, MA, US)

Carol Rosenberg (Harvard Vanguard, Boston, MA, US)

Andrew Wagner (Dana Farber Cancer Institute, Boston, MA, US)

Brian M Wolpin (Dana Farber Cancer Institute, Boston, MA, US)

Coordinating Site – CEC Oncology

Thrombolysis in Myocardial Infarction (TIMI) Study Group, CEC Department, Brigham and Women's
Hospital and Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA, US (*Lead coordinating site*)

Uppsala Clinical Research Center (UCR), Uppsala University, Uppsala, SE

Duke Clinical Research Institute (DCRI), Durham, NC, US

GLCC Research Organization Ltd, Auckland, NZ

Staff Members – CEC Oncology

TIMI Study group: Cheryl Lowe (CEC Director); Kristen Mills (CEC Manager); Maria Alkhalil and Jessica
Ruvido (CEC Coordinators); Mian Qasim Rehman, Margarita Shimmer, and Irina Stebletsova (Medical
Reviewers)

Statistical Centers and Involved Statisticians

Allison Barnes (GlaxoSmithKline, Research Triangle Park, NC, US)

Rebekkah Brown (GlaxoSmithKline, Research Triangle Park, NC, US)

Karen Chiswell (Duke Clinical Research Institute, Durham, NC, US)

Rich Davies (GlaxoSmithKline, King of Prussia, PA, US)

Amanda Stebbins (Duke Clinical Research Institute, Durham, NC, US)

Central Laboratory

Quest Diagnostics Clinical Laboratories, Inc., Valencia, CA, US

Data Coordination

Data management: GlaxoSmithKline, R&D Projects Clinical Platforms & Sciences, King of Prussia, PA, US

Registration And Medication Ordering System [RAMOS] interactive voice response system: GlaxoSmithKline, R&D Platform Technology & Science, Upper Providence, PA, US

Web-based Data Capture Vendor: Oracle Health Sciences, Boston, MA, US

STABILITY Investigators by country

Listed are investigators recruiting at least 1 patient. Number of patients included is listed in brackets. FPI = Former Principal Investigator at site

Argentina

Bustamante Labarta, Miguel, Instituto Medico de la Comunidad (IMEC), Buenos Aires (19); Cartasegna, Luis R, Hospital Italiano de La Plata, Buenos Aires (6); Chekherdemian, Sergio, Complejo Médico de la Policia Federal Argentina Churrucá-Visca, Ciudad Autonoma de Buenos Aires (16); Cuello, Jose L, Instituto de Investigaciones Clinicas Bahia Blanca, Buenos Aires (42); Elías, Pedro, INSARES, Mendoza (22); Giordano, Jorge, Clinica Instituto Medico Adrogué, Buenos Aires (23); Hirschson, Alfredo, CENIT- Centro de Neurociencias y Tratamiento- Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires (14); Hominal, Miguel Angel, Centro de Investigaciones Clinicas del Litoral S.R.L., Santa Fe, Santa Fe (47); Ibañez, Julio O, Instituto de Hipertension y Corazon, Corrientes (21); Jure, Horacio O, Clinica Chutro SRL, Córdoba (49); Litvak, Marcos, Instituto Medico Especializado, Ciudad Autonoma de Buenos Aires (25); Macin, Stella M, Instituto de Cardiologia JF Cabral, Corrientes (16); MacKinnon, Ignacio Jorge, Instituto de Investigacion Clinica de Mar del Plata, Buenos Aires (56); Maffei, Laura Elena, Consultorios Asociados de Endocrinología (CADE), Buenos Aires (43); Montaña, Oscar R, Clinica DIM Privada, Buenos Aires (39); Prado, Aldo D, Investigaciones Clinicas Tucuman, Tucuman (18); Sala, Jorgelina M, Gorosito, Vanina (FPI) Instituto de Investigaciones Clinicas Rosario, Santa Fe (68); Sanchez, Ramiro A, Fundapres, Ciudad Autonoma de Buenos Aires (18).

Australia

Brieger, David, Concord Hospital, Concord (6); Chew, Derek, Flinders Medical Centre, Bedford Park (9); Cross, David, The Wesley Research Institute, Auchenflower (20); De Looze, Ferdinandus J, Aus trials Pvt Ltd, Sherwood (36); Farshid, Ahmad, The Canberra Hospital, Garran (10); Hall, Stephen, Emeritus Research, Malvern (17); Krum, Henry, CCRE Clinical Trials Centre, Monash University, Caulfield Hospital, Caulfield (22); Lane, Geoff K, Fremantle Hospital, Fremantle (15); Oqueli Flores,

Ernesto, Stickland, John (FPI), Ballarat Health Service - Ballarat Base Hospital, Ballarat (6); Purnell, Peter W, Joondalup Clinical Trials Foundation Inc., Joondalup (55); Szto, Gregory YF, Peninsula Heart Centre, Peninsula Private Hospital, Frankston (20); Thompson, Peter L, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, Nedlands (22); Waites, Jonathan, Coffs Harbour Health Campus, Coffs Harbour (55); William, Maged, Gosford Hospital, Gosford (13).

Belgium

Beauloye, Christophe, Cliniques Universitaires Saint-Luc, Brussels (28); Boland, Jean, Centre Hospitalier Régional de la Citadelle, Liège (10); Charlier, Filip, Imelda Ziekenhuis, Bonheiden (26); De Raedt, Herbert JLP, Onze-Lieve-Vrouwziekenhuis Aalst, Aalst (17); Dens, Joseph AY, Ziekenhuis Oost-Limburg, Genk (21); Dujardin, Karl, H.-Hartziekenhuis, Roeselare (23); Friart, Alain, Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Tivoli, La Louvière (18); Scheen, André, Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Liège, Liège (14); Schröder, Erwin, CHU Mont-Godinne, Yvoir (5); Sinnaeve, Peter R, Universitair Ziekenhuis Gasthuisberg, Leuven (17); Verheye, Stefan, LRAZNA Campus Middelheim, Antwerpen (3); Vranckx, Pascal, Jessa Ziekenhuis, Hasselt (20).

Brazil

Abrantes, José A M, Santa Casa de Pelotas, Pelotas (23); Albuquerque, Denilson, Campos De Hospital Universitário Pedro Ernesto, Rio de Janeiro (24); Ardito, Wilma Roberta, Instituto de Moléstias Cardiovasculares – IMC, São José do Rio Preto (6); Baracioli, Luciano M, Instituto do Coracao HCFMUSP (INCOR), Sao Paulo (16); Bertolami, Marcelo C, Instituto Dante Pazzanese de Cardiologia, São Paulo (32); Bodanese, Luiz C, Hospital São Lucas da PUC-RS, Porto Alegre (19); Dos Santos Filho, Raul D, Instituto do Coração - INCOR, São Paulo (2); Maia, Lilia N, Fundação Faculdade Regional de Medicina de São José do Rio Preto, São José do Rio Preto (9); Manenti, Euler RF, Hospital Mãe de Deus, Instituto de Medicina Vascular, Porto Alegre (29); Marino, Roberto L, Madre Teresa - Cardiologia Clinica & Intervencionista, Belo Horizonte (2); Ogawa Indio do Brasil, Clarisse K, Instituto Dante Pazzanese de Cardiologia, São Paulo (21); Paiva, Maria Sanali de Oliveira, Natal Hospital Center, Natal (59); Rabelo, Alves Junior, Álvaro, Fundação Bahiana de Cardiologia, Salvador (10); Rassi, Salvador, Hospital das Clínicas da Universidade Federal de Goiás, Goiânia (31); Reis, Gilmar, Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Belo Horizonte, Belo Horizonte (45); Rossi, Paulo R F, Unicardios - Unidade de Atendimento do Coração S/S, Curitiba (42); Saraiva, José Francisco K, Hospital e Maternidade Celso Pierro da PUC Campinas, Campinas (14).

Bulgaria

Benov, Haralambi, MHAT Dr. Stefan Cherkezov, Veliko Tarnovo (26); Chompalova, Boryana, MHAT Plovdiv, Plovdiv (5); Denchev, Stefan, Cardiology Clinic at MHAT Alexandrovska, Sofia (23); Goudev, Assen, Cardiology Clinic at MHAT Tsaritsa Yoanna, Sofia (24); Grigorova, Valentina, 1st internal ward at 1st MHAT Sofia, Sofia (29); Mihov, Atanas, Internal Department at MHAT Sveta Ekaterina, Dimitrovgrad (26); Mincheva, Valentina, Clinic of Cardiology at National Multiprofile Transport Hospital Tzar Boris III, Sofia (23); Petrova, Sylvia, Internal Cardiology Department at MHAT Ruse, Ruse (20); Staneva, Angelina, Raev, Dimitar (FPI), Clinic of cardiology and intensive treatment, Sofia (3); Tisheva, Snezhanka, Cardiology clinic at MHAT "Dr. Georgi Stranski", Pleven (43);

Canada

Aronson, Ronnie, LMC Endocrinology Centres, Toronto (17); Bedard, Jacques, Recherche Clinique London/London Clinical Research, Sherbrooke (25); Bhargava, Rakesh K, Heart Care Research, Oshawa (10); Borts, David, Brampton Research Associates, Brampton (48); Constance, Christian, Clinique Sante Cardio MC, Montreal (50); Cusson, Jean, Hopital Charles LeMoyné, Greenfield Park (12); Davies, Richard F, University of Ottawa Heart Institute, Ottawa (14); Ducas, John, Saint Boniface General Hospital, Winnipeg (19); Ferguson, Murdo ER, Colchester Research Group, Truro (20);

Goldenberg, Ronald M, LMC Endocrinology Centres (Thornhill) Limited, Thornhill (35); Grondin, Francois, Clinique de Cardiologie de Levis, Levis (17); Gyenes, Gabor, University of Alberta Hospital, Edmonton (10); Halperin, Frank, Kelowna Cardiology Research, Kelowna (13); Kornder, Jan, SMH Cardiology Clinical Trials Inc., Surrey (18); Kouz, Simon, Centre de sante et de services sociaux de Nord de Lanaudiere, Saint Charles-Borromeo (51); Lainesse, Andre Y, Centre Investigation Clinique de la Mauricie Inc., Trois Rivieres (23); Leader, Rolland, Leader Medicine Professional Corporation, Ajax (20); Leiter, Lawrence A, Saint Michael's Hospital, Toronto (8); Lonn, Eva M, Hamilton Health Sciences, Hamilton (35); Milot, Alain, CHUQ Pavillon Saint Francois D'Assise, Quebec City (4); Pearce, Murray E, Murray Pearce Medicine Professional Corporation, Kitchener (5); Pliamm, Lew, Canadian Phase Onward Inc, Toronto (30); Powell, Calvin N, Dr. Calvin Powell Professional Medical Corporation, Bay Roberts (25); Rose, Barry F, Health Sciences Centre, St. John's (5); Rupka, Dennis W, Fraser Clinical Trials, Inc., New Westminster (35); Siega, Anthony JD, Klinke, Peter W (FPI), Victoria Heart Institute Foundation, Victoria (57); St-Amour, Eric, Q&T Research Outaouais Inc., Gatineau (49); Talbot, Paul, Centre de recherche clinique de Quebec Inc., Quebec City (45); Tardif, Jean-Claude, Montreal Heart Institute, Montreal (3); Tishler, Steven J, Mississauga Clinical Research Centre, Mississauga (29); Title, Lawrence, Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Center, Halifax (9); Wong, Graham C, Buller, Christopher E (FPI), Diamond Health Care Centre, Vancouver (39).

Chile

Acevedo Blanco, Monica Andrea, Hospital Clinico Universidad Catolica de Chile, Santiago (14); Albornoz Alarcon, Francisco Javier, Hospital Las Higueras, Talcahuano (87); Escobar, Edgardo, Hospital San Borja Arriaran, Santiago (12); Florenzano Urzua, Fernando, Hospital Salvador, Santiago (17); Pedemonte Villablanca, Oneglio Antonio, Hospital Gustavo Fricke, Viña del Mar (14); Prieto Dominguez, Juan Carlos, Hospital Clinico Universidad de Chile, Santiago (28); Sanhueza Cardemil, Patricio, Centro de Estudios Clínicos Santiago Oriente, Santiago (10); Varleta Olivares, Paola Elena, Hospital Dipreca, Santiago (13).

China

Chen, Hong, People's hospital of Peking University, Beijing (30); Chen, Jiyan, Guangdong General Hospital, Guangzhou (26); Dong, Yugang, 1st Affiliated Hospital of Sun Yat-Sen University, Guangzhou (19); Ge, Junbo, Zhongshan Hospital Affiliated to Fudan University, Shanghai (10); He, Ben, Ren Ji Hospital Affiliated to Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Shanghai (5); Huo, Yong, 1st Affiliated Hospital of Beijing University, Beijing (19); Li, Weimin, 1st Affiliated Hospital of Harbin Medical University, Haerbin (137); Li, Xin-li, Jiangsu Province Hospital, Nanjing (1); Liao, Yuhua, Wuhan Union Hospital, Wuhan (23); Wei, Meng, The Sixth Hospital of Shanghai Jiaotong University, Shanghai (12); Yan, Xiaowei, Peking Union Medical College Hospital, Beijing (17); Ye, Ping, Beijing 301 PLA Hospital, Beijing (3); Yuan, Zuyi, 1st Affiliated Hospital, Xian Jiaotong University, Xian (36); Zhang, Yun, Shandong University Qi Lu Hospital, Jinan (18); Zhu, Jianhua, 1st Affiliated Hospital of Zhejiang University, Hang Zhou (13).

Czech Republic

Cermak, Ondrej, Nemocnice Slany, Slany (93); Dedek, Vratislav, Orlickoustecka nemocnice, Usti nad Orlici (72); Francek, Lumir, Kromerizska nemocnice, Kromeriz (57); Grunfeldova, Hana, Mestska nemocnice Caslav, Caslav (37); Hubac, Jan, Franc, Pavel (FPI), Chrudimska nemocnice, Chrudim (12); Kellnerova, Ivana, Svitavska nemocnice, Svitavy (63); Klimsa, Zdenek, Nemocnice Jihlava as, Jihlava (55); Kroupa, Josef, Oblastni nemocnice Kolin, Kolin (35); Kuchar, Ladislav, Vseobecna interni ambulance, Milevsko (51); Linhart, Ales, Vseobecna Fakultni Nemocnice - II. interni klinika, Praha 2 (64); Malecha, Jan, Ordinance pro choroby srdce, Chomutov (114); Povolny, Jiri, Cardiomed, s.r.o., P-P Klinika Kladno, Kladno (9); Velimsky, Tomas, Kardiologicka ambulance, Pisek (55); Volf, Roman, Jirka, Vladimir (FPI), Nemocnice Tabor, Tabor (57).

Denmark

Bang, Lia, Grande, Peer (FPI), Rigshospitalet Hjertermedicinsk Forskningsenhed, Kobenhavn (36); Frost, Lars, Regionshospitalet Silkeborg, Silkeborg (30); Husted, Steen E, Aarhus Sygehus, Aarhus (16); Laursen, Rikke V, Nielsen, Tonny (FPI), Sydvestjysk Sygehus Esbjerg, Esbjerg (20).

Estonia

Hedman, Anu, East-Tallinn Central Hospital, Tallinn (26); Muda, Piibe, Tartu University Clinic, Tartu (21); Planken, Ulle, North Estonia Regional Hospital, Tallinn (30).

France

Barnay, Claude, Centre Hospitalier du Pays d'Aix, Aix en Provence cedex 1 (1); Bauters, Christophe, Hôpital Cardiologique, Lille Cedex (2); Bayet, Gilles, Clinique Rhône-Durance, Avignon (5); Bonnet, Jacques, Hôpital Cardiologique du Haut Lévéque, Pessac (20); Bruckert, Eric, Groupe Hospitalier PITIE-Salpetriere, Paris Cedex 13 (14); Cottin, Yves, CHU de Dijon - Complexe du Bocage, Dijon cedex (3); Courreges, Jean-Pierre, Centre Hospitalier de Narbonne, Narbonne Cedex (11); Danchin, Nicolas, Hôpital Européen Georges Pompidou Pole B, Paris (8); Decoux, Eric, Centre Hospitalier Hôpital Chatilliez, Tourcoing cedex (71); Demarcq, Jean-Michel, Hôpital Victor Provo, Roubaix (5); Dubois-Rande, Jean-Luc, Hôpital Henri Mondor, Créteil Cedex (3); Elbaz, Meyer, CHU Hôpital de Rangueil, Toulouse Cedex (26); Khalife, Khalifé, CHR De Metz-Thionville-Hospital De Mercy, Metz Cedex (24); Krempf, Michel, CHU de Nantes - Hôtel Dieu, Nantes cedex (20); Maupas, Eric, Hôpital Privé les Franciscaines, Nimes (5); Ovize, Michel, Groupe Hospitalier Est, Bron Cedex (11); Roul, José Gérald, Nouvel Hôpital Civil (NHC), Strasbourg cedex (3); Schiele, François, Bassand, Jean-Pierre (FPI), CHU - Hôpital Jean Minjoz, Besançon Cedex (6); Steg, Gabriel, Hôpital Bichat Claude Bernard, Paris cedex 18 (8); Vaisse, Bernard, CHU de Marseille - Hôpital de la Timone, Marseille cedex 5 (4).

Germany

Aigner, Ulrich Michael, Praxis Dr. med. Ulrich Aigner, Sulzbach-Rosenberg (5); Bavendiek, Udo, Fischer, Dieter (FPI), Medizinische Hochschule Hannover, Hannover (3); Benedix, Gisela, Dr.med. Gisela Benedix, Berlin (5); Boeneke, Hilmar, Dr. med. Hilmar Boeneke, Lienen-Kattenvenne (9); Bott, Jochen, Praxis Dr.med. Jochen Bott, Berlin (37); Brado, Bernadett, Praxis Dr. med. Bernadett Brado, Heidelberg (8); Buhr, Marianne, Praxis Dr. med. Marianne Buhr, Berlin (2); Butter, Christian, Heart Center Brandenburg in Bernau, Bernau (2); Fischer, Steffen, Praxismgemeinschaft Dr.med. Steffen Fischer, Leipzig (43); Foerster, Andreas PD, Dr.med Andreas Foerster, Berlin (44); Grad, Marc Oliver, Polikum Friedenau MVZ GmbH, Berlin (9); Grosskopf, Josef, Dr.med. Josef Grosskopf, Wallerfing (10); Hanefeld, Markolf, GWT-TUD GmbH, Dresden (68); Hoeltz, Susanne, Frick, Horst-Michael (FPI), Susanne Hoeltz, Rhaunen (7); Illies, Gabriele, SMO. MD GmbH Zentrum fuer Klinische Studien, Magdeburg (88); Jung, Thomas WGE, Praxis Dr. med. Thomas Jung, Deggingen (24); Kademann, Barbara, Praxis Dr.med Barbara Kademann, Leipzig (11); Kahrman, Gert, Bourrat, Alexandra (FPI), Horacek, Thomas (FPI), Reusch, Regina (FPI), Dr.med Gerd Kahrman, Witten (9); Klausmann, Gerhard, Studienzentrum Haematologie/Onkologie/Diabetologie, Aschaffenburg (28); Klein, Christiane, Gem. Praxis Dr.med Christiane Klein, Kuenzing (14); Koenig, Wolfgang, Universitaetsklinikum Ulm/Oberer Eselsberg, Ulm (4); Krause, Karl Heinz, MedicoKIT Goch Institut fuer klinische Arzneimittelpruefungen, Goch (23); Kuesters, Detlev, Praxis Dr.med. Detlev Kuesters, Eschweiler (17); Mellwig, Klaus-Peter, Kardiologische Klinik, Bad Oeynhausen (25); Menke, Thomas, Praxis Dr. Thomas Menke, Goch (16); Mueller, Steve, Gem. Praxis Dr.med Steve Mueller, Gueglingen (24); Neumann, Gerhard, Praxis Dr. med. Gerhard Neumann, Delitzsch (52); Nischik, Ruth Medamed GmbH, Leipzig (31); Preusche, Andreas, Praxis Dr.med. Andreas Preusche, Schmiedeberg (20); Prohaska, Martin, Dr.med. Martin Prohaska, Muehldorf (4); Regner, Stefan Franz, Gem. Praxis Dr.med. Stefan Regner, Mainz (8); Rein, Wilfried, Dr.med. Wilfried Rein, Herford (24); Rummel,

Reinhard, Dr.med Reinhard Rummel, Berlin (20); Samer, Holger, Praxis Dr.med. Holger Samer, Haag (18); Schaefer, Thomas, Praxis Dr. med. Thomas Schaefer, Kelkheim (19); Schenkenberger, Isabelle, Isabelle Schenkenberger, Berlin (60); Schmidt, Ekkehard, Dr.med. Ekkehard Schmidt, Hamburg (71); Schoen, Norbert, Kardiologisch-angiologiscbe Schwerpunktpraxis, Muehldorf (3); Schreckenberger, Andreas, Dr.med. Andreas Schreckenberger, Weyhe-Leeste (15); Schulze, Uwe, Wunderlich, Joachim (FPI), Vivantes MVZ Praxis Dr. med. Uwe Schulze, Berlin (21); Sohn, Hae-Young, Klauss, Volker (FPI), Universitaetsklinikum Muenchen, Muenchen (3); Toursarkissian, Nicole, Praxis Dr. med. Nicole Toursarkissian, Berlin (66); Voigt, Jan-Gerrit, Dr.med. Jan-Gerrit Voigt, Dorsten (13); Weber, Dirk, Praxis Dr. med.Dirk Weber, Essen (65); Winkelmann, Bernhard R Dr.med, Prof. Dr.med. Bernhard Winkelmann, Hessen (11); Zuechner, Dirk, Dr.med. Dirk Zuechner, Berlin (30).

Greece

Alexopoulos, Dimitrios, University Hospital of Patras, Patras (13); Anastasiou-Nana, Maria, Kremastinos, Dimitrios (FPI), University General Hospital Attikon, Athens (19); Elisaf, Moses, University General Hospital of Ioannina, Ioannina (21); Geleris, Parashos, Peripheral General Hospital Ippokratio, Thessaloniki (17); Kallikazaros, Ioannis, General Hospital of Athens Ippokratio, Athens (2); Kranidis, Athanasios, General Hospital of West Attica "Agia Varvara", Agia Varvara, Athens (18); Manolis, Athanasios, General Hospital Asklipieio Voulas, Voula / Athens (15); Mantas, Ioannis, General Hospital of Chalkida, Chalkida (34); Olympios, Christoforos, General Hospital of Elefsina Thriasio, Magoula (17); Tziakas, Dimitrios, University General Hospital of Alexandroupolis, Alexandroupolis (19); Voudris, Vassilis, Onassis Cardiac Surgery Center, Athens (12).

Hong-Kong

Lam, Yat Yin Homer, Yip, Wai Kwok Gabriel (FPI), Prince of Wales Hospital, Shatin, New Territories (56); Siu, Chung Wah David, Queen Mary Hospital, Hong Kong (61).

Hungary

Benczúr, Béla, Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok Megyei Hetényi Géza Kórház-Rendelőintézet, Szolnok (15); Hornyik, Andrea, CRU Hungary Kft- II. Rakoczi Ferenc Korhaz, Szikszó (96); László, Zoltán, Fovarosí Onkormanyzat Szent Janos Korhazaa es Eszak-budai Egyesített Korhazai, Budapest (26); Papp, András, ClinExpert kft, Kaszásdűlő u. 5., Budapest (14); Papp, Anikó, Területi Kórház, Berettyóújfalu (13); Plés, Zsolt, Piros, Annamária (FPI), CEE Research Kft, Sátoraljaújhely (113); Szakál, Imre Selye János Kórház, Komárom (16); Túri, Tibor, Sereg, Mátyás (FPI), Fejér Megyei Szent György Kórház, Székesfehérvár (67); Vértés, András, Fovarosí Onkormanyzat Egyesített Szent Istvan es Szent Laszlo Korhaz, Budapest (50).

India

Abraham, Sunitha, Narayana Hrudayalaya Institute of Medical Sciences, Bangalore (1); Banker, Darshan N, Bankers Heart Institute, Vadodara (47); Chandwani, Prakash, Heart & General Hospital, Jaipur (25); Gupta, Rajeev, Fortis Escorts Hospital, Jaipur (17); Hiremath, Jagdish, Poona Hospital & Research Centre, Pune (33); Jayadev, Santhosh, St John's Medical College Hospital, Bangalore (9); Joseph, Stigimon, Menon, Jaideep (FPI), Little Flower Hospital and Research Centre, Angamaly (28); Keshavamurth, C, Srinivas, Arun (FPI), Vikram Hospital & Heart Care, Mysore (10); Parikh, Keyur, Care Institute of Medical Science, Ahmedabad (113); Pothineni, Ramesh B, Dr. Ramesh Cardiac & Multispeciality Hospital Limited, Vijayawada (52); Sathe, Shireesh P, Deenanath Mangeskar Hospital & Research Center, Pune (15); Sawhney, Jitendra P, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, New Delhi (37); Sethi, Sumeet, Chandra, Praveen Kumar (FPI), Department of Cardiology, New Delhi (4); Varma, Sudhir, Sadbhavna Medical and Heart Institute, Patiala (7).

Italy

Ardissino, Diego, Azienda Ospedaliero-Universitaria di Parma, Parma (47); Bobbio, Marco, Azienda Ospedaliera S.Croce e Carle, Cuneo (7); Bongo, Angelo S, Azienda Ospedaliera Maggiore della Carità, Novara (32); Cipollone, Francesco, Mezzetti, Andrea (FPI), Fondazione G. D'Annunzio-Centro Studi sull'Invecchiamento (Ce.S.I.), Chieti (32); Colivicchi, Furio, Santini, Massimo (FPI), Azienda Ospedaliera San Filippo Neri, Roma (24); Esposito, Giovanni, Chiariello, Massimo (FPI), Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II, Dipartimento di medicina clinica, Napoli (15); Marzilli, Mario, Azienda Ospedaliero-Universitaria Pisana Ospedale di Cisanello, Pisa (19); Merlini, Piera, Ospedale Niguarda Ca' Granda - Dipartimento De Gasperis, Milano (28); Moretti, Luciano, Presidio Ospedaliero C.G. Mazzoni, Ascoli Piceno (25); Olivari, Zoran, Ospedale S. Maria di Ca' Foncello, Struttura Complessa di Cardiologia- Presidio Ospedaliero di Treviso, Treviso (13); Patrizi, Giampiero, Ospedale "B. Ramazzini", Carpi (5); Valgimigli, Marco, Azienda Ospedaliera-Universitaria Arcispedale S.Anna di Ferrara, Ferrara (9).

Japan

Amemiya, Hiroshi, Hayama Heart Center, Kanagawa (23); Ando, Kenji, Iwabuchi, Masashi (FPI), Kokura Memorial Hospital, Fukuoka (3); Endo, Masahiro, Nagashima, Hirotaka (FPI), Tokyo Heart Center, Tokyo (18); Kametani, Ryosuke, Nagoya Tokushukai General Hospital, Aichi (7); Koike, Akihiro, National Hospital Organization Fukuoka-Higashi Medical Center, Fukuoka (8); Kuramochi, Takehiko, Chibanishi General Hospital, Chiba (20); Nakamura, Yuichiro, Nakamura Cardiovascular Clinic, Fukuoka (17); Oku, Koji, National Hospital Organization Nagasaki Medical Center, Nagasaki (18); Okutsu, Masaaki, Nozaki Tokushukai Hospital, Osaka (20); Sueyoshi, Atsushi, Uji Tokushukai Hospital, Kyoto (30); Takahashi, Wataru, Sasaki, Yasuyuki (FPI), National Hospital Organization Shinshu Ueda Medical Center, Nagano (16); Tanabe, Jun, National Hospital Organization Shizuoka Medical Center, Shizuoka (5); Tanaka, Hideki, Kashima, Katsuro (FPI), National Hospital Organization Kagoshima Medical Center, Kagoshima (16); Tanaka, Yutaka, Takeshita, Satoshi (FPI), Shonan Kamakura General Hospital, Kanagawa (23); Teranishi, Junichi, Betsuyaku, Tetsuo (FPI), National Hospital Organization Hokkaido Medic058187al Center, Hokkaido (24); Yamamoto, Takashi, Shiga University of Medical Science Hospital, Shiga (19); Yamazaki, Seiji, Sapporo Higashi Tokushukai Hospital, Hokkaido (20); Yano, Shoji, Oita city Medical Association's ALMEIDA Memorial Hospital, Oita (11); Yoshida, Kazuro, National Hospital Organization Nagasaki Kawatana Medical Center, Nagasaki (20).

Korea

Chae, Jei-Keon, Chonbuk National University Hospital, Jeonju-si, Jeollabuk-Do (8); Chae, Shung-Chull, Kyungpook National University Hospital, Dae-Gu (28); Cho, Myeong-Chan, Chungbuk National University Hospital, Cheongju (53); Choi, Dong-Hoon, Yonsei University Health System, Seoul (22); Choi, Dong-Ju, Seoul National University Bundang Hospital, Seongnam-si Gyeonggi-do (10); Hong, Taek-Jong, Pusan National Univ. Hospital, Seo-gu Busan (61); Jeon, Hui-Kyung, The Catholic University of Korea, Uijeongbu-si (53); Jeong, MyungHo, Chonnam National University Hospital, Gwangju (30); Kim, Hyo-Soo, Seoul National University Hospital, Seoul (93); Kim, Hyun-Joong, Ryu, Kyu-Hyung (FPI), Konkuk University Medical Center, Seoul (11); Kim, Woo-Shik, Kim, Kwon-Sam (FPI), KyungHee University Medical Center, Seoul (29); Lee, Sang-Hoon, Samsung Medical Center, Gangnam-gu (26); Lim, Do-Sun, Korea University Anam Hospital, Seoul (43); Park, Seong-Wook, Asan Medical Center, Seoul (26); Seung, Ki-Bae, The Catholic Univ of Korea Seoul St. Mary's Hospital, Seoul (10).

Mexico

Cervantes-Escárcega, Jose-Luis, Hosptial Angeles del Pedregal, Mexico (74); Hernández-Santamaría, Ismael, Hospital Juárez de México, México D.F (12); Sánchez-Díaz, Carlos Jerjes, Unidad de

Investigación Clínica en Medicina S.C., Monterrey (18); Uribe-Rios, Marittza-Arasely, Alvarado-Ruiz, Ricardo (FPI), Cardioprevent, Durango (37).

Netherlands

De Winter, Robbert J, Academisch Medisch Centrum, Amsterdam (17); Dijkgraaf, René, St. Jansdal Ziekenhuis, Harderwijk (24); Jansen, Rutger M.G, Slingeland Ziekenhuis, Doetinchem (19); Knufman, Nicole M.J, Frederiks, Joost (FPI), Bronovo Ziekenhuis, S-Gravenhage (12); Kuijper, Adrianus, F.M Spaarne Ziekenhuis, Hoofddorp (24); Post, Johannes C, Michels, Herman R (FPI), Catharina Ziekenhuis, Eindhoven (17); Roeters van Lennep, Hendrik W.O, Liem, AnHo (FPI), Admiraal de Ruyter Ziekenhuis, Goes (28); Smits, Pieter C, Maasstad Ziekenhuis, Rotterdam (6); Swart, Hendrik P, Antonius Ziekenhuis, Sneek (48); Van Boven, Adrianus J, Medisch Centrum Leeuwarden, Leeuwarden (107); Van Daele, Marc ERM, Orbis Medisch Centrum, Sittard-Geleen (28); Van der Zwaan, Coenraad, Ziekenhuis Rivierenland, Tiel (36); Von Birgelen, Clemens, Medisch Spectrum Twente locatie Haaksbergerstraat, Enschede (64); Westendorp, Iris C.D, Rode Kruis Ziekenhuis, Beverwijk (14).

New Zealand

Davidson, Laura, Palmerston North Hospital, Palmerston North (19); Devlin, Gerard P, Waikato Hospital, Hamilton (22); Elliott, John M, Christchurch Hospital, Christchurch (17); Hamer, Andrew W, Nelson Hospital, Nelson (3); Harrison, Nigel A, Rankin, Richard J (FPI), Whangarei Hospital, Whangarei (11); Hart, Hamish H, North Shore Hospital, Auckland (9); Hills, Matthew J, Timaru Hospital, Timaru (6); O'Meeghan, Timothy J, Hutt Hospital, Lower Hutt (16); Scott, Douglas S, Middlemore Hospital, Auckland (14); Stewart, Ralph AH, Auckland City Hospital, Auckland (46); Tisch, Jonathan G, Tauranga Hospital, Tauranga (21); Williams, Michael JA, Chen, Victor HT (FPI), Dunedin Hospital, Dunedin (18).

Norway

Berge, Christ, Helse Bergen HF, Bergen (25); Istad, Helge, Radhuset Specialistsenter, Oslo (60); Pedersen, Terje R, Ullevål Universitetssykehus, Oslo (8); Sirnes, Per Anton, Ostlandske Hjertesenter, Moss (20).

Pakistan

Hanif, Bashir, Tabba Heart Institute, Karachi (35); Ishaq, Riaz, The Indus Hospital, Karachi (31); Kayani, Azhar Mahmood, Armed Forces Institute of Cardiology/National Institute of Heart Diseases, Rawalpindi Cantt Rawalpindi Institute of Cardiology Rawalpindi (46); Qureshi, Muhammad Bilal Ahsan, Ch PervaizElahi Institute of Cardiology, Multan (33); Siddique, Saulat, Shaikh Zayed Hospital, Lahore (80); Yaqub, Zia, National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases, Karachi (25).

Peru

Doig, Rafael, Britto, Frank. (FPI), Centro de Investigación INCOR, Lima (27); Yanac, Pedro, Horna, Manuel (FPI), Valdivia, José (FPI), Hospital Nacional Alberto Sabogal Sologuren, Callao (41); Zubiato, Mario Cesar, Hospital Nacional Edgardo Rebagliati Martins, Lima (10).

Philippines

Abelardo, Nelson S, Manila Doctors Hospital, Manila (9); Abola, Maria Teresa B, Philippine Heart Center, Quezon City (23); Añonuevo, John C, Philippine General Hospital, Manila (35); Atilano, Alberto A, Perpetual Succor Hospital, Manila (44); Cheng, Federick C, St. Luke's Medical Center, Quezon City (15); Gaspar-Trinidad, Emma Y, Medical Center Manila, Manila (9); Sison, Jorge A, Mezzanine 24, Manila (32); Sulit, Dennis Jose V, Quirino Memorial Medical Center, Quezon City

(10); Sy, Rody G, Cardinal Santos Medical Center, San Juan (24); Uy, Norbert Lingling, UERM Memorial Medical Center, Quezon City (18).

Poland

Budaj, Andrzej, Szpital Grochowski im. dr med. Rafała Masztaka- Samodzielny Publiczny Zakład Opieki Zdrowotnej, Warszawa (22); Chmielinski, Arkadiusz, Poradnia Rodzinna Zdrowie, Plonsk (31); Czepiel, Aleksandra, Poradnia Rodzinna Zdrowie, Warszawa (27); Guzniczak, Ewa M, Siminiak, Tomasz (FPI), Szpital Rehabilitacyjno-Kardiologiczny, Oborniki (7); Kania, Grzegorz, NZOZ Przychodnia Zdrowia Zadebie, Skierniewice (71); Kincel, Krzysztof, Wielospecjalistyczny Niepubliczny Zakład Opieki Zdrowotnej, Śląskie (11); Kopaczewski, Jerzy, Szpital Wojewodzki we Włocławku, Włocławek (50); Kubica, Jacek, Niepubliczny Zakład Opieki Zdrowotnej MEDICUS Jacek Kubica, Bydgoszcz (7); Lysek, Roman, Lecznica CITOMED Sp. z o.o., Torun (43); Miekus, Pawel, Gabinet Kardiologiczny MEDIPULS, Gdynia (53); Młodziankowski, Adam, American Heart of Poland, Mielec (26); Napora, Piotr, NZOZ Centrum Badań Klinicznych, Wrocław (32); Prochaczek, Fryderyk, Niepubliczny Specjalistyczny Zakład Opieki Zdrowotnej, Tychy (18); Ruscika, Teresa, Vitamed - A. Galaj R. Cichomski Sp. j., Bydgoszcz (67); Tarchalski, Janusz, Niepubliczny Specjalistyczny Zakład Opieki Jantar, Ostrow Wielkopolski (14); Tracz, Wiesława, Krakowski Szpital Specjalistyczny im. Jana Pawła II w Krakowie, Krakow (24); Wrzosek, Bożena, Wojewodzki Szpital Specjalistyczny Samodzielny Publiczny Zakład opieki Zdrowotnej, Radom (7).

Romania

Basarab, Gheorghe V, Spitalul Clinic Judetean de Urgenta Deva, Deva (26); Benedek, Imre, Spitalul Clinic Judetean de Urgenta Targu Mures, Targu Mures (59); Cinteza, Mircea, Spitalul Universitar de Urgenta Bucuresti, Bucharest (32); Cristea, Madalina I, CMDTAMP, Bucharest (14); Dimulescu, Doina R, Spitalul Universitar de Urgenta Elias, Bucharest (12); Dragusin, Daniela, Spitalul Clinic Judetean de Urgenta "Sf. Ap. Andrei", Galati (22); Gabor, Iulia, Spitalul Clinic de Urgenta "Sf. Ioan" Bucuresti, Bucharest (44); Ginghina, Carmen D, Institutul de Boli Cardiovasculare C.C. Iliescu, Bucuresti (25); Macarie, Cezar E, Institutul de Boli Cardiovasculare C.C. Iliescu, Bucuresti (93); Sinescu, Crina, Spitalul Clinic de Urgenta Bagdasar-Arseni, Bucharest (17); Tatu-Chitoiu, Gabriel, Cardiomed Clinic, Bucharest (13); Vinereanu, Dragos, Spitalul Universitar de Urgenta Bucuresti, Bucharest (54).

Russia

Andryushina, Natalya A, Baum, Svetlana R (FPI), Non-state Institution of healthcare "Road clinical hospital on station Novosibirsk-Glavny of OAO "Russian Railways", Novosibirsk (9); Arkhipov, Mikhail V, LLC Medical Association "New hospital", Yekaterinburg (26); Barbarash, Olga L, Municipal Health care Institution "Kemerovo Cardiological Dispensary", Kemerovo (28); Boldueva, Svetlana, State educational institution of higher professional education Saint-Petersburg's State Medical Academy n.a.I.I.Mechnikov, Saint Peterburg (25); Boyarkin, Mikhail V, Saint Petersburg State Institution of Healthcare, Alexandrovskaya city hospital, Saint Petersburg (6); Demko, Arkady P, Non State Institution of healthcare Department hospital on station Kemerovo of OAO "Russian Railway", Kemerovo (18); Freydlin, Marina S, State financed Institution of healthcare of Sverdlovsk's Region "Scientific practical center for special kinds of medical care" Ural Institution of Cardiology, Yekaterinburg (14); Golitsyn, Sergei P, Federal State Institution Russian Cardiology Research Complex Institute of Clinical Cardiology, Moscow (20); Gordeev, Ivan, State Institution of healthcare of Moscow, Moscow Clinical Hospital No.15 n.a.O.M Filatov, Moscow (38); Gratsiansky, Nikolay, State Institution of healthcare of Moscow, City clinical hospital No. 29 n.a., Moscow (31); Karpov, Yuri A, Federal State Institution Russian Cardiology Research Complex, Institute of Clinical Cardiology, Moscow (23); Kobalava, Zhanna, State Institution of healthcare of Moscow, City clinical hospital No.64, Moscow (21); Konstantinov, Vladimir, State educational institution of higher professional education, Saint Petresburg (14); Kuimov, Andrey D, State Educational Institution for higher

professional education Novosibirsk State Medical University based at Municipal Institution of healthcare City Clinical Hospital No.1, Novosibirsk (23); Kukharchuk, Valery V, Federal State Institution Russian Cardiology Research Complex Institute Of Clinical Cardiology, Moscow (9); Panov, Alexey, Federal State Institution " Federal center of heart blood and endocrinology n.a.V.A Almazov of Rosmedtechnologies, Saint-Petersburg (43); Ruda, Mikhail Y, Federal State Institution Russian Cardiology Research Complex Institute of Clinical Cardiology, Moscow (45); Sayganov, Sergey A, Saint-Petersburg State Institution of healthcare Pokrovskaya city hospital, Saint-Petersburg (55); Simanenkov, Vladimir, Saint-Petersburg State Institution of Healthcare City Hospital No. 26, Saint-Petersburg (14); Smolenskaya, Olga G, City Hospital No. 41, Yekaterinburg (13); Tsyba, Larisa P, Municipal Institution of healthcare Novosibirsk's municipal clinical hospital of Emergency Call Service No.2, Novosibirsk (17); Vishnevsky, Alexander Y, Saint-Petersburg State Institution of healthcare Pokrovskaya city hospital, Saint-Petersburg (57); Yakhontova, Polina K, State financed Institution of healthcare of Novosibirsk's Region "Novosibirsk's Regional Clinical Cardiological Dispensary", Novosibirsk (21); Yakushin, Sergey S, State Institution of healthcare Ryazan Regional Clinical Cardiology Dispensary, Ryazan (53); Zateyshchikov, Dmitry A, State Institution of healthcare of Moscow City Hospital No. 17, Moscow (31).

Slovakia

Gaspar, Ludovit, Univerzitna nemocnica Bratislava, Bratislava (12); Hranai, Marian, Kardiocentrum Nitra, Nitra (52); Kokles, Martin, Univerzitna nemocnica Bratislava, Bratislava (16); Pella, Daniel, Cardio D&R, s.r.o., Kosice (40).

South Africa

Badat, Aysha, Sliwa-Hahnle, Karen (FPI), Chris Hani Baragwanath Clinical Trial Centre, Soweto (2); BIGNAUT, Suzanne, Paarl Research Centre, Paarl (32); Burgess, Lesley, Tygerberg Hospital, Cape Town (69); Dalby, Anthony, Millpark Hospital, Suite C, Johannesburg (6); Dawood, Saleem Y, Vincent Pallotti Hospital, Pinelands (52); Gray, Thomas, Scion Clinical Research, Pretoria (10); Horak, Adrian R, Vincent Pallotti Hospital, Pinelands (5); Mabin, Thomas, Vergelegen Medi Clinic, Somerset West (18); Manga, Pravin, Wits Donald Gordon Clinical Trial Site, Gauteng (15); Moodley, Rajendran, Netcare Umhlanga Medical Centre, Umhlanga (11); Pretorius, Maria M, Hough, Frans S (FPI), Karl Bremer Hospital, Bellville (19); Roodt, Andre, ClinResco Centre, Kempton Park (3); Saaiman, Jan, Kuils River Private Hospital, Kuils River (117); Theron, Hendrik D, Netcare Universitas Hospital, Bloemfontein (27).

Spain

Alonso Karlezi, Rodrigo, Mata López, Pedro (FPI), Fundación Jiménez Díaz, Madrid (2); Aranda Granados, Pedro, Hospital Carlos Haya, Malaga (5); Berrazueta Fernández, José Ramón, Hospital Marques de Valdecilla, Santander (2); Carnevali Ruiz, Daniel, Hospital Quirón Madrid, Pozuelo de Alarcón/Madrid (13); Castro Conde, Almudena, Hospital de Cantoblanco La Paz, Madrid (45); Cruz Fernández, José M^a, Hospital Virgen de la Macarena, Sevilla (36); De Teresa Galván, Eduardo, Hospital Clinico Universitario Virgen Victoria, Malaga (19); De Teresa Parreño, Luis, Camino Viejo Alicante-Elche s/n, Alicante (26); Díaz Buschmann, Isabel, Hospital Infanta Elena, Valdemoro/Madrid (26); Domínguez Escribano, José Ramón, Hospital San Juan, Alicante (18); Garcia Puig, Juan, Hospital la Paz, Madrid (24); Gil Extremera, Blas, Hospital Clínico San Cecilio, Granada (67); Gómez Cerezo, Jorge, Hospital Infanta Sofía, San Sebastián de los Reyes/Madrid (10); Macaya, Carlos Miguel, Hospital Clinico San Carlos, Madrid (20); Mostaza Prieto, José M^a, Instituto de Salud Carlos III, Madrid (13); Muñoz Aguilera, Roberto, Hospital Infanta Leonor, Madrid (15); Pérez Muñoz, Carlos, Hospital General de Jerez de la Frontera, Jerez de la Frontera (60); Querejeta Iraola, Ramón, Hospital de Donostia, San Sebastián (17); Romero Hinojosa, José Antonio, Hospital Virgen de las Nieves, Granada (9); Ruilope Urioste, Luis Miguel, Hospital Doce De Octubre, Madrid (6); Sabán Ruiz, José,

Hospital Ramon Y Cajal, Madrid (14); Sobrino Martínez, Javier, Hospital Espiritu Santo, Sta. Coloma de Gramanet/Barcelona (6); Suárez Suárez, Enma Concepción, Lozano Martínez-Luengas, Iñigo (FPI), Hospital Central de Asturias, Oviedo (21).

Sweden

Al-Khalili, Faris, Stockholm Heart Center, Stockholm (22); Bandh, Stellan, Hjärtmottagningen, Västerås (4); Bennermo, Marie, Hjärt kärllaboratoriet, Stockholm (9); Dellborg, Mikael, Klin Exp Forskningslab, Göteborg (15); Held, Claes, Uppsala Kliniska Forskningscentrum UCR, Uppsala (8); Herlitz, Johan, Johanson, Per (FPI), Kardiologens forskningsenhet, Göteborg (10); Hjelmaeus, Lars, City Heart, Stockholm (39); Landergren, Karl, Forskningsmottagning Avd. 4, Västervik (11); Linderfalk, Carina, Eksjö Företagshälsövård, Eksjö (38); Lindholm, Carl-Johan, Hjärtmottagningen, Lund (35); Lindmark, Krister, Kliniskt forskningscentrum, Umeå (20); Mooe, Thomas, Hjärtenhetens Mottagning, Östersund (35); Nilsson, Jan, Klinisk forskningsenhet, Malmö (42); Wodlin, Peter, Kardiologiska kliniken, Linköping (11).

Taiwan

Ho, Yi-Lwun, National Taiwan University Hospital, Taipei (41); Hou, Charles, Mackay Memorial Hospital, Taipei City (15); Hsia, Chien-Hsun, Changhua Christian Hospital, Changhua (41); Lin, Shing-Jong, Taipei Veterans General Hospital, Taipei (15); Tsai, Liang-Miin, National Cheng Kung University Hospital, Tainan (49); Wang, Kuo-Yang, Taichung Veterans General Hospital, Taichung (39).

Thailand

Chotinaiwattarakul, Chunhakasem, Her Majesty Cardiac Centre, Siriraj Hospital, Bangkok (13); Kuanprasert, Srun, Maharajnakorn Chiangmai Hospital, Amphoe Muang, Chiang Mai (80); Sansanayudh, Nakarin, Phramongkutklao Hospital, Bangkok (56); Sritara, Piyamitr, Ramathibodi Hospital, Mahidol University, Bangkok (36); Suithichaiyakul, Taworn, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok (22).

Ukraine

Andriyevska, Svitlana, Odesa Regional Cardiodispensary, Odesa (5); Basylevych, Andriy Y, Lviv City Municipal Clinical Hospital No. 5, Lviv (16); Denesiuk, Vitaliy I, Vinnytsia City Clinical Hospital #1, Vinnytsia (46); Kononenko, Lyudmyla G, City Clinical Hospital No 27, Kharkiv (39); Korzh, Oleksii M, Multifield Clinical Hospital 17 n.a. Malyshev, Kharkiv (21); Kovalenko, Volodymyr M, National Scientific Centre M.D.Strazhesko Institute of cardiology of AMS of Ukraine, Kyiv (9); Kraiz, Igor G, Kharkiv State Treatment and Preventive Institution "Central Clinical Hospital of Ukrzaliznytsia", Kharkiv (52); Lishnevskaya, Viktoriia Y, Institute of Gerontology of AMS of Ukraine, Kyiv (15); Lutay, Mykhaylo I, Strazgesko Research Institute of Cardiology, Kyiv (4); Parkhomenko, Oleksandr M, National Scientific Centre "M.D.Strazhesko Institute of cardiology", Kyiv (25); Rudenko, Leonid V, Kyiv Emergency Care Hospital, Kyiv (21); Telyatnikova, Zinaida Y, Odesa City Polyclinic No.20, Odesa (13); Tseluyko, Vira Y, City Clinical Hospital # 8, Kharkiv (47); Vatutin, Mykola T, Institute of Urgent and Reconstructive Surgery, Donetsk (19); Vizir, Vadym A, Zaporizhzhia City Clinical Hospital No.7, Zaporizhzhia (21).

United Kingdom

Bakhai, Ameet, Barnet Hospital, Barnet (18); Bijral, Harbal S, Stewart, Edmund (FPI), Central Health Centre, Cumbernauld (8); Dargie, Henry, Barlow, Marion G (FPI), Clinical Research Initiative, Glasgow (2); Dutka, David P, Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge (3); Findlay, Iain N, Royal Alexandra Hospital, Paisley (6); Fisher, Michael, Royal Liverpool University Hospital, Liverpool (32); Gorog, Diana A, Queen Elizabeth II Hospital, Hertfordshire (5); Jacques, Adam M, Beeton, Ian (FPI), St Peter's

Hospital, Chertsey (4); Logie, Brian, Orchard Medical Centre, Motherwell (20); Pepper, John R, Flather, Marcus D (FPI), Royal Brompton Hospital, Chelsea (6); Purcell, Ian F, Freeman Hospital, Newcastle-upon-Tyne (29); Scullion, William, Thompson, James F (FPI), Waverley Medical Practice, Coatbridge Health Centre, Coatbridge (8); Senior, Roxy, Northwick Park Hospital, Harrow (3); Simpson, David A, Low Waters Medical Centre, Hamilton (13); Thackray, Simon DR, Alamgir, Mohammed F (FPI), Castle Hill Hospital, Cottingham (4); Wilding, John PH, University Hospital Aintree, Liverpool (6); Wong, Yuk-ki, St. Richard's Hospital, Chichester (17).

United States

Ahmed, Abdel M, Altru Health System Clinic, Grand Forks, North Dakota (15); Antonishen, Mark C, Northern Michigan Regional Hospital, Petoskey, Michigan (15); Atassi, Keith, Northwest Indiana Cardiovascular Physicians, Valparaiso, Indiana (4); Azocar, Jose, Northgate Medical P.C., Springfield, Massachusetts (5); Ball, Eric M, Walla Walla Clinic, Walla Walla, Washington (17); Ballantyne, Christie M, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas (19); Bays, Harold E, L-Marc Research Center, Louisville, Kentucky (30); Beavins, Jill E, American Health Network of Indiana, LLC, Franklin, Indiana (30); Benjamin, Sabrina A, Universal Research Group, Tacoma, Washington (20); Benson, Mark R, American Health Network of Indiana, Avon, Indiana (27); Berger, Peter B, Buckley, Jeremy W (FPI), Geisinger Medical Center, Danville, Pennsylvania (32); Betz, William R Lake Erie Medical Group, PC, Erie, Pennsylvania (13); Biederman, Robert WW, Allegheny General Hospital, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (21); Bisher III, Edward W, Baptist Heart Specialists, Jacksonville, Florida (40); Bittner, Vera A, Dr. Vera Bittner, The University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, Alabama (13); Breton, Cristian F, International Research Associates, LLC, Miami, Florida (14); Buttaci, Salvatore, Changlani, Mahesh (FPI), Patterson, John B (FPI), Cardiovascular Institute of the South, New Iberia, Louisiana (21); Byrd, Leroy J, Rowan Research, Spokane, Washington (12); Canaday, Donald B, Rockwood Inland Cardiology Associates, Spokane, Washington (27); Cashion, Jr, William R, Austin Heart P.L.L.C, Harker Heights, Texas (14); Chandna, Harish, Victoria Heart and Vascular Center, Victoria, Texas (14); Chang, Anna R, John Muir Physicians, Network Clinical Research Center, Concord, California (11); Chin, John, Regional Cardiology Associates, Sacramento, California (6); Claybrook, Harry P, Martin, Frederick A (FPI), Internal Medicine and Pediatric Associates of Bristol, PC, Bristol, Tennessee (21); Cohen, Kenneth R, New West Physicians, PC, Golden, Colorado (18); Colan, David R, Internal Medical Associates of Grand Island, PC, Grand Island, Nebraska (18); Coodley, Gregg O, Fanno Creek Clinic, LLC, Portland, Oregon (14); Corson, Marshall A, Knopp, Robert H (FPI), Paramsothy, Pathmaja (FPI), Harborview Medical Center, Seattle, Washington (19); Cottiero, Richard A, Hypertension and Nephrology Inc., Providence, Rhode Island (17); Dandona, Paresh, Diabetes-Endocrinology Center of Western New York, Williamsville, New York (9); Davidson, Michael H, Kamaradt, Kent T (FPI), Radiant Research, Inc., Chicago, Illinois (18); Davuluri, Ashwini K, Baptist Heart Spealists, P.A., Jacksonville, Florida (16); Desai, Vikas S, Garson, Glen D (FPI), Charles River Medical Associates, Natick, Massachusetts (14); East, Cara Soltero Cardiovascular Research Center, Dallas, Texas (19); Ebrahimi, Ramin, Ramin Ebrahimi, M.D. Inc., Los Angeles, California (6); Ellison, Howard S, Rockdale Medical - Research Associates, Conyers, Georgia (28); Erickson, Bernard R, CentraCare Heart and Vascular Center at St Cloud Hospital, St Cloud, Minnesota (25); Fernandes, Valerian L, Ralph H Johnson VA Medical Center, Charleston, South Carolina (21); Flores, Angel R, Heritage Valley Medical Group, Inc., Beaver, Pennsylvania (64); Folkerth, Steven D, Clinical Research Center of Nevada, Las Vegas, Nevada (2); Foster, Robert E, Birmingham Heart Clinic, PC, Birmingham, Alabama (9); Gaona, Sr., Raul E, Briggs Clinical Research, LLC, San Antonio, Texas (8); Gardner, Timothy J, Northside Internal Medicine, Spokane, Washington (19); George, William H, Cadillac Clinical Research LLC., Cadillac, Michigan (5); Gessler, Carl J JR, The Heart Center Research LLC, Huntsville, Alabama (9); Gill, Santosh K, Fox Valley Clinical Research LLC, Aurora, Illinois (13); Go, Alan S, Kaiser Permanente Santa Clara Medical Center, Santa Clara, California (17); Go, Alan S, Kaiser Permanente Division of Research, Oakland, California (19); Goldberg, Anne C, Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, Missouri (17); Goldschmidt, Marc E, New Jersey Cardiology Associates,

West Orange, New Jersey (6); Gorman, Timothy A, Brautigam, Donald F (FPI), Great Lakes Medical Research, Westfield, New York (44); Guyton, John R, Duke University Medical Center, Durham, North Carolina (17); Haffey, Thomas, Western Cardiology Associates, Thornton, Colorado (6); Henry, Sheldon D, Geisinger Clinic, Geisinger Medical Group-Grays Woods, Port Matilda, Pennsylvania (28); Hermany, Paul R, Grand View - Lehigh Valley Health Services, Sellersville, Pennsylvania (28); Hoekstra, John A, National Clinical Research-Richmond Inc., Richmond, Virginia (14); Hudson, Michael, Henry Ford Hospital, Detroit, Michigan (7); Iteld, Bruce J, Louisiana Heart Center, Slidell, Louisiana (16); Jack, David B, Lonepeak Family Medicine, Draper, Utah (14); Johnson Jr., Frank P, Advanced Therapeutics Inc., Johnson City, Tennessee (26); Joswig, Bill C, Arch Health Partners, Poway, California (19); Kaissar, Amy J, Dawes Friezlin Clinical Research Group, LLC, Indianapolis, Indiana (10); Karns, Adam D, Karns, Robert M (FPI), Adam D Karns, MD, Los Angeles, California (28); Kaster, Steven R, Wenatchee Valley Medical Center, Wenatchee, Washington (31); Kerzner, Boris, Health Trends Research LLC, Baltimore, Maryland (76); Khan, Mohammed S, Ahmed, Ismail S (FPI), North Ohio Research Ltd, Westlake, Ohio (10); Kieval, Joshua, ZASA Clinical Research, Atlantis, Florida (5); Kim, Edward, Eastside Cardiology Associates, Kirkland, Washington (10); Klaff, Leslie J, Rainer Clinical Research Center Inc, Renton, Washington (16); Klein, Eric J, Capital Clinical Research Center, Olympia, Washington (21); Koren, Michael J, Jacksonville Center for Clinical Research, Jacksonville, Florida (25); Kosinski, Edward J, Connecticut Clinical Research, Bridgeport, Connecticut (26); Krumian, Razmig, Portnoy, Edward B (FPI), Westlake Medical Research, Thousand Oaks, California (2); Kuvin, Jeffrey T, Tufts Medical Center, Boston, Massachusetts (6); Langer, Michael M, North Ohio Research, Ltd., Elyria, Ohio (16); Letts, Dustin P, Caro Mont Heart, Gastonia, North Carolina (55); Lipetz, Robert S, Encompass Clinical Research, Spring Valley, California (11); Long, William J, Thomas, Ignatius (FPI), Medical Research Institute, Slidell, Louisiana (33); Lopes-Virella, Maria, Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, South Carolina (10); Lubin, Barry C, National Clinical Research-Norfolk, Inc., Norfolk, Virginia (23); Martin, Richard A, Geisinger Clinic, Geisinger Medical Group-Lake Scranton, Scranton, Pennsylvania (9); Masri, Bassem, Weill Medical College of Cornell University/NYPH, New York, New York (11); Matthews, George, Corbelli, John C (FPI), Buffalo Cardiology and Pulmonary Associates,P.C, Williamsville, New York (15); McCullum, Kevin, York Hospital Wellspan, York, Pennsylvania (14); Meholick, Alan W, Buffalo Heart Group, Buffalo, New York (28); Mitchell, Jerry R, Texas Center for Drug Development, PA, Houston, Texas (18); Modares, Fariba, Geisinger Clinic, Geisinger Medical Group-Kistler, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania (16); Mohler, Emile, Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (2); Morcos, Charle N, Apex Research Institute, Santa Ana, California (31); Murdock, David K, Aspirus Cardiovascular Associates, Wausau, Wisconsin (20); Narayan, Puneet, Clinical Research Institute of Northern Virginia, Burke, Virginia (25); Oberoi, Mandeep S, Central Jersey Medical Research Center, Elizabeth, New Jersey (46); O'Connor, Thomas, Schneck, Robert J (FPI), American Health Network of Indiana, LLC, Greenfield, Indiana (36); O'Donnell, Philip J, Selma Medical Associates, Winchester, Virginia (40); Ong, Stephen T, MD Medical Research, Oxon Hill, Maryland (11); Parang, Pirouz Deborah Heart and Lung Centre, Browns Mills, New Jersey (4); Pasquini, John A, Mid Carolina Cardiology/Novant Health-NMG, Charlotte, North Carolina (58); Patel, Rajesh J, Lycoming Internal Medicine, Inc., Jersey Shore, Pennsylvania (30); Patlola, Raghotham, Cardiovascular Institute of the South, Lafayette, Louisiana (19); Penny, William, VA San Diego Healthcare System, San Diego, California (14); Pepine, Carl J, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida (18); Pierce, Charles H, Stein, Evan A (FPI), Metabolic and Atherosclerosis Research Center, Cincinnati, Ohio (55); Popeil, Larry R, Magnolia Research Group Inc., Ocala, Florida (12); Pratt, Stephen E, West Coast Research, LLC, San Ramon, California (14); Price, Robert W, Mid Carolina Cardiology PA, Matthews, North Carolina (47); Raikhel, Marina, Torrence Clinical Research, Lomita, California (20); Ravi, Ram C, Cho, Donald (FPI), North Ohio Research, Ltd., Middleburg Heights, Ohio (22); Rhyne, James M, The Lipid Center, Statesville, North Carolina (15); Richards, Mary K, Mary K. Richards, MD, PA, Little Rock, Arkansas (16); Rivera, Ernesto, Amarillo Heart Group, Amarillo, Texas (11); Robinson, Jennifer G, Preventive Intervention Center, Iowa City, Iowa (67); Roth, Eli M, Sterling Research Group Ltd, Cincinnati, Ohio (33); Rubenstein, Carl

J, Oklahoma Cardiovascular Research Group, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (15); Sandoval, Jaime D, Padre Coast Clinical Research, Corpus Christi, Texas (25); Sangrigoli, Renee A, Doylestown Cardiology Associates VAAA, Doylestown, Pennsylvania (22); Schramm, Erich L, St. Johns Clinical Research Center, Ponte Vedra, Florida (23); Schwartzbard, Arthur, New York University, New York (10); Serfer, Gregory T, South Florida Clinical Research Center, Hollywood, Florida (3); Shah, Dhiren H, Shah Associates, PA, Prince Frederick, Maryland (25); Shalek, Marc S, Legacy Heart Center, Plano, Texas (45); Shanes, Jeffrey G, Consultants in Cardiovascular Medicine, Melrose Park, Illinois (16); Sharma, Marigene S, Bretton, Elizabeth M (FPI), Albuquerque Clinical Trials, Inc., Albuquerque, New Mexico (15); Sheikh, Zafar, Internal Medicine Associates, Madera, California (3); Sklaver, Neal L, Medical Specialists Associated, Dallas, Texas (18); Solano, Maria Del Pilar, Goldberg, Ronald B (FPI), University of Miami, Diabetes Research Institute, Miami, Florida (6); Srivastava, Nalin K, South Carolina Pharmaceutical Research, Spartanburg, South Carolina (7); Staniloae, Cezar S, Gotham Cardiovascular Research, PC, New York (37); Staub, Jonathan S, Wilmington Medical Research, Wilmington, North Carolina (18); Stillabower, Michael E, Christiana Care Health System, Christiana Care Hospital, Newark, Delaware (17); Suresh, Damodhar P, St. Elizabeth Physicians, Crestview Hills, Kentucky (19); Szulawski, Ireneusz, Geisinger Clinic, Geisinger Medical Group-Lewistown, Lewistown, Pennsylvania (16); Thompson, Paul, Polk, Donna M (FPI), Hartford Hospital, Hartford, Connecticut (14); Tinkel, Jodi L, Pandya, Utpal H (FPI), University of Toledo Medical Centre, Toledo, Ohio (9); Toth, Phillip T, Midwest Institute For Clinical Research, Indianapolis, Indiana (17); Traboulssi, Mourhaf, North Ohio Heart Centre, Inc, Sandusky, Ohio (53); Tuohy IV, Edward R, Bridgeport Hospital, Bridgeport, Connecticut (8); Uusinarkaus, Kari T, Clinical Research Advantage, Inc, Colorado Springs, Colorado (7); Vijay, Nampalli K, Aurora Denver Cardiology Associates, Denver, Colorado (18); Voyce, Stephen, Advanced Cardiology Specialists, Scranton, Pennsylvania (18); Wainwright, William, RHancock, Holly (FPI), Baptist Heart Specialists, Jacksonville Beach, Florida (28); Walder, James S, Black Hills Cardiovascular Research Group Cardiology Associates, P.C., Rapid City, South Dakota (56); Wang, Tracy Yu-Ping, Duke University Medical Center, Durham, North Carolina (15); Watkins, Stanley P, Alaska Heart Institute, Anchorage, Alaska (11); Weiss, Robert J, Maine Research Associates, Auburn, Maine (66); Whitney, Edwin J, BHS Speciality Network, Inc., San Antonio, Texas (7); Wickemeyer, William J, Iowa Heart Center, West Des Moines, Iowa (55); Willis, John G, San Gabriel Clinical Research, Georgetown, Texas (12); Wilson, Dennis F, Abrams, Cyril (FPI), Mid Carolina Cardiology, Salisbury, North Carolina (23); Wiseman, Alan, Eastern Maine Medical Centre, Bangor, Maine (17); Wolfson, Eric, Wolfson Medical Centre, Las Vegas, Nevada (14); Wright, David, Central Texas Clinical Research, Austin, Texas (19); Zawada, Jr. Edward T, Verma, Suneet (FPI), Avera Research Institute, Sioux Falls, South Dakota (14).



Self-Reported Health and Outcomes in Patients With Stable Coronary Heart Disease

Ralph A. H. Stewart, Emil Hagström, Claes Held, Tom Kai Ming Wang, Paul W. Armstrong, Philip E. Aylward, Christopher P. Cannon, Wolfgang Koenig, José Luis López-Sendón, Emile R. Mohler III, Nermin Hadziosmanovic, Susan Krug-Gourley, Marco Antonio Ramos Corrales, Saulat Siddique, Philippe Gabriel Steg, Harvey D. White, Lars Wallentin and on behalf of the STABILITY Investigators

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