News and  
Announcements

**Familial Hypercholesterolemia Awareness Day** The 24<sup>th</sup> of September was Familial Hypercholesterolemia (FH) awareness Day, initiated by the Familial Hypercholesterolemia foundation in order to raise awareness of FH in the general public. Millions of people around the globe are unaware that they might have FH and a very increased risk for heart disease. FH is an inherited high cholesterol disorder, not caused by diet. If left untreated, it can lead to atherosclerosis, coronary heart disease and even death. Early diagnosis can reduce the risk of developing a heart attack by 80% if appropriate treatment and therapy is given. More information about diagnosis & management can be found on the Familial Hypercholesterolemia Website <https://thefhfoundation.org/>. In addition the probability risk score of developing FH can be calculated using the Hellenic Atherosclerosis Society website <http://www.atherosclerosis.gr/>



## Highlights

The CVEG Lab Research Associate **Panagiota Socratous** gave an oral presentation at the 6<sup>th</sup> Symposium of the Working Groups of the Hellenic Atherosclerosis Society. The meeting was held in Athens on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2015. Panagiota Socratous presented research work from the Lab on the "Correlation between the degree of adherence to the Mediterranean diet score and subclinical atherosclerosis". More details about the 6<sup>th</sup> Symposium of the Working groups can be found on the Hellenic Society of Atherosclerosis website.

<http://www.atherosclerosis.gr/events/6o-simposio-omadon-ergasias-eea-4-5122015-athina/>

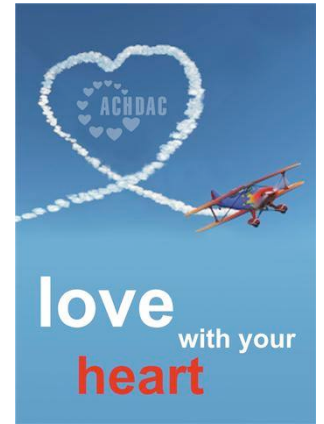




News and highlights update from the CVEG Research Lab

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[Adult Congenital Heart Defects 7-14 of February awareness week](#) The second week of February (7-14/02) was the Adult Congenital Heart Defect (ACHDAC) awareness week. ACHDAC is any genetic abnormality that affects the anatomy of the heart and is present at birth. One to two children out of 100 are born with such abnormalities every year Globally, and the percentage of adults diagnosed with congenital heart defect tends to increase year by year, thus increasing the appearance of the condition by almost another 1 per cent in the general population. There are 35 different congenital heart defects. During the past years due to the advancements in medical management many patients with ACHDAC were able to reach adulthood, but had to undergo open heart interventions (surgeries) 2-3 times until their first teenage years. The [ACHDAC.org](#) was established Cyprus in order to support and educate such patients and health professionals. Despite the lack of a strategic plan for the management of such patients in Cyprus, the ACHDAC organization has recently succeeded in passing a law to support patients with pharmaceutical care and surgery The Cyprus Ministry of Health has improved relevant diagnostic methods and introduced screening tests among teenagers.. In Cyprus 10 % of cases require invasive treatment and often need several times treatment over a patient's lifespan



## Highlights

[Citizens dialogue with the EU commissioner for Health and Food Safety](#). On the 11<sup>th</sup> of February students from the CII visited the EU House in Nicosia, in order to participate in a dialogue with the EU commissioner for Health and Food Safety Vytenis Andriukaitis [Profile of the Commissioner](#). The dialogue started with the World Health Organisations definition of "Health"; a totality of physical, mental and social wellbeing.

- The question about the enforcement of the Tobacco free policy was one of the main concerns of the students. The EU policy is to try and create tools in order to help the countries to enforce the Tobacco policy. The enforcement Act through the EU subsidiaries will intervene to EU countries that do not follow compliance to the Tobacco use policy. In addition, the commissioner pointed that European citizens should not be passive about this public health policy and that they should have a more inclusive role in the EU society by being ambassadors and advocates for smoking free environments. EU is aiming to be smoke free by 2050.
- Moreover, a question on "how the EU is planning to face the issue about the human resources that the health systems of EU countries will need due to the increasing ageing population?" arose. The commissioner answered that indeed, the health systems are expected to face big issues due to the increasingly ageing population as non-communicable diseases (obesity, cancer, cvd and diabetes) would also be increased. Thus, the implementation of prevention instruments and strategies is a must from each member country of the EU. He specified that Public Health is an issue that every Ministry of each member country should keep in mind and not just an issue of the Ministries of Health.
- The promotion of the Mediterranean diet also came up in the conversation since many food-health specialists were worried that currently the Mediterranean diet is not really followed by young people in Cyprus due to the shift from traditional diets to westernized food industry. Cyprus and Greece he suggested, should be more active on promoting the Mediterranean diet and citizens should be advocates of such elixirs that we inherited from our ancestors.

