Editor’s Note

Stroke Issue 2015
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The word cardiovascular in Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes was always intended to include cerebrovascular disease. To highlight the inclusion of that critically important area, we have devoted an entire issue to it, planned for release coinciding with World Stroke Day. So much forward motion has been made in the prevention and treatment of stroke, and yet the future is likely to show even more dramatic progress.

The outcomes research community can play a critical role in the further reduction of the incidence and impact of stroke, from prevention to treatment and recovery. There is a need for wise choices about allocation of resources, incisive evaluation of various strategies, and effective approaches to the delivery of the highest quality and value services.

I dedicate this issue to Larry Brass, a pioneer in stroke outcomes research. Larry was an inspiration to a generation of stroke researchers and was known for his intellect, wit, and collaborative nature. He passed away at the age of 50 years, leaving those who knew him heartbroken at losing a friend, a colleague, and someone who would have contributed so much more. Larry would have been proud of the progress in the field and the benefits that have accrued through strokes averted and strokes mitigated by effective prevention and treatment.

I want to express my deep gratitude to three leaders in stroke outcomes research—Gregg Fonarow, Moira Kapral, and Lee Schwamm—who served as editors for this effort. They consistently demonstrated their generosity and commitment in making this an outstanding issue, and the fact that there is a cardiologist and 2 neurologists shows the interdisciplinary nature of the work. I also thank Emily Picillo and the Circulation staff for their continued support.

Among the abundance of strong science that we present in this issue is an article that examines the volume-outcome relationship for carotid artery stenting in the Medicare population.1 There is an article on National Institutes of Health Stroke Scale documentation, an increasingly important factor for risk adjustment, in 1184288 patients with acute ischemic stroke admitted to 1704 Get With The Guidelines-Stroke hospitals.2 There is a comparative effectiveness study of carotid endarterectomy and carotid stenting,3 and an article that examines the information needs and preferred presentation format for stroke survivors, caregivers, and clinicians considering recombinant tissue-type plasminogen activator treatment.4 There is an article investigating whether automatic assessment of the modified Rankin Scale based on a mobile phone questionnaire may serve as an alternative to assessments at clinical visits post stroke,5 and an article on failure modes effects and criticality analysis to identify system and process failures in door-to-needle times6—and much more.

This collection of work gives us a glimpse of a vibrant stroke outcomes research community capable of generating impactful science that has clear relevance to improving prevention, care, and outcomes. As an editor, I am honored to welcome this type of contribution every day and to have the special privilege of publishing this issue on the occasion of World Stroke Day. With it, we highlight our commitment to our colleagues in the stroke field and to the aspiration to make stroke a footnote in the future history of medicine rather than a major cause of morbidity and mortality.

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Disclosures
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References
The online version of this article, along with updated information and services, is located on the World Wide Web at:
http://circoutcomes.ahajournals.org/content/8/6_suppl_3/S65