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## **A United Front – Global Statement Unveils One of the Best Kept Secrets in Modern Medicine**

**42 national and international Societies from around the world unite to support the IR Global Statement, which highlights the importance of Interventional Radiology (IR) in modern medical care and outlines the identity and scope of IR practice worldwide.**

The Society of Interventional Radiology (SIR), the Cardiovascular and Interventional Radiological Society of Europe (CIRSE) and 40 other national and international scientific societies have joined in supporting the first global statement defining Interventional Radiology as a unique specialty providing key treatment options for a wide range of medical conditions. Interventional Radiologists offer the least invasive and most advanced treatment options for major health problems (including cancer, cardiovascular and venous disease, spine fractures, stroke and uterine fibroids). However, many referring physicians and patients are not aware of these advances. Thus, many patients are still treated by invasive surgery and do not receive the benefits that IR can bring: shorter recovery times, less need for anaesthesia, shorter hospitalisation, fewer surgical complications and less pain, all while preserving the patient's physical integrity.

The unified statement addresses the evolution, global impact and future direction of this image-guided minimally invasive specialty, emphasising the worldwide availability of this state-of-the-art medical care. The statement, the result of more than two years of collaborative work, was co-published in August in the Journal of Vascular and Interventional Radiology (JVIR) and CardioVascular and Interventional Radiology (CVIR).

While Interventional Radiologists have been helping patients for more than 40 years, the discipline is still a relatively new specialty. Today, Interventional Radiology is integral to the delivery of health care worldwide and its service should be available in every modern hospital. The Global IR Statement represents more than 10,000 physicians worldwide – a professionally organised, scientific community which cannot be ignored.

The need for such a universal statement is self-evident, considering that in many countries a lack of recognition leads to patients being denied optimal care. The goal of the Global IR Statement is to improve definition, recognition and clinical pathways for Interventional Radiology. Work on the collaborative statement began two years ago, led by John A. Kaufman, M.D., FSIR, FCIRSE, then SIR president, and his European counterpart, Jim A. Reekers, M.D., FCIRSE, FSIR, then president of CIRSE, who emphasised that: "While each country may find differences in their Interventional Radiology practice, the goal was to develop a document backed by all major scientific societies in the field, stating what constitutes the specialty of Interventional Radiology."

The Global IR Statement stresses that Interventional Radiologists are responsible for providing clinical care relevant to image-guided interventions, either in collaboration with other physicians or independently. Intentionally brief, the Global IR Statement emphasises that IRs have expertise in diagnostic imaging and radiation safety; in image-guided minimally invasive procedures and techniques as applied to multiple diseases and organs; in the evaluation and management of patients suitable for the image-guided interventions included in the scope of IR practice; and in continual invention and innovation of new techniques, devices and procedures. The unified statement defines and identifies the common features of IR. It provides background information and outlines common elements found in the specialty, including clinical practice and scope, training, certification, research, practice quality and professionalism.

The Global IR Statement is supported by 42 Interventional Radiology societies. The final statement is endorsed by SIR, CIRSE, Austrian Society of Interventional Radiology, Brazilian Society of Interventional Radiology and Endovascular Surgery, British Society of Interventional Radiology, Bulgarian Society of Interventional Radiology, Canadian Interventional Radiology Association, CardioVascular and Interventional Radiology Section Within the Singapore Radiological Society, Cardiovascular and Interventional Society of Turkey, Chinese Society of Interventional Radiology, Croatian Society of Radiology, Czech Society of Interventional Radiology, Danish Society of Interventional Radiology, Dutch Society of Interventional Radiology, Egyptian Society of Interventional Radiology, Finnish Society of Interventional Radiology, Georgian Association of Cardiovascular and Interventional Radiology, German Society of Interventional Radiology and Minimally Invasive Therapy, Hellenic Society of Interventional Radiology, Hong Kong Society of Interventional Radiology, Hungarian Society of Cardiovascular and Interventional Radiology, IberoAmerican Society of Interventionism, Indian Society of Vascular and Interventional Radiology, Interventional Radiology Section, Polish Medical Society of Radiology, Interventional Radiology Society of Australasia, Irish Society of Interventional Radiology, Israeli Society of Interventional Radiology, Japanese Society of Interventional Radiology, Korean Society of Interventional Radiology, Pan Arab Interventional Radiology Society, Philippine Society of Vascular and Interventional Radiology, Portuguese Section of Interventional Radiology of the Portuguese Society of Radiology and Nuclear Medicine, Section of Cardiovascular and Interventional Radiology of the Royal Belgian Radiological Society, Seldinger Society of Vascular and Interventional Radiology, Sezione di Studio della SIRM di Radiologia Vascolare ed Interventistica, Sociedad Argentina de Radiologia, Society of Interventional Onco-Radiology, Spanish Society of Vascular and Interventional Radiology, Swiss Society of Cardiovascular and Interventional Radiology, Taiwanese Radiological Society, Thai Society of Vascular and Interventional Radiology and the Working Group of Cardiovascular and Interventional Radiology of the Slovak Radiological Society.

Interventional Radiologists are the innovators behind many minimally invasive image-guided therapies that are commonplace today. From the invention of angioplasty and the catheter-delivered stent, which were both first used to treat peripheral arterial disease in the legs, to cardiac catheterisation, drug-coated stents, balloon angioplasty, catheter delivery systems and clot-removing devices of today – these vascular specialists continue to shape and change the medical landscape and improve patient care. IR treatments offer less risk, less pain and less recovery time than traditional surgery.

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Interventional radiologists are physicians who specialise in minimally invasive, targeted treatments. They offer the most in-depth knowledge of the least invasive treatments available coupled with diagnostic and clinical experience across all specialties. They use X-ray, MRI and other imaging to advance a catheter in the body, such as in an artery, to treat at the source of the disease internally. As the inventors of angioplasty and the catheter-delivered stent, which were first used in the legs to treat peripheral arterial disease, interventional radiologists pioneered minimally invasive modern medicine.

Today, interventional oncology is a growing specialty area of interventional radiology. Interventional radiologists can deliver treatments for cancer directly to the tumour without significant side effects or damage to nearby normal tissue. Many conditions that once required surgery can be treated less invasively by interventional radiologists. Interventional radiology treatments offer less risk, less pain and less recovery time compared to open surgery. Visit [www.cirse.org](http://www.cirse.org).

**Attachment:** Global Statement Defining Interventional Radiology

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