Analysis of non-animal methods and models for research in cardiovascular disease

Emanuele Gasparotti,1,2 Margherita Cioffi,3 Vincenzo Positano,1 Emanuele Vignali,1,2 Benigno Marco Fanni,1,2 Katia Capellini,1,2 Dorela Haxhiademi,4 Emiliano Costa,3 Sergio Bertil,5 Luigi Landini,1,2 Simona Celi,1 Laura Gribaldo6

1BioCardioLab, Bioengineering Unit, Fondazione Toscana G. Monasterio, Massa; 2Department of Information Engineering, University of Pisa, Pisa; 3RINA Consulting S.p.a, Rome; 4Anesthesia and ICU Department, Heart Hospital, Fondazione Toscana G. Monasterio, Massa; 5Adult Cardiology Unit, Heart Hospital, Fondazione Toscana G. Monasterio, Massa, Italy; 6European Commission, DG Joint Research Centre, Ispra, VA, Italy

Abstract

Cardiovascular diseases (CVD) are disorders of the heart and blood vessels and represent 31% of all global deaths. In the contest of CVD, the use of animal experiments has been a contentious subject for many years. In recent years, in vitro and in silico models and methods have been proposed according to the 3Rs statement. However, an exhaustive report regarding the state of art in terms of efficacy and translational research efficiency is not reported. In line with such service, the goal of this work is to provide a collection of non-animal models and methods in use for basic and applied CVD research with information on their development status, applications or predictive value in the field of human cardiovascular diseases. The standardized descriptions of such studies will ultimately feed into a EURL ECVAM inventory on innovative methods.

Materials and Methods

Our research is organized in two main phases: the first phase is dedicated to the setting up of the methodologies, including the exclusion/inclusion criteria and format for the method summaries, the list of relevant information resources and the proposed search phrases. The second phase focuses on the actual performance of the literature search, selection of the methods, analysis and their detailed description. The search was performed analyzing records on Scopus, including Pubmed database.

Introduction

Prevalence of cardiovascular disease (CVD) has been increasing worldwide, and the recent report from AHA1 indicates over 90 million US adults have at least one CVD, which is expected to increase more in a rapid pace. In the contest of CVD, the use of animal experiments has been a contentious subject for many years. In recent years, several in vitro and in silico models and methods have been proposed according to the 3Rs statement. However, despite a significant amount of literature in the CVD research field, to date, a complete mapping regarding the state of art in terms of efficacy and translational research efficiency is not reported.

Figure 1. Records categorization.
Conclusions

These results seem to be in accordance with the effort of the EU community concerning the past projects in cardiovascular devices and point out fundamental details on further effort by the Community to cope missing research topic. The outcome of this study will be crucial to contribute to the uptake, implementation and promotion of non-animal methodologies in biomedical research, thus contributing to the reduction of the reliance on animal use.

References