

## Editor's note

As Chairman of the Sub-study Committee, I am glad to acknowledge on behalf of my committee colleagues the pleasure it has been for us to guide 23 sub-studies through a number of complex and often tedious processes, which included study design, protocol composition, submission and approval, fulfilling ethical requirements and obtaining financial support. We are grateful to the investigators of the sub-studies for being so patient with what may at times have seemed to be trivial queries and stipulations.

It is gratifying that the ASCOT study sparked so much research interest and we must pay compliment to the scientific endeavour and expertise that investigators of the main study brought to the sub-studies.

The ASCOT Study will answer a number of important scientific questions, but as is often the case with major international studies, carefully designed sub-studies can address issues, which could not be considered in isolation from the framework of the main study, usually because of financial implications. The Sub-study Committee, conscious

of this reality, has sought therefore to encourage as many sub-studies as possible.

The concept of publishing all the protocols for the sub-studies in a supplement volume was formulated for two reasons: first, as a means of bringing together the large body of work that comprises the ASCOT study, and secondly, as a means of providing an archival source which would obviate having to publish full protocol detail when publishing the results of the sub-studies. We are grateful to Professor Gareth Beevers and his editorial colleagues in the Nature Publishing Group for making the *Journal of Human Hypertension* available for this purpose.

Finally, it gives me pleasure to acknowledge the support of the many pharmaceutical companies and grant awarding bodies who made it possible for the sub-studies to proceed.

Eoin O'Brien  
*Chairman Sub-study Committee  
and Guest Editor of the Supplement*