Randomized controlled trials provide the best evidence in clinical trials; however, they do have limitations. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of treatments, population based registries may also yield useful information about the actual practice and they may enable users to carry out a dynamic follow-up. To evaluate the outcome of vascular procedures, the Vascular Registry in Hungary has been established in 2002. This article presents the establishment and functioning of the Vascular Registry and provides information about scientific results obtained during the past years. The Vascular Registry is an internet based database with on-line input. The backup server is provided by the National Institute for Quality and Organizational Development in Healthcare and Medicines. The database collects data in three different fields: interventions for carotid artery, aneurysm (any type) and lower extremity vascular diseases. Twenty five vascular surgical units record interventions in the registry, which corresponds to two thirds of the whole activity. Since joining the Vascunet Group of the European Society for Vascular Surgery, the registry has contributed to several publications based on evaluation of a large common dataset in different fields of vascular surgery. A validation process has been recently performed which confirmed the internal and external validity of the database. The authors conclude that despite unsolved problems related to
financing issues, the Vascular Registry has proved to be a useful tool during the past years. In order to take advantage of the registry to its fullest, measures should be taken to achieve a more complete data recording, increase publication activity on the national dataset, improve the flow of information during operation and develop a system of regular feedback.