

Editorial Introduction

The following paper entitled *Medical Technology and Research: An Engineer's View* by G. Van der Perre is devoted to a basic and important aspect of the interplay between engineering and medicine: the task of the biomedical engineer in an *academic environment*. Often, medical technology is being developed by clinical "Opinion Leaders" in direct cooperation with industry and the involvement of academic biomedical engineering, i.e., of university-based biomedical engineering institutions during this process is of secondary importance at best. The question relating to the primary task of academic biomedical engineering is actually as vital as ever: Should it mainly (i)

provide education and serve as a supplier of biomedical engineers for industry and hospitals, (ii) conduct long-term basic research with limited immediate applicability, and/or (iii) be involved in applied clinical research and development. Some of the statements put forward in the following article are quite outspoken and provocative, however, it was the opinion of the editors in charge that the paper should be published as such and without changes. It is thereby anticipated that the article would stimulate a fundamental and in-depth discussion of the issues presented. Accordingly, we encourage our readers to formulate their views and continue this discussion.