

Intensive Care Policy Debate and Exhibition at EU Parliament

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SEMICYUC estuvo representada en esta importante reunión en el Parlamento Europeo el 15 de Mayo de 2012 por el presidente D. Jose Cuñat y por D. Gumersindo González.



REPORT:
Intensive Care
Policy Debate
and Exhibition
at EU
Parliament



Several ESICM Executive Committee members, including President Andrew Rhodes, President-Elect Jean-Daniel Chiche and Richard Beale, Chair of the Research Committee voiced their opinions during a Policy Debate centred on Improving Patient Outcomes in Intensive Care held at the European Parliament on May 15th.

“Currently, Europe lags behind the US in terms of resources—human and institutional, to deal with this vital growing need for acute

and critical care in the coming years,” said Andrew Rhodes, President of the European Society of Intensive Care (ESICM) and a UK-based clinician. “Lack of recognition of the importance of intensive care and the specialty training it requires has a major impact on the level of care we can provide patients and influences overall outcomes.”

The policy debate, organised by ESICM, in collaboration with the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) and hosted by MEP Cristian Buşoi (ALDE; Romania), was geared at raising awareness of the field within the EU Parliament, whose members are in the process of drafting and enacting several key directives which directly affect those professionals working in Intensive Care and influence patient outcomes.

“Making the link between the providers of intensive care and the EU healthcare agenda is essential,” said Dr. Buşoi. “Because intensive care is the most expensive, technologically advanced, resource-intensive area and decisive area of medical care in that patients are in life-threatening situations—we must look beyond just the costs and see that by making an investment in intensive care, we are making a vital investment in the future of Europe and its’ citizens.”

Several high-ranking members and National Societies representatives were on hand to highlight

issues and the current status of intensive care in their countries. Dr. Cornelius Bartels, a Senior Expert in Bioterrorism at the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) reflected on the impact of epidemics or highly threatening infections on consumption of staff resources. He noted that in his home country, Germany, each isolated patient required round-the-clock care of five doctors and eight nurses. He stressed that the special multi-disciplinary training of intensivists (intensive care specialists) made them the best choice in treatment of epidemics and infections, "ICU professionals have the most comprehensive knowledge of disease and processes and they deal with nosocomial infections and antimicrobial resistance on a daily basis," explained Dr. Bartels. "This is a specialty that deserves recognition and investment in anticipation of emergent needs in care."

The patients' perspective: A particularly poignant moment of the debate was when H1N1-flu survivor Laura Wagner spoke about her experiences in intensive care. She was six months pregnant when she contracted the flu in 2010, and spent nearly two months in a Paris intensive Care Unit.

"High intensity, hands-on care," said Rhodes. "Patients tell us and statistics prove that while technology has helped outcomes over the long-term, machines cannot do it alone. To meet the needs of critical patients of

the future, to deliver a high level of care, we need more well trained staff— doctors and nurses at the bed side.”

The policy debate marked the launch of a two-day exhibition and campaign in support of the LIFE-PRIORITY Fund (an ESICM initiative) at the EU Parliament aimed at heightening public awareness about the importance of intensive care. The exhibition showcased critical care equipment and practitioners were on hand to train EU members, staff and the public life saving techniques including CPR. Thousands of participants received training and visited the Wheels of LIFE; a fully-equipped mobile intensive care that was located in front of the EU Parliament for the two-day event.

Other Notes on the EU Policy Debate

MEP Busoi

- MEP Busoi emphasised the importance of intensive care medicine for better patient outcomes and paid tribute to health professionals working in a multidisciplinary field
- He also emphasised that it's important to put intensive care medicine on the EU agenda in order to address the challenges of securing appropriate funding and research, something that is even more

important for ICUs given
its dependence on
specialist teams and
state-of-the-art
technology and medical
devices; need for more
integrated care

ESICM President Andy
Rhodes

- ESICM President Andy Rhodes noted that the hospital structure is changing and demand for ICM is increasing.
- In order to address this growing need, he called for a change in the way care is provided: "high-intensity, hands-on care".
- He also stressed that more well trained staff—nurses and intensive care physicians will be needed in the next five to ten years.
- He stated that while investments in technology are important, machines cannot do it alone— we MUST develop plans to train nurses and doctors in intensive care now.
- He also emphasised the need to harmonise training across Europe, and regulatory guidelines should focus on competency rather than be based on duration of training
- Rhodes stressed the need for reliable, comparable data to assess whether health funds are spent effectively, and to understand different outcomes of interventions (e.g., sepsis) in different countries

DG SANCO- Stefano Soro

- Support for simplified

clinical trials procedure
(as proposed by
Commission in proposal
to revise Directive) to
cut red tape and speed
up the process

ESICM Chair of Research
Committee- Richard Beale

- Sepsis is one of the greatest risks to patients
- Responsible for more deaths than any other disease in Europe
- Adherence to protocols has led to improved outcomes in sepsis
- Organised strategies and practices can help improve overall outcomes in intensive care

ECDC- Cornelius Bartels

- ICUs are at frontline of health threats detection and hence play a major role in preventing cross-border risks to public health

ESICM President-Elect JD
Chiche

- Need for increased resources to fund intensive care research, education and initiatives to support ICU patients and families
- Need for increased public awareness and education to save LIVES

Please feel free to contact us for more information about our EU initiatives and becoming involved in LIFE-Priority and our public awareness campaigns.

Sincerely,

Andrew Rhodes
Jean-Daniel Chiche



President, ESICM
President-Elect

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