



ESPA President's report 2013

Dear members of ESPA,

The ESPA president's report is both a traditional method of informing members and other interested parties about the activities of Society and an official, statutory document summarizing and archiving the proceedings and actions of the Society over the previous year.

In 2013 we can state that in terms of membership and activities ESPA is still very much a growing society with as yet limited resources, which restrict the rate at which we can fulfil our many ambitions. Nonetheless, in the last year we have made significant progress in a number of areas as described in the coming paragraphs.

COMMITTEES:

Scientific Committee

In March 2013 Tom Hansen took over from Neil Morton as chair of the scientific committee. His aim is to broaden the remit of the scientific committee whilst still maintaining its establish role in deciding and organising the content of our scientific meetings. The medium-term aims of the committee now include the establishment of a European Scientific Network for paediatric anaesthesia – which will begin with a survey of on-going research in Europe – and the development of a European statement on the possible neurobehavioural effects of anaesthesia in young children. A further exciting scientific development is the APRICOT study which is described later in this report.

Safety Committee

The main thrust of the safety committee over the last year has been directed towards establishing an ESPA mobile simulation course (ESimPA - European Simulation in Pediatric Anesthesia Course). The necessary equipment has been arranged by our partner in this project, the International Anesthesia Teaching Center (IATC), with a generous donation from the German Government. Pilot courses have held in Switzerland and arrangements are being made to train new facilitators from Serbia and Moldova. The course content will be finalised in cooperation with the ESPA Safety and Education committees

Education committee

Following an approach from the Association of Paediatric Anaesthesia of Great Britain and Ireland (APA) the ESPA education committee has broadened its activities from defining competencies for safe anaesthesia for children under one year to the development of a complete competency matrix for paediatric anaesthesiology in Europe, using the existing APA as a guide to this development.

Guidelines

The ESPA Guideline Committee has continued its work of collecting internationally relevant guidelines for the ESPA website. A number of these are in the form of downloadable pdf documents and others are links to guidelines on other websites. The guidelines, which currently cover emergency care, anaesthetic management and safety, are available in the open area of the ESPA website for access by all visitors to the site. The section on emergency care contains action cards which can be downloaded and either printed or distributed electronically.

Pain

New this year is the ESPA European Paediatric Acute Pain Network which PA Lönnqvist has been setting up. The response to his call for national representatives for this group has successfully generated a motivated core of interested anaesthesiologists who can work together on such projects as audit, the development of guidelines and multi-centre trials. The Acute Pain Network is open to any ESPA member who has an idea or project relating to acute pain therapy in children either for consultation or potential collaboration.

The QUIPSI project continues to gather pace with the aim of collating, analysing and feeding back performance data on paediatric post-operative pain to participating hospitals with in order to improving the quality of care. The ESPA QUIPSI group is currently standardizing the data collection system for use throughout Europe.

Task force competent anaesthetic services

The aim of the task force competent anaesthetic services is to define the essential and desirable components of a modern paediatric anaesthesiology and pain management service, which includes individual as well as institutional competence. The task force has been considering many source documents including national and European statements as well as the older FEAPA guidelines. Together with the ESPA Executive Board and ACORNS they will draw up a guidance document including a catalogue of standards for clinical issues, self-assessment tools and equipment for quality assurance and improvement and a peer review process.

Website

The ESPA website continues to develop into a useful information resource for education and practice. As well as the guidelines section, the safety and pain sections in the open area of the site have also been extended this year. In addition, two new resources on ultrasound for regional anaesthesia and vascular access have been produced by the respective ESPA committees and added to the members' area of our site. The possibility of sponsorship for the website has been discussed in the ExBo who feel we should be cautious in this area in order not to risk compromising our scientific neutrality.

Congresses and meetings:

As always running the annual ESPA congress and participating in other meetings remain important activities for ESPA.

The ESPA congress 2012 in Stresa, Italy was one our best even as judged by the participants' evaluations. However, despite to the excellent organization and marketing from Ida Salvo and her team a high attendance and extensive sponsoring, the financial result of the meeting was modest due to the continuously rising costs of running an international congress.

ESPA 2013 will be held in Geneva Switzerland and will be our most ambitious congress to date with over 70 invited speakers and up to five parallel programmes covering all aspects of perioperative paediatric anaesthesia as well as giving attention to related areas of intensive care, pain therapy and emergency medicine. For the first time year we will also be holding satellite session at this congress. Also for the first time we are joining forces with the American Society for Pediatric Anesthesia (SPA) as well as the local host, the Swiss Society for Paediatric Anaesthesia for this congress. Walid Habre and his team have worked extremely hard over the last year to organize the meeting.

As well as our own congresses, ESPA was also involved in a joint meeting and participated in joint sessions at other congresses. In June 2013 we held a joint meeting with the Association of Paediatric Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland in Cambridge, UK, which was their 40th anniversary meeting and was a great success. Similarly, ESPA was proud to be one of many national and international societies which participated in the International Assembly for Pediatric Anesthesia in Washington, DC in in October 2012 organised by the Society of Pediatric Anesthesia which marked their 25th Anniversary.

Also this summer we held a joint session with the European Society for Paediatric and Neonatal Intensive Care (ESPNIC) on perioperative issues of importance to both anaesthesiologists and intensivists at the ESPNIC congress in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. ESPA was also one of the many organizations which endorsed and contributed to the first Paediatric Resuscitation and Emergency

Medicine (PREM) congress in Ghent, Belgium, which was also a great success prompting calls for a second congress in the coming years.

Looking to the future, arrangements for our next congress in Prague in 2014 are well underway. A site visit was made at the beginning of this year at which many of the organisational issues were discussed and decided. Vladimir Mixa and his team made us feel very welcome and full of confidence for the success of this meeting which will be held 18th – 20th September 2014. The scientific programme for this congress will be finalised after the Geneva meeting.

In 2015 we will be in Turkey, which will be our first congress with a central ESPA PCO having hitherto always employed a local PCO. It is our intention to pursue a permanent relationship with a PCO and the 2015 congress will be the first step in this process. Three PCO-companies have been short-listed and we will be making a final choice in the autumn of 2013. The host country for the ESPA congress in 2016 will also be decided in the autumn from the three countries which have made a bid.

Finally, in the spring of 2015 we will be holding a joint meeting with the French Society for Paediatric Anaesthesia and Intensive Care (ADARPEF).

I would also like to express a warm word of thanks to Ton Schouten who is stepping down as chair of the ESPA congress committee this year after many years of dedicated service to the Society.

Membership:

As the membership and involvement of ESPA has continued to rise over the last few years so too have the costs of running the Society increased. This has resulted in the proposal of the ExBo to increase the membership fee slightly to Eur 50 for active members. The fee for members from low income countries and trainee members will remain EUR 30. A proposal to link the ESPA membership fee to that of the national society is being explored. This would result in a reduced fee for the individual ESPA member but should lead to an increase in total income from membership fees for the Society.

Honorary memberships

At our winter meeting the ExBo decided to award honorary membership of the Society to two anaesthesiologists who have contributed enormously to both ESPA and FEAPA over many years – Marcin Rawicz and George Meakin. Following approval of this proposal by the General Assembly, these awards will be made at the Geneva congress.

Relationships with other organisations:

As a direct result of our scientific relationship with the ESPNIC ESPA has been asked to participate formally in their Haemodynamics and Congenital Heart Disease section, in which we will be represented by Ehrenfried Schindler. Reciprocal representation of ESPNIC in ESPA either at the level of the committees or Executive Board is being considered by the ExBo.

Our relationship with the European Society for Anaesthesiology (ESA) continues to grow with our endorsement of the APRICOT study, referred to above, in which three ESPA officers are involved as members of the steering group. The study will be a large epidemiological investigation of anaesthetic services in Europe aimed at determining and quantifying the risk factors involved. This is an important issue and the study promises to deliver useful data about anaesthetic services for children in Europe. The combined networks of the ESA and ESPA should be able to minimize the data collection issues involved in this study.

Through our involvement in the International Assembly of Pediatric Anesthesia, the idea arose of establishing a global common interests group for paediatric anaesthesia. The Paediatric Anaesthesia International Forum, as it is currently called, is very much in its infancy, but ESPA is very interested in its further development.

Finally, our relationship with Orphananesthesia (OA) continues to bear fruit. There are now 18 fully worked-out evidence-based guidelines on the OA-site with more than 30 more being developed.

Financial matters

The financial situation of the Society is healthy, but in these economically difficult times, we have not this year seen a continuation of the rapid financial growth of the last few years. This has led to a more cautious budget this year and an emphasis on low-budget projects in the coming year. For details I refer you to the financial report 2012-13 and the budget 2013-14.

Handover of presidency:

At the end of the ESPA congress in Geneva I will hand over the presidency to Neil Morton. In the spring of 2014 we will hold elections for members of the Executive Board and a new president-elect who will take that office in September 2015.

Looking back over the last more than two years I think we can be proud of our achievements. Although still a young society, we have already booked some significant achievements. As always the success of the Society will depend to a great extent on the enthusiasm and input of individual members. This has been truly great up to now and I have every reason to believe that it will be even better in the future.



Nigel Turner,
President of ESPA.

Utrecht, August 2013