



News from the Working Group on Paediatric Cardiac Intensive Care

Eduardo da Cruz, Evelyn Lechner, Ricardo Munoz, Duncan Macrae, Brigitte Stiller, Ullrich Fakler on behalf of The Working Group

The Birth of a new Working Group

The latest Annual Meeting of the Association for European Paediatric Cardiology, held in Copenhagen in May 2005, provided the occasion to establish the matrix of the new Working Group on Paediatric Cardiac Intensive Care. Our first business meeting was attended by approximately 20 colleagues, coming from different backgrounds. Eduardo da Cruz, from Geneva Children's University Hospital, the mentor of this project, explained its meaning and aims, and gave an overview of the objectives.¹ The main motivation shared by all the members has been the wish to promote and develop interactions between specialised professionals involved in the field of paediatric cardiac intensive care. Intensive care for infants and children suffering cardiac disease is an interdisciplinary effort, and no one can claim to represent all paediatric cardiac intensivists. Although this is a well accepted notion, there is still room, as well as a genuine need, for developing strong links between the specialised bodies concerned with the specialty both in Europe and beyond our boundaries, whilst sharing and respecting the expertise of the various bodies as we seek to provide optimal care to our patients. Amongst other aims, this includes the promotion and facilitation of teaching and research, and the establishment of homogeneous guidelines for training and continuous education. The working group now established within the Association, therefore, wishes actively to collaborate with the other working groups, as well as with international societies, especially with the European Society of Paediatric and Neonatal Intensive Care, the European Association of Cardiothoracic Anaesthesia, and with the Society of Critical Care Medicine in the United States of America. Moreover, our council hopes to encourage the participation of international leaders in the field as scientific advisors for specific projects, such as Anthony Chang from Houston, Daniel Penny from Melbourne, Gil Wernovsky from Philadelphia, and David Wessel

from Boston. The council itself (Table 1) was established partly during the initial meeting, and consolidated a few days later.

Main objectives and ongoing projects

- **Development of guidelines for continuous education, and for training in paediatric cardiac intensive care for those training in paediatric cardiology:**
One of our most important aims is to develop recommendations for certain aspects of our clinical work and training as European paediatric cardiologists. We consider that those training in paediatric cardiology should be exposed to the field of intensive care throughout their tuition period. Recommendations are currently in draft, and will shortly be forwarded for evaluation by the council of the Association. Once accepted by the council, further discussion will be needed so as to coordinate efforts with the European Society of Paediatric and Neonatal Intensive Care, the European Association of Cardio-Thoracic Anaesthesia, and the Union Européenne des Médecins Spécialistes.
- **Production of a Manual of Paediatric Cardiac Intensive Care:**
This project will hopefully materialise once the working group is consolidated, incorporating the participation of European and International leaders in the field as discussed above.
- **Communication between the working group and members of the Society:**
We will endeavour to maintain frequent electronic exchanges between our members. Twice a year we will produce a newsletter, and we are currently developing our own website, to be hosted on the new homepage of the Association, with the aim of opening additional pathways to provide information and support to interested members

Table 1. Composition of the Working Group on Paediatric Cardiac Intensive Care.

<i>Chairman</i> Eduardo da Cruz, Geneva, Switzerland Eduardo.DaCruz@hcuge.ch	<i>Councillor</i> Ricardo Munoz, Pittsburgh, United States of America munorx@ccm.upmc.edu
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of the Association and other societies. In a second stage of its development, the website will be made available to the patients and to their relatives.

- **Upcoming events and joint projects:**

We will be actively involved in the programme of the forthcoming Annual Meeting to be held in Basel in May, 2006. A specific session will be designed to cover aspects of the low cardiac output syndrome, and extra-corporeal life support. We will sponsor a “state of the art” lecture on intensive care, ensured by our treasurer Duncan Macrae and by Peter Rimensberger. We will also actively participate in a Satellite Symposium on univentricular assistance.

We are delighted that our Working Group has recently been accepted and recognised as an endorsing group for the World congress in Intensive Care to be held in Geneva in 2007. We are currently determining our precise participation to this important event.

We are aiming to host a session on paediatric cardiac intensive care for the meeting of the Association planned for Padova, also in 2007, and we will be applying to organise the pre-congress teaching course. We invite all members to contact us in order to appraise their needs and interests in the field of cardiac intensive care, and to develop a suitable programme based on these needs. This is particularly pertinent for the junior members of the Association.

Anthony Chang, President of the Pediatric Cardiac Intensive Care Society, has suggested that joint meetings should be organised between his Society, based in the United States of America, and both our group and the European Society of

Paediatric and Neonatal Intensive Care. This attractive prospect is to be further discussed and developed.

There is growing interest in organising short meetings with specific centres in order to promote discussion of the key issues in paediatric cardiac intensive care. The idea is to facilitate “low-budget” symposiums, for which registration fees would be within reasonable ranges, making these meetings available to all who might wish to attend, particularly those in training.

- **European multicentric studies:**

Our working group will aim, in coordination with other European and international Societies, to participate and promote multi-centric research projects and audits on matters regarding infants and children.

- **International coding committee:**

Rodney Franklin, on behalf of the Coding Committee of the Association, has requested our input for the elaboration of an “universal” coding system, which should include considerations related to the issues of intensive care. Anyone interested in participating is invited to contact us.

Last but not least, the council is committed to all the tasks described above, but our efforts will be useless and inefficient without the collaboration of whoever might be interested in providing us with innovative ideas, projects, and recommendations. We invite all such members to join us in this venture.

Reference

1. da Cruz E. The working group on paediatric cardiac intensive care: a new interdisciplinary effort within the Association for European Paediatric Cardiology. *Cardiol Young* 2005; 15: 114–115.