

Editorial

Celebrating 10 years of ERS HERMES examination in paediatric respiratory medicine

The virtual ERS International Congress 2020 will mark 10 years since the first ERS HERMES examination in paediatric respiratory medicine. The inaugural examination took place on 24 September 2011 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and now has become a well-known and recognised assessment within the profession throughout Europe and worldwide. In 2016, the first examination in paediatric respiratory medicine took place outside of Europe in Asia in collaboration with the Asian Paediatric Pulmonology Society (APPS). This delivery gave doctors outside of Europe the opportunity to take the examination and show that they are suitably qualified to a European standard. The ERS HERMES examination in paediatric respiratory medicine has not only evolved as a recognised European Diploma, it is also valued by many national societies as an international proof of knowledge and excellence. In 2016, the European diploma examination became a mandatory part of the Swiss Specialist Diploma in Paediatric Pulmonology.

The ERS HERMES examination in paediatric respiratory medicine consists of 90 multiple-choice questions (MCQs) selected from a large and growing pool of validated questions. The examination is delivered in English. The MCQs focus on clinical knowledge including pathophysiology, symptoms, diagnosis and therapy relevant for practicing paediatric respiratory medicine. New MCQs are created each year; each question undergoes a rigorous process of formulation and validation by European representatives, who ensure that current

and authentic professional situations are illustrated. The examination is based on a European syllabus in paediatric respiratory medicine, published in *Breathe* [1], and the examination blueprint. The HERMES examination is designed and constructed using its respective examination blueprints. The blueprint identifies the topics covered in each examination. The examination is accredited by the European Board for Accreditation in Pneumology, and approved by the European Academy of Paediatrics and the Paediatric Section of the UEMS (European Union of Medical Specialists). Participants can earn a potential 51 continuing medical education (CME) credits if taking the European Diploma examination category, and six CME credits if taking the self-assessment and in-training categories respectively.

There are three categories of examination that a participant can choose to take:

- European Diploma, for those who are nationally accredited or are in the final year of training
- In-training assessment, for those who are currently within their specialist training
- Self-assessment, open to doctors who would like to test their knowledge and benchmark themselves

As an experienced physician, the European Diploma will allow you to show both your patients and colleagues your commitment to high-quality lifelong learning. If participating as a trainee, the

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examination can be used as a driver for learning. If sitting the examination for self-assessment, candidates can benchmark themselves against their peers and identify their potential gaps of knowledge. Upon successful completion of the European Diploma examination participants join a registry of diplomates from previous years which can be found on the ERS website.

Over the past 10 years, 285 participants have sat the examination. Madrid, Spain, in 2019 marked the highest number of registrations for the examination to date. When looking to the future, it is hoped that the ERS HERMES examination in paediatric respiratory medicine will continue to grow in

notoriety and stature, and that it will become more important in the national diploma process of European countries supporting the harmonisation of specialist titles, and thus competence and knowledge.

The next ERS HERMES examination in paediatric respiratory medicine will take place on Saturday 5 September 2020 at the University of Bern, Bern, Switzerland. Registrations for the examinations are now open; to register, please visit <https://my.ersnet.org/>.

For further information on the HERMES examination, please e-mail hermes@ersnet.org or visit our website, ersnet.org/paediatric.

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Conflict of interest

S-J. Cawley is an employee of the European Respiratory Society.

References

1. Primhak R, Tabin N, Beydon N, *et al*. Update of the European paediatric respiratory medicine syllabus. *Breathe* 2019; 15: 173-180.