

Italian thoracic anesthesia: a prospective survey

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Sir,
anesthesia, as well as other specialties, is characterized by constant progresses in knowledge and by the introduction of more sophisticated devices. One of the way chosen by scientific community to keep anesthesiologists up to date is the creation of national and international societies. Their mission is to share the recent literature, organize meetings regarding specific topics of anesthesia, and, in general, to promote a continuous feedback between members in relation to the current practice in different centers.

Anesthesia Societies have a relevant role in scientific and academic activities since the organization of multicentre studies and meetings leads to an improvement of knowledge in a large part of the anesthesia and intensive care communities.

Moreover, they hold an important role in clinical practice, since a continuous head-to-head between healthcare providers is a good and efficacious way to increase the standard level of care in many of the medical specialties.

Guidelines can be considered the main and most useful “product” of the Anesthesia societies since they represent the results of scientific and clinical issues in defining

algorithms and recommendations on different fields.

Actually there is not an European ‘Thoracic Anesthesia’ society, and the issues of this subject area are often discussed and managed by national and international Cardiothoracic and Vascular anesthesia societies. This phenomenon can be related to the fact that in most of North American and Anglo-Saxon countries cardiac and thoracic surgery are usually performed by the same surgical and anesthesiology team. Differently in Italy where thoracic surgery can be performed by a non cardio-surgical team or even by general surgeons That is why most thoracic anesthesiologists are not used to manage cardio surgical patients.

The creation of European Association of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Anesthesiology (EACTA www.eacta.org) and the following creation of Italian Association of Cardio-Thoracic Anesthesia (ITACTA www.itacta.org) led to a relevant diffusion of knowledge between the cardio-anesthesiologists and a creation of a solid network between many of the high volume Italian cardio surgical centers. This was not the case for thoracic anesthesia centers, since, so far, there is no specific ‘thoracic anesthesia’ network’ and the cultural change between the providers is often left to few focused workshops, or time limited spaces included in general or cardio anesthesia congresses.

This results in different ways of managing thoracic anesthesia in different hospitals.

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Actually in Italy despite the existence of some centers of excellence there is not an 'Italian School' for thoracic anesthesia.

ITACTA was primarily created as a Cardiac anesthesia society, many of the physicians of the directory board being well recognized expert of this discipline. Nevertheless this association is trying to increase the participation of 'thoracic anesthesia' providers in the society.

The first step is the detection of the Italian hospitals that usually perform cases of thoracic surgery. The next one is the creation of a register of Italian thoracic anesthesia centers, so it would be easier to spread the

events organized by ITACTA regarding the discipline. Finally it could be feasible to compare and discuss the different ways to manage the common issues of thoracic surgery.

If you are interested in thoracic anesthesia, please send an e mail with your name and a brief description of the activity of your hospital to drpiraccini@gmail.com. This will include your trust in the Italian thoracic anesthesia register (<http://www.itacta.org/Itacta/survey.html> and [ONLINE supplement www.itacta.org](http://www.itacta.org) to the journal) and allow you to be informed on the forthcoming ITACTA events.