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# Breathe journal club: virtually meet the experts

On December 13, 2016, the first *Breathe* journal club took place. During the annual ERS International Congress in London, UK, in September 2016, the *Breathe* editorial board agreed to set up this event. In the journal club, a recently published research article from another journal, in keeping with the thread of the current *Breathe* issue, is presented, supported by multimedia slides, in about 20 min by an expert in this field who is not an author of the paper. Afterwards, the paper is further discussed. The authors of the paper are available to explain their work, provide deeper insight in their results, talk about the clinical and scientific consequences of their study, and elaborate on future plans. This discussion is chaired by another expert in the specific field of interest, who is not directly involved in the present study. Participants to the journal club can submit questions and comments related to the paper and presentation during the entire course of the event, and in this way are actively involved in the discussion. Depending on the degree of interaction and discussion, the journal club ultimately lasts for 60 min.

In its inaugural edition, David Berlowitz (University of Melbourne, Melbourne Australia) presented a recent publication by Jesus Gonzalez-Bermejo (Sorbonne Universités, Paris, France) and his colleagues of the RespiStimALS study group that was published in *Lancet Neurology* [1]. In this multicentre, randomised, controlled, triple-blind trial, GONZALEZ-BERMEJO *et al.* [1] investigated whether early diaphragm pacing could slow down diaphragm deterioration and would therefore

delay the need for noninvasive ventilation in amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) patients with moderate respiratory involvement. All patients received phrenic stimulators by laparoscopic intervention and were randomly assigned to receive either active or sham stimulation. As presented by Dr Berlowitz during the journal club, unplanned masked analysis was performed after another trial showed excess mortality with diaphragm pacing in ALS patients with hypoventilation [2]. As this analysis revealed excess all-cause mortality in the active stimulation group, RespiStimALS was terminated and the authors concluded that diaphragm pacing is not indicated at the early stage of ALS-related respiratory involvement. During the online discussion, which was led by Richard Lewis (Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Los Angeles, CA, USA), Dr Gonzalez-Bermejo explained that aspiration and acute respiratory events are among the potential mechanisms related to the increased mortality risk with diaphragm pacing. Subsequently, Dr Gonzalez-Bermejo responded to the comments and questions submitted by the online participants. Once again, I would like to thank the three professional experts from all over the world for their outstanding contributions and the pioneering participants for their active involvement.

The *Breathe* journal club initiative offers several unique opportunities. In addition to being informed about a recent and relevant publication in the field of respiratory medicine, participants have to possibility to directly interact with worldwide experts from their “safe” home or work

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@ERSpublications

A recap of the first *Breathe* online journal club by @fritsfranssen <http://ow.ly/5uXX308xAG1>



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environment. They are updated beyond the text presented in the publication and may be inspired by the discussion in ways relating to their own clinical or scientific work. Events are scheduled well in advance in order for participants to fit these in their busy agendas. Free registration is offered and the event is accessible for non-ERS members as well. For those not able to join the live session, a recording of the journal club is posted online. Finally, the possibility of gaining CME credits for journal club participation is currently being explored by the *Breathe* editorial board.

I hope that you share my enthusiasm about the journal club and that many *Breathe* readers will

Did you miss the first *Breathe* journal club? Catch up at <http://ers.adobeconnect.com/p56j4rsbeqb>

participate in the next one, which is scheduled for March 7, 2017, at 18:00 CET.

In this edition, we will discuss a paper on predictors of all-cause mortality in patients with severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and major depression admitted to a rehabilitation hospital [3].

To register for the next *Breathe* journal club, please complete the form at <https://goo.gl/forms/rcR5jtg2sqtthp12>

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### Conflict of interest

None declared.

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### References

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