ERS LIVE ENDOSCOPY: BRINGING INTERVENTIONAL PULMONOLOGY TEACHING TO THE NEXT LEVEL

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The year 2015 saw the European Respiratory Society (ERS) take a new and exciting step in Congress session innovation with the development of ERS Live Endoscopy day. A first for the ERS, this day demonstrated how using the latest medical techniques in a live session, combined with dedicated organisers, faculty and operators, could create a very special and memorable experience which enriched the 2015 Congress programme. The success of the 2015 ERS Live Endoscopy sessions was further recognised by an International and European Association Award from the Associations Network for “Best Use of Event Technology”. After the success of this event, the ERS has decided to once again include half a day of exciting live procedures in the 2017 ERS Congress programme, on Tuesday, September 12.

VENUE AND ORGANISERS

The 2017 version of ERS Live Endoscopy will be set in the Congress host country, Italy. The live procedures will take place in the “Azienda Ospedaliero Riuniti” of Ancona and will be broadcast live into the MiCo congress centre in Milan. The organisers are a mix of local and international experts, all with extensive experience in performing live endoscopic procedures. They are: 1) Prof. Stefano Gasparini, 2) Prof. Jouke T. Annema, 3) Prof. Felix Herth and 4) Prof. Venerino Poletti.

Prof. Stefano Gasparini (figure 1) is an Associate Professor of Respiratory Medicine at the Università Politecnica delle Marche and head of the Pulmonary Diseases Unit at the Azienda Ospedaliero-Universitaria “Ospedali Riuniti”. He has been involved in the field of interventional pulmonology for some 30 years and has been involved, via his hospital’s Interventional Pulmonology Service, in the organisation of some 80 national and international courses in interventional pulmonology. Furthermore, more than 100 colleagues from around the world have attended his department for training in interventional pulmonology.
Prof. Gasparini says “It will be a great pleasure and an honour for me to host in our Institute the 2017 ERS Live Endoscopy session. It will be a great educational opportunity to see the world’s leading experts in each technique performing the most interesting and innovative interventional bronchoscopic procedures”.

Prof. Jouke T. Annema (figure 2) is Professor of Pulmonary Endoscopy at the University of Amsterdam’s Academic Medical Centre. He has performed thousands of endobronchial ultrasound (EBUS) and endoscopic ultrasound (EUS) procedures. His PhD focused on the topic and he initiated and conducted numerous studies, publishing extensively. He has organised dozens of EBUS/EUS and transthoracic ultrasound courses for more than a decade. He is one of the founders of the ERS EBUS training and certification project. Furthermore, he is actively involved in the Interventional Pulmonology Group of the ERS as chair. He initiated the ERS Live Endoscopy sessions in 2015 to share novel endoscopy interventions with the pulmonary community at large.

Prof. Annema says: “As the integration of procedural skills with clinical reasoning is an important aspect of our profession-Live Endoscopy Milan/Acona will help bring this message across”.

Prof. Felix Herth (figure 3) is the head of ERS Assembly 1 and Head of Pulmonology at Heidelberg University Hospital.

Prof. Herth says: “Interventional pulmonology is developing rapidly. Various options for diagnosis and therapy have been approved and introduced, and more and more technologies are coming. With this, interest in learning about the field is also rapidly growing, mostly thanks to the options we can offer our patients beyond the classical therapy routes. Courses all over Europe, like the ERS courses, are quickly overbooked. ERS Live Endoscopy is a unique opportunity to see and hear the world’s leading experts. These sessions are not only ideal for those who want to learn to do the procedures but also for those who ‘only’ refer patients to centres of excellence; it is always important to know in detail what they can really offer your patients”.

Prof. Venerino Poletti (figure 4) is a Professor at the Dept of Respiratory Diseases and Allergy, Aarhus University Hospital, Denmark and Chair at the Dept of Diseases of the Thorax at the Ospedale Morgagni, Forlì, Italy.

Prof. Poletti says: “This event offers the opportunity to see how things happen in real life. It is difficult to learn the skills needed just from reading about the topic. I sincerely recommend you come to see the techniques in practice so you may gain a better understanding of the techniques”.

Whilst participating in the sessions, delegates may be fooled into thinking that watching live endoscopy is like following a well-scripted movie and, to a certain degree, this is a fair analogy. The organisers have the responsibility of ensuring that the Live Endoscopy sessions are meticulously organised and they have ensured that the following factors have been taken into consideration: 1) Patient recruitment, safety and ethics. 2) Logistics constraints. 3) Educational value of the procedure. 4) Faculty recruitment and training. As with any medical procedure, there is always a certain risk with live sessions. The ERS and the organisers follow the live endoscopy events position statement prepared by the European Society of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy and place particular emphasis on patient safety. Each endoscopy suite has a patient advocate who is an independent specialist doctor who is not involved in the
The development of echo-endoscopy, bronchoscopic procedures are becoming an essential step in lung cancer staging. Indeed, a complete diagnosis and staging of a lung cancer pathway cannot be realised without the use of bronchoscopic techniques. Conventional transbronchial needle aspiration (TBNA), endobronchial ultrasound-guided transbronchial needle aspiration (EBUS-TBNA) and endoscopic ultrasound with bronchoscope-guided fine-needle aspiration (EUS-B-FNA) will be demonstrated (figures 5 and 6), and rapid on-site evaluation (ROSE) in the presence of an expert cytopathologist will be shown live. The pleural procedures are a precious heritage of interventional pulmonology and the growing role of external ultrasound (figure 7) and of medical thoracoscopy in the diagnosis of pleural diseases has been recognised worldwide. To illustrate the use of these techniques, a patient affected by pleural effusion will be evaluated first by ultrasound and then by a live medical thoracoscopy.

In recent years, thanks to the advent of cryobiopsy and the great sensitivity of EBUS-TBNA in sarcoidosis, the role of bronchoscopy in the diagnosis of diffuse lung disease pathways has increased. To illustrate these techniques, a cryobiopsy in an indeterminate diffuse lung disease and an EBUS-TBNA procedure in a case of suspected sarcoidosis will be performed. Last, but by no means least, the organisers have recognised the great interest that the pulmonology community has for the bronchoscopic treatment of emphysema. The results obtained by valves, coils and steam are promising and there is enough evidence in the literature to justify the use of these techniques in selected patients with emphysema. As such, two patients with emphysema will be treated by the implant of unidirectional valves and coils.

Each individual session will consist of five parts: 1) An opening lecture. 2) A case presentation, including clinical questions, case history, key radiological images and learning objectives. 3) A live demonstration performed by an international expert. A second expert will stand next to him/her such that both experts can communicate with the moderators, operators and experts, and will see on-site cytological evaluation of the pathology material obtained. 4) An interactive multiple-choice question (MCQ) session and summary of questions from the audience. 5) A wrap-up period to conclude the session.

On behalf of the organisers, faculty and operators we look forward to seeing you at one of the ERS Live Endoscopy programmes. The programme this year will focus on two key areas: 1) Lung cancer and the pleura, and 2) Interstitial lung disease (ILD) and emphysema. In recent years, thanks to the development of echo-endoscopy,
sessions during the 2017 Congress! For live commentary by those attending the sessions and all parts of Congress don’t forget to check out www.twitter.com/ERSTalk

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Amy Farr is an employee of the European Respiratory Society. Felix Herth is the head of Assembly 1 of the European Respiratory Society. Venerino Poletti is the secretary of Assembly 1 of the European Respiratory Society. Jouke T. Annema is chair of the European Respiratory Society Interventional Pulmonology Group.

RECOMMENDED READING


ERS professional development: courses in interventional pulmonology. www.ersnet.org/professional-development/courses Date last accessed: May 19, 2017.


