

EDITORIAL

The ESVS Academy is Growing...

One of the goals of the European Society for Vascular Surgery (ESVS) is to provide educational opportunities with the aim of promoting optimal care for patients with vascular disease. Three years ago, the educational ambitions in connection with the annual meeting were revised, and the ESVS Academy was founded. One of its main objectives was to replace the long training courses including traditional lectures during the annual meeting with dedicated hands on workshops or interactive case discussions with clear learning objectives. These ESVS Academy sessions are being organised in collaboration with industry, offering high quality education with minimal commercial bias, and are compliant with both Union Européenne des Médecins Spécialistes (UEMS) standards and the MedTech Code of Ethical Business Practice. The initiatives were well received and since Lyon in 2017, the ESVS Academy programme has expanded exponentially offering training and education within seven educational tracks: endovascular, open, venous, diagnostics, human relations, science, and vascular medicine.

In Valencia, the ESVS Academy arranged 44 workshops that were attended by delegates from nearly 60 nations, more than half were under 40 years and a trainee to specialist ratio of 2:3 was observed. There is no doubt that the ESVS Academy has had a significant impact on the rejuvenation of the annual meeting (AM) witnessed over the last two years.¹ In Valencia, an ESVS certification programme in Basic Vascular Ultrasound (US) was introduced and 16 doctors and nurses enrolled, of which 14 passed the theoretical and practical examination, while being assessed by a team of experienced doctors and sonographers. The certification programme's curriculum is a continued process preceded by the ESVS two and a half day courses in Basic Vascular US organised in Copenhagen and Barcelona where participants are introduced to US theory and practice US skills under close supervision on actual patients. These participants, and others with vascular US ambitions, are invited to take the certification programme after approximately 100 supervised US examinations at their local institutions. The US certification programme is an example of the closer collaboration between the ESVS Academy and the European Vascular Nurses and Sonographers (EVNS) and how educational activities outside the AM can relate to the AM.

Congratulations to the newly certified doctors, nurses, and sonographers!

The focus on education of the ESVS in 2019 will continue to strengthen the annual meeting in Hamburg. The ESVS Academy plans the largest so far educational programme with more than 60 workshops and interactive case discussions delivered during 48 h (Wednesday and Thursday). The workshops and case discussions will run in eight dedicated rooms situated in a separate hall side by side with the scientific lectures and the exhibition. Online pre-conference registration will offer more than 1000 seats for workshops and case discussions involving approximately 100 experienced and dedicated convenors from all over Europe and beyond.

The UEMS was invited to visit and objectively evaluate random workshops organised by the ESVS Academy at the AM in Valencia, with attention to the format, objectives, hands on opportunities, participant- convenor interaction, and possible commercial influences. This UEMS feedback was positive, with only minor concerns about the risk of commercial bias. This concern has been addressed with convenors and companies and the UEMS will continue reviewing the Academy activities in Hamburg.

Workshop convenors were enthusiastic, positive, and want to return and to contribute in Hamburg. The overall feedback from the workshop attendees was good to excellent keeping in mind that the response rate via the ESVS app to provide feedback varied (mean feedback rate 40%). The low feedback was surprising as completion of online feedback is the only way to get an ESVS workshop certificate. Driven by the positive feedback about the ESVS Academy programme in Valencia, changes will be implemented to increase not only the number of training opportunities but also the quality of the educational programme in Hamburg, keeping an eye on commercial bias.

Most workshops can only be carried out in close collaboration with industrial partners who support the ESVS Academy by providing training tools (simulators, devices, models, surgical tools, grafts, US equipment), knowhow, or unrestricted educational grants. It is a very fine balance, but the objectives of the ESVS Academy and our industrial partners are 'crystal clear': to provide high quality education so as to ensure that products are used correctly and safely in order to improve the quality of care provided to vascular patients. Hence, the concept of 'industrial workshops' has been eliminated at the AM. Consequently, training and education can ONLY be organised together with the ESVS

Academy, who are responsible for educational and scientific content before (pre-learning) and during the workshops, for the appointment of the convenors and tutors, for the selection of the delegates, and for processing the feedback. Convenors and tutors are a mixture of well known senior experts and several younger enthusiastic colleagues who, despite their young age already are highly experienced within their field. A faculty consisting of young and senior experts is inspiring and stimulating for the participants and tutors. Furthermore, the young colleagues will be the future of the ESVS Academy and they will ensure that high quality training putting the learner and patient in the centre will become standard practice across Europe both at their institution and at conferences.

Education and science go hand in hand, which is also reflected in a recent publication in the European Journal of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery including several ESVS Academy members and the UEMS.² Herein, the first European Needs Assessment within Vascular Surgery has been created and described in an attempt to stimulate and adapt simulation based education in daily practice. Finally, during the scientific programme in Hamburg, the category education has returned, allowing educational researchers in the vascular field to submit their work and present at the annual meeting.

We look forward to welcoming you, and anyone interested in improving the quality of care of our vascular patients, at ESVS Academy 2019 in Hamburg. We believe that everyone will be intrigued by at least one topic: medical students, surgical trainees, (endo)vascular surgeons in

training, experienced colleagues, nurses, sonographers ... and even leaders in the field.

REFERENCES

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