

EDITORIAL



In memoriam: Philippe Biderman

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Dr. Philippe Biderman has left our intensive care community, and we are grieving for the sudden loss of an outstanding physician, a fine researcher, and most of all a good friend.

Philippe Biderman spent his formative professional years in France. He graduated from medical school in Lariboisiere Saint Louise “Paris 7” University in 1988. He received his national diplomas of medical intensive care from Lille University and emergency medicine from the Necker medical center in Paris in 1993. After becoming an established expert in intensive care in France, he decided to begin anew in a country with a budding intensive care profession, Israel.

In his newly adopted country, Dr. Biderman was required to undergo residency for a second time and pass local accreditation procedures in order to receive national licensure. This did not hinder his determination or drive; shortly after receiving his Israeli intensive care diploma, he established the first intensivist-led cardiothoracic intensive care unit in the country. In that

unit, he treated patients after heart and lung surgery, complex heart transplantations, and chest trauma. His expertise with mechanical assist devices and ECMO was invaluable not only to his department but also to others. During his training in the medical intensive care unit of the Ambroise Pare medical center he specialized in hemodynamic monitoring under the supervision of Prof François Jardin. In the early 1990s, a time when cardiac echocardiography was still very much considered within the realm of cardiologists alone, he was trained in critical care echocardiography by François Jardin and in point of care ultrasonography by Dr. Daniel Lichtenstein in the ICU. This concept he brought with him and disseminated among the local intensive care community. Together with the Israeli National EMS service he outfitted an ambulance to suit the needs of patient transport on extracorporeal life support and created the busiest ECMO center in the country. Although referral to ECMO was and is still mostly viewed by many intensivists as a last resort, hundreds of patients were referred to him in extremis. Many of them were saved. When additional medical centers established a similar service, Philippe was happy to reach out to offer assistance, advice, and training. He was always the first to know if we had trouble with a patient on ECMO. His was always the advice we sought. In line with this typical generosity, in 2015 he opened the first adult ECMO training course in the Rabin Medical Centre. His interest in the topic extended beyond clinical expertise; Dr. Biderman published on his experience with ECMO, point of care sonography, and post cardiac surgery care in international journals such as the *Journal of Trauma*, *Critical Care Medicine*, *Intensive Care Medicine*, the *American Journal of Respiratory Critical Care*, and more. At the time of his demise several intensive care doctors in Israel have on our desktops some of his unfinished papers that we must now finish without his untiring support.

Very early in his career Dr. Biderman also developed an interest in air transport of critically ill and injured

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patients. His initial training on this topic took place in France which included a national diploma of aerospace medicine, a university diploma of aerial transportation, and experience with the SAMU. Shortly after arrival in Israel he underwent training in advanced trauma life support and national licensing in air medical transport, after which he became highly involved in air transport of critically ill and injured patients in both civilian and military settings.

Shortly before his untimely death, at the age of 53, Dr. Biderman was nominated to direct the general ICU of the newest and most modern hospital in the country, the Assouta Ashdod Medical Center. Following nearly half a year of frenzied preparation his ICU opened its doors in October 2017. It was immediately credited as being one of the best centers in the country. Dr. Biderman will not have the privilege of watching his newest project blossom and grow. We will. And as we continue to follow in his footsteps, we will be constantly thinking of him.

Philippe delivered the whole package. He was a driven, ambitious leader. He was never afraid to voice his opinion. He was also a dedicated, kind, and caring doctor to his patients and a generous teacher to his students and trainees. He was a loving husband to his wife and four children who will undoubtedly miss him dearly. But to us, most of all he was a friend. He was a good listener, could always elicit a laugh, and was fun to work, write, and just spend time with. We are grateful for our time with him. It was very sweet and much too brief.

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