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Prishtina International Airway Day: A big step for the small country



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Everything began with few endotracheal tubes and laryngeal masks and emerged into the biggest workshop in the region (A. Hasani).

Prishtina International Airway Day - Advanced Airway Workshop was held on March 2nd, 2019, in the capital of Kosovo, Prishtina, with a great panoramic view of the city at Hotel International Prishtina. The meeting was endorsed by the European Airway Management Society (EAMS), Faculty of Medicine, and Kosovo Doctors, which were also our co-organizers and supporters. It was the first airway meeting in our country.

The idea for the workshop was born during the EAMS congress in Catania [1], when Ayten and Tolga Saracoglu (EAMS Treasurer) encouraged my proposal to organize an airway meeting in Prishtina, Kosovo. And, from that moment our 3 months hard work journey started and brought enthusiasm to facilitate the modern airway management equipment to our country and share the knowledge with our colleagues. We inaugurated the Kosova Airway Management Society. Ayten and Tolga proposed the programme and we started the necessary preparations. We crossed a long and hard way, breaking the barriers of big airway companies, which refused to be part of the workshop. But, our motto was: we can do it if we want to and the success will follow!

The 16 faculty members and 112 participants attended the meeting, most of them were anesthesiologists including specialists and residents, intensive care physicians, emergency medicine doctors, pediatricians and other medical staff interested in airway management. Unfortunately, a vast number of applicants were rejected due to the limited places for the workshop. Therefore an efficient teaching could be performed.

In the opening ceremony, not only our dear guests were present, but at the same time they attended as our co-organizers, lecturers and instructors. From Turkey: Dr. Toker, Dr. Saracoglu KT, Dr. Saracoglu A, Dr. Ustalar-Ozgen, Dr. Zengin, Dr. Altun-Bingol and from France: Dr. Eljezi. First, Dr. Ustalar-Ozgen presented the video with her impressions during unforgettable humanitarian work in refugee camps in Kenya and Nigeria, endorsed by UNHCR and TIKA (Fig. 1).

The meeting agenda was comprised of 8 mainstay topics, separated into a theoretical part and also a practical hands-on workshop. The first lecture, *Predictors of difficult airway* was presented by Dr. Saracoglu A. This very important topic covered all news and most important parts of airway predictors. Dr. Toker, Fellow of the European Airway Management Society, discussed the crucial topic of updated guidelines from scientific societies that are needed to offer our patients safety and quality. Dr. Eljezi, from Clermont-Ferrand, captured the audience in his best way with the topic about anesthesia in patients with difficult airway. Another amazing lecture followed about apneic oxygenation and high flow, came from Dr. Saracoglu KT, past secretary and current treasurer of EAMS.

The issues of airway management in obese patients were discussed by Dr. Zengin, from Marmara University, Istanbul. And, of course a very popular new era: airway ultrasonography, presented by Dr. Altun Bingol, from Istanbul University, all received with great interest. Finally, how to extubate the patients were explained very professionally by Dr. Ustalar Ozgen, from Acibadem University, Istanbul, Turkey.

The second part of the meeting was “hands-on” workshop. The equipment for the workshop was provided with the great effort of the organizers. When we started this organization we had only endotracheal tubes, laryngeal masks, one video laryngoscope and two intubating manikins. The variety of equipment was built up over the course of the organization. And, finally we arranged 8 workshop stations with all the modern equipment necessary for a high quality workshop. Each workshop station had both an international and a national instructor. The delegates rotated around eight 30-min workshop stations in groups (Fig. 2).

The first workshop station covered pediatric and adult direct and indirect laryngoscopy. Macintosh, Miller, McCoy, pediatric and adult laryngoscopes and intubating manikins were present. The retrograde intubating devices and some kind of stylets, intubating catheters, offered great appeal to our delegates.

The big surprise for our delegates was ORSIM (Airway Simulation Limited, Auckland, New Zealand), fiberoptic bronchoscopy simulator, which took place on the second workshop station. Having the ORSIM in our workshop was our dream and many thanks to Dr. Baker from New Zealand and Dr. Angheliescu from Romania, who contributed to make our dream come true. With the tutorial of Dr. Toker, delegates enjoyed training in this device. And, they passed from virtual intubation to the real fiberoptic bronchoscope guided intubation at the other workshop station.

The video laryngoscopy station was also one of the most favoured ones from delegates. They used 6 kinds of video laryngoscopes and learned to compare their advantages and



Fig. 1. Theoretical part of the meeting.



Fig. 2. Hands on workshop.

disadvantages. Workshop station with supraglottic airway devices presented the samples of all 3 generations. And, of course the Airway Ultrasonography workshop station, was the most liked one of all. At the surgical cricothyroidotomy workshop-station, delegates were also reminded at the importance of early and clear decision-making. Tricks were given from Onrubia X et al.'s [2] narrative review.

The other surprise in the workshop was the High Flow Nasal Cannula Oxygenation Systems including Peri-Operative Insufflatory Nasal Therapy (POINT, Armstrong Medical, Coleraine, North Ireland), which Dr. Saracoglu KT carried the big box on his hands from Istanbul. From the expert point of view, delegates had the opportunity to get familiar with the device and high-flow nasal oxygen principles.

At the end of meeting, the feedback of all participants was very positive, which proved the purpose of the meeting that was introducing and improving technical skills with novel airway management devices, according to airway management guidelines, raising awareness of hospital managers about their importance and supply and finally to advance and to increase patient safety and quality. Besides the participants had a chance to learn about the EAMS structure and activities [3]. Afterwards many of them applied for membership and Kosovo elected their own Council member of EAMS. The common desire of all participants was more future airway management meetings. During this course we realized that there were even participants from out of the country. Therefore we had a decision to organize regular airway management courses in different Balkan countries. According to the evaluation and feedback forms, the satisfaction level was high. Several participants remarked about the lack of oxygen sources in the

meeting area. This caused a limitation to practice the high flow systems efficiently. Some participants stated that they were only using the intubating catheters and from now on they will consider using the extubation catheters as well. The experience of the tutors were congratulated.

Limitations: Because this was the first airway meeting in our country, we focused only on technical skills, teaching the practices of using specialized airway devices. The practice of non-technical skills lacked in the agenda of this meeting. The combination of technical and non-technical skills with high fidelity simulations was our vision for future meetings.

1. Conclusion

In conclusion, now, we are ready for new airway management challenges and new airway management meetings!

Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tacc.2019.04.007>.

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