

National critical care audit

The Critical Care Society committed in 2003 to improve the delivery of critical care in South Africa. One such commitment was to do an audit of the current critical care resources in South African public and private hospitals. Part 1 comprised a comprehensive audit which has now been completed. Part 2 is a 1-day prevalence study which is currently in the final planning stage, and part 3 will measure patient acuity levels in critical care.

The scope of the audit included describing and cataloguing the current critical care and high care facilities available in South Africa, profiling the doctors and nurses working in critical care and high care units, and detailing the referral of patients both from hospitals without intensive or high care facilities to hospitals with the appropriate facilities and also between units.

Preliminary results of the audit were presented at the annual critical care congresses in 2003 (Cape Town) and 2004 (Durban). The results have been presented to the Minister of Health and subsequent meetings have been held with officials from the national Department of Health. The final results of part 1 of the audit were presented at a meeting on 29 June 2005 in Johannesburg to the participants in the study and will again be presented at the 2005 congress at Sun City.

This was an enormous undertaking and we managed to get an unprecedented 100% sample, which would not have been possible without the co-operation of every unit in South Africa. Thank you to every one who took the time from their already busy schedules to complete the questionnaire.

Planning for part 2 is well underway and the study day is planned for early August. A proportional probability sampling method has been used in order to arrive at the selection of units which will be asked to participate in part 2.

Once again thank you for everyone's valuable input and interest in the audit. We hope this is the beginning of a fruitful critical care research programme.

Juan Scribante and Sats Bhagwanjee

Certificate in Critical Care

The examination for a Certificate in Critical Care, held under the auspices of the Colleges of Medicine of South Africa (CMSA), has been in existence since 2002. It appears to be quite popular as an increasing number of candidates are sitting the exam. The intention of the

examination is to allow practitioners to register the sub-speciality of critical care medicine.

Current requirements for the certificate include:

- A registered speciality, e.g. FCA, FCS, FCP, FCPaed, FCOG, etc.
- Two years spent in a training post in an accredited critical care unit.
- Successful completion of the written and oral components of the examination.

Three out of six candidates were successful at the last examination held in May in Durban. They were Drs F Paruk, N H Sewlall and N Welkovichs.

As the discipline of critical care medicine continues to grow, it is hoped that more practitioners will seek to be formally certified. Full details of the examination process are available from CMSA.

Critical Care Travel Fellowship

This continuing education programme is generously supported by Fresenius Kabi. The programme mainly targets non-academic centres and private institutions. The speakers are drawn from recognised South African intensivists. Talks are offered on most ICU relevant topics. A typical visit entails clinical rounds in a local hospital/clinic and a CPD-accredited mini-symposium (2 - 3 talks) in the evening.

Society members are encouraged to submit requests for their centres to be visited. Such requests should be sent to Professor Rudo Mathivha, tel. 083 292 3362 or via e-mail mathivhalr@medicine.wits.ac.za. Alternatively, your local Fresenius representative can be utilised to facilitate a request through Ms Albertha Nel (Fresenius Head Office in Midrand, Gauteng). Members are free to request specific speakers.

Congresses and refresher courses

Annual Congress 2005: 22 - 26 July 2005, Sun City (organised by Johannesburg). Combined with Pulmonology and Infectious Diseases.

Annual Congress 2006: August/September 2006, Bloemfontein (organised by Free State).

Refresher Course 2005: 29 November – 2 December 2005, Kramer Building, UCT (organised by Western Cape). Invited speakers: Monty Mythen (UK) – adult; Peter Rimensberger (Geneva) – paediatric. This course will include 2 full days of paediatric ICU sessions.