

## CARTA AO EDITOR

# On behalf of the Utstein Simulation Study Group

## Grupo de Estudo de Simulação Utstein

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### Afiliação

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### Dear Editor,

I would like to use the opportunity of this special edition of Revista de Sociedade Portuguesa de Anestesiologia, the official Journal of the Portuguese Society of Anesthesiology, to direct the readers to the article with the title “Integration of simulation-based education in anaesthesiology specialist training. Synthesis of results from an Utstein Meeting”, which has been recently published by the Utstein Simulation Study Group in the European Journal of Anaesthesiology (EJA).<sup>1</sup> The authors are trusting that this publication will make a significant national and international impact.

It is worth mentioning the background to this collaborative work. The European Society of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care (ESAIC), via its speciality Simulation and Trainees Committees, have conducted 2 recent surveys with the participation of representatives of the National Anaesthesiology Societies and anaesthesiology residents in Europe.<sup>2,3</sup> Both surveys showed that simulation-based education (SBE) modalities (mainly procedural and high-fidelity simulation) have been adopted by European anaesthesiology training programmes. Yet, a significant discrepancy in relation to the availability and accessibility to such programmes, and in the level of implementation, was found. The training programmes in the Northern and Western Europe appear to offer greater access to SBE<sup>1,2</sup> whereas there is a lot of scope for improvements in the rest of Europe. SBE is a mandatory component of the training curriculum in only 5 European countries.<sup>2</sup>

The unifying learning from these surveys, also highlighted in an editorial by Stefan De Hert, past Chair of the ESAIC Education and Training Committee, is that there is a lot to reflect upon and even more to be done.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, a

common theme emerges, which refers to ongoing obstacles to a widespread implementation, e.g. the availability of trained instructors, time constraints, and financial restrictions.<sup>2,4</sup>

To attempt and align all European simulation anaesthesiology training, it became obvious to the ESAIC that a curriculum was required.<sup>2-4</sup> The Utstein study group was therefore formed, representing a collaboration of 25 participants from 22 countries, including 23 international experts in simulation and 2 anaesthesia residents. An initial meeting of the study group took place in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 2022, and was followed by the manuscript writing, review by all the contributors, submission and acceptance for publication by the European Journal of Anaesthesiology (EJA) over the following months.<sup>1</sup>

To the best of this author's knowledge, this is the first time that a comprehensive SBE curriculum for anaesthesiology specialist training has been published. In brief, the study group used Kern's six-step approach and the Utstein-type process to identify the specific domains for which simulation should be used. These are: 1) Bootcamp/initial training; 2) Airway management; 3) Regional anaesthesia; 4) Point of care ultrasound; 5) Obstetrics anaesthesia; 6) Paediatric anaesthesia; 7) Trauma; 8) Intensive care; 9) Critical events in our specialty, and 10) Professionalism and difficult conversations. For each domain, a course template was constructed that defines the learning objectives, the instructional strategies including simulation modalities and simulator types, and assessment methods. A section is dealing with the obstacles to SBE and the means to deal with those.<sup>1</sup> To make it widely accessible, the manuscript is Open Access, and the templates can be downloaded by clicking on in-text SDC links.

It would be interesting to see how various countries will be applying the Utstein simulation guidelines. For example, the Romanian Society of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care (Societatea Romana de Anestezie si Terapie Intensiva) was

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the first National Anaesthesiology Society to collaborate with both the ESAIC Simulation Committee and the Society for Simulation in Europe Applied to Medicine (SESAM) in relation to implementing this curriculum in the Romanian anaesthesiology training. The model adopted by Romanian society has been that of an initial National Advanced Airway Management Train the Trainer (NAAM - TTT) course, which was conducted in 2022, in Timisoara, Romania, by a group of ESAIC and SESAM content and simulation experts.<sup>5</sup> A similar model National Obstetric Anaesthesia Management Train the Trainer (NOAT-TTT) was conducted in Targu Mures, Romania, in 2023.<sup>6</sup> The TTT courses were initially conducted in English; however, subsequently, the trained Romanian Faculty created content (e.g. simulation scenarios, video-assisted material) in the Romanian language. Both courses have already been rolled out to a large cohort of Romanian anaesthesiology residents. A Moldovan NAAM-TTT will be conducted in Kishinev, Moldova, in early 2024, and it will follow the same model. For other countries, a Course Director Programme might be a more suitable alternative.

The ESAIC via its Simulation Committee is committed to collaborate with the National Anaesthesiology Societies and training programmes to promote and support the implementation of the Utstein simulation curriculum, in full realization that every national training programme is different and "no one size fits it all".

For more information, please contact [simulation@esaic.org](mailto:simulation@esaic.org).

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