

Harmonising education and training in Europe - New this year – HERMES European Examination in Adult Respiratory Medicine

The ERS is pleased to announce that the inaugural Examination for the European Diploma in Respiratory Medicine will be held on the afternoon of Saturday, October 4 in Berlin in the frame of the ERS 2008 Congress.

The European examination is the latest accomplishment of the HERMES project (Harmonised Education in Respiratory Medicine for European Specialists). This project was launched in 2005 by the ERS School based on the principle that, no matter whether trained in Sweden, France, Portugal, Greece, other EU or neighbouring countries, all respiratory specialists should possess the same core skills and abilities. The entire HERMES project, including the examination which is now about to start, are proof of the ERS commitment to achieving the highest possible standards of practice in the specialty and to harmonising training across Europe, for the final benefit of patients and of the whole healthcare system.

In phase I, the HERMES project allowed for the development and publication of the first European consensus-based syllabus in Respiratory Medicine. In phase II, more comprehensive Curriculum recommendations are being finalised, incorporating useful advice with regard to training structure as well as teaching and assessment methods. In parallel, phase III has been dedicated to the development of a European Examination, which is one of the assessment methods recommended by the HERMES Task Force in its curriculum recommendations.

Details on the examination

The examination is knowledge-based only. It will be run in the form of a paper-based Multiple Choice Questionnaire (MCQ) in English. The blueprint for the content of this examination is the consensus-based European syllabus, available in 24 languages at <http://hermes.ersnet.org>. The selected format for the first examination has two dimensions: 1. 'Respiratory diseases', composed of 10 categories and 2. 'Actions of the doctor'.

In accordance with the EU principle of subsidiarity, this examination has no legal standing, since only national authorities can grant doctors the right to practice. The examination is therefore reserved to registered medical practitioners who have already obtained their national accreditation (or equivalent) to practice as a specialist in adult respiratory medicine. Furthermore, the examination is open to ERS members only. All further details pertaining to registration are available at <http://hermes.ersnet.org>

Good reasons for sitting the examination

There are many reasons why such a European examination can be of interest to any qualified respiratory physician:

- Proof of excellence: the European Diploma in Respiratory Medicine will allow any successful candidate to show both their patients and colleagues their commitment to high-quality life-long learning;
- Mobility: the ERS European Diploma in Respiratory Medicine, even if not legally recognised by any national health authorities, will certainly be known and recognised among the profession, thus making moving to another country easier;
- Self-assessment: the ERS European Examination represents a perfect opportunity to test one's knowledge with respect to what is regarded as the current golden European standard.

Further information about HERMES

Details of HERMES' activities can be found at: <http://hermes.ersnet.org> or by email hermes@ersnet.org