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Esicm Congress Preview: Controversies in Critical Care

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The 21st Annual Congress of the European Society of Intensive Care Medicine will be held in Lisbon, Portugal from September 21-24, 2008. This congress is likely to be the biggest critical care meeting taking place in the world this year. Held over three days, it will feature ten parallel sessions with over 800 lectures, presentations, debates, round table discussions, tutorials and interactive educational sessions. Invited speakers are all well-known international experts in their field, and we anticipate having a faculty of over 220 speakers that will participate with us. Presentation of original research is one of the priorities of this series of congresses and we are pleased that over 1200 abstracts have been submitted to the meeting. Many of these will be presented in either oral or poster format to congress registrants. This combination of thematic presentations, education, discussion and debate of new data is an intoxicating mixture that will make the congress an event that should not be missed.

Lisbon lays lazily on the Tejo River, very close to the Atlantic coast, near the history and the beauties of Estoril, the fish restaurants of the picturesque fisherman's village of Cascais and the wild, green landscapes that inspired Byron in Sintra. Historically, Lisbon was the European hub of commerce with Africa, the Far East and Brazil.

Lisbon today remains a stunning city, a prior cultural capital of Europe. Add to that its multicultural diversity, where Africa, South America and Europe mix in complex sounds and tastes, the laid-back feel and architectural time warp, and you have one of the most enjoyable cities in Europe. To recognise Lisbon's tradition of discovery and integration of diverse cultures as well as the joys of learning from different points of view, this meeting has been designed around a number of key controversies pertinent to Critical Care [Table 1]. These will be presented in a series of debates that will run through the meeting.

The objectives of this meeting are to update clinicians, nursing staff, allied health professional and industry partners on all the relevant and recent data and changes that pertain to critically ill patients and emergency medicine. We will focus not only on patient management decisions but also on organisational and management topics that are important in this area. Prior to the start of the congress, we will host a number of postgraduate courses. There will be a refresher course included among these courses, which is designed to update participants on all relevant subjects. This course will suit anyone thinking of taking the European Diploma in Intensive Care or other 'more senior' parties wanting to refresh themselves on a broad number of topics. We will also be hosting postgraduate courses on trauma, sub-arachnoid haemorrhage, patient safety, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma, in addition to echocardiography and microcirculation.

Lisbon is the city for fado, funiculars, feasting and frolicking and remains one of the cheapest cities in Europe. Good fish and fresh seafood can be found just steps away from traditional fisherman, cooked in thousands of small familiar restaurants. We look forward to you attending our 21st annual congress in Lisbon where we will offer both an enjoyable and exciting scientific program together with an entertaining social and cultural spectacle.

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