
ICU Volume 5 - Issue 3 - Autumn 2005 - Features

ICU Europe: What do We Know and How can We Improve?

Authors

David L. Edbrooke

Intensivist

Gary H. Mills

Intensivist

Daniela Negrini

Statistician

Medical Economics and Research Centre Sheffield (MERCS)

Website

www.mercs.org.uk

David Edbrooke calls for intensive care professionals to participate in a new initiative to identify and publish ICU statistics from across Europe in **ICU Management**.

Introduction

Intensivists are well versed in clinical ICU research. Little attention, however, has been focused upon the number of beds that are available, how many nurses and doctors are used to run these ICUs and how these numbers vary between countries. Should significant differences exist, this then leads to questions about why, and ultimately what represents the most efficient use of resources.

What are We Trying to Achieve

With **ICU Management**, we hope to improve the situation by asking healthcare professionals working within the ICU environment to contribute to a picture of "ICU Europe". This will not be the work of one person but the summation of data to which everyone can contribute. This will be an ongoing project, which will be updated regularly. We intend to start in a simple way by trying to achieve a better estimate of the number of beds per 100,000 population within Europe. Currently available data are reviewed in table 1.

The main problems with the data shown in table 1 are:

- The data span a number of years and are all at least 7 years out of date
- There is no clear and common method employed in the data collection
- There is no common definition of intensive care Varying statistics are also available at a national level to inform on the number of intensive care units, but these may not necessarily always be accurate.

So Please Join Us

This initiative will only work if you, the readers, are willing to take part. We need enthusiastic intensive care professionals from each country to make this project happen. Any data received for the study will be attributed to the individual providing the data, and by publishing updates regularly in **ICU Management**, readers will be able to follow the project progress.

- We need a researcher from each country to establish numbers of the number of ICU beds
- In addition to calculating the numbers and sharing these with us, you must specify how you arrived at the figures
- Retrospective data needs to be collected for 2004.

© For personal and private use only. Reproduction must be permitted by the copyright holder. Email to copyright@mindbyte.eu.

- For standard comparisons, all neonatal, paediatric, neurosurgical, cardiac or surgery beds should be excluded
- We define an intensive care unit as “a specific are within a hospital capable of treating patients with more than one organ system failure” for the purposes of this initiative.

What Happens Next?

Our objective is to develop and publish European wide ICU statistics with the help of ICU Management. Data will be reported in future issues of the journal following validation by Medical Economics and Research Centre Sheffield (MERCs). If successful, we will all learn a great deal more about the systems in place, and perhaps benefit from this knowledge. We then hope to collect further data, for example on numbers of ICU physicians and nurses per 100,000 population. The project will be ongoing and will deliver validated results to readers on a regular basis.

Contacts

I hope that you will be interested enough to join us in this venture and feel free to contact either **ICU Management** or me personally:
DEdbrooke@aol.com



Published on : Thu, 20 Oct 2011