To the National Societies of Anaesthesiology

Brussels, February 2015

Dear President,

Please accept this invitation to join the European programme of teaching accreditation.

Within the ESA, the Hospital Visiting and Training Accreditation Programme (HVTAP) is one essential part of the ESA Academy, which includes the Scientific Committee, the Committee for European Education in Anaesthesiology (CEEA), Trainee Exchange Programmes, Teach-the-Teacher courses, Masterclasses, Refresher Courses, and finally the Examination Committee.

The HVTAP programme is coordinated by a Joint Committee of the European Society of Anaesthesiology (ESA) and the European Board of Anaesthesiology (EBA). The HVTAP aims to improve and harmonise anaesthesiology training throughout Europe by accrediting *Centres of excellence* to serve as references for National visiting programmes, and hopefully also take on the role of mentoring institutions in Europe.

The HVTAP programme was instituted to evaluate training programmes in terms of facilities, design of education, standard and involvement of faculty, balance between clinical training and didactic teaching and the possibility for research. The accreditation visit focuses on structure as well as process. For further details, please read the addendum to this letter.

The major benefits of passing the HVTAP programme are:

1. review your own activities to find future points of development;
2. have an increased visibility of the hospital/ anaesthesiology department efforts, at the national and European levels, for continuous medical education in our speciality;
3. in enhancement of residents and staff satisfaction as well as patient safety;
4. with this increased value and visibility be enabled to recruit the best employees available;
5. the participation to the NASC Network of Centres of excellence which will support peer-to-peer collaborations and exchange
6. as well as the participation to the TARH-AICE programme (Train Abroad and Return Home in Anaesthesia and Intensive Care in Europe);
7. both previous actions will benefit from the activities of the ESA Academy;
8. And of course, any department that has submitted an application for certification and has subsequently been visited and approved will receive a certificate of accreditation during the Euroanaesthesia Award Ceremony.

Yours respectfully,

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**Addendum:**

**The Hospital Visiting and Training Accreditation Programme (HVTAP), a joint venture of the European Society and European Board of Anaesthesiology**

The HVTAP programme is coordinated by a Joint Committee of the European Society of Anaesthesiology (ESA) and the European Board of Anaesthesiology (EBA). The HVTAP aims to improve and harmonise anaesthesiology training throughout Europe by accrediting *Centres of excellence* to serve as references for National visiting programmes, and hopefully also take on the role of mentoring institutions in Europe.

The HVTAP programme was instituted to evaluate training programmes in terms of facilities, design of education, standard and involvement of faculty, balance between clinical training and didactic teaching and the possibility for research. The inspection focuses on structure as well as process.

Structure addresses resources such as medical staff, facilities, library, technical equipment, access to medical service and opportunities for research and development. Process refers to the “educational climate” and to how existing educational resources are used; whether there is a director of studies, whether training programmes are formulated and guidelines applied, how professional guidance is organised, and whether senior doctors take an active interest in the training of their younger colleagues. Good educational resources may not be used to their full potential because of inadequate involvement, and conversely, a positive educational and academic climate may compensate for material deficiencies.

The visiting team is made up of three visitors appointed by the HVTAP Joint Committee; one from the ESA, one from the EBA and one from the country in which the accreditation visit will take place. The latter is appointed by the National Society of Anaesthesiology of the visited country.

The visits may be to a single unit or to a group of hospitals which are regarded as a training unit that can provide the full range of clinical services as required for complete anaesthesiology training.  The 2-day visit consists of a detailed presentation of the staff, the organisation of the hospital, the department (or the institute) and the training structure. This forms the basis for a discussion and evaluation of all aspects of the teaching and training process with the staff members involved. The purpose of the evaluation is to complement and build upon the strengths of the department and to encourage development and change in order to address areas of weakness.

Several real benefits are provided by passing the HVTAP programme: an increase in resident quality of training and staff satisfaction, patient safety, becoming aware of the educational and training offers provided by the ESA, creating a network of *Centres of excellence* which will support the TARH programme (Trainee Abroad and Returning Home Programme), and finally benefit from the other activities of the ESA Academy.

Any department that has submitted an application for certification and has subsequently been visited and approved will receive a certificate of accreditation during the Euroanaesthesia Award Ceremony.