

Clinical research as foundation for the advancement of respiratory physiotherapy

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Associazione Riabilitatori dell'Insufficienza Respiratoria (ARIR) is pleased to announce a new editorial project by joining the *Monaldi Archives of Chest Disease* journal.

ARIR (Italian Association of Respiratory Physiotherapists), a non-profit association born in 1989, promotes the prevention and rehabilitation of respiratory diseases as well as the scientific advancement of respiratory physiotherapy profession. In the absence of any formal specialization career at that time, activities carried out by ARIR, since its establishment, have mainly been focused on education, with the final goal of promoting evidence based respiratory physiotherapy diffusion among Italian physiotherapists. Therefore, we have been offering national and international courses, postgraduate training tracks in collaboration with the University of Milan and consensus papers shared with national and international scientific societies (AARC, ERCA, ERS, AIPO, SIFC).

From 1992 to 2017, we have been steadily covered the educational gap in physiotherapy respiratory care through our editorial activity and by the unconditional support of several colleagues. *Bollettino ARIR* was published from 1992 to 2001, and then it turned into the four-monthly *Rivista Italiana di Fisioterapia e Riabilitazione Respiratoria*, offered until 2017. Several publications nationally edited followed as well in forms of books [1-3], position paper [4] and expert opinion [5].

The most challenging career-changing initiative started 13 years ago, when ARIR and the University of Milan organized the

first postgraduate course on respiratory physiotherapy and pulmonary rehabilitation. This important event implicitly marked the time in which Italian academia recognized the scientific ground of respiratory physiotherapy as well as the moment in which a physiotherapist could be referred as *specialist* [6].

By consequence, it became mandatory to strengthen the methods of our professional conduct through more solid approaches, shifting from a more experience-based approach to the current evidence-based practice. This specialization course constituted itself as the first attempt to fill a gap of 1500 hours in the respiratory education missing in the BSc degree in physiotherapy, that still provides a minimum of 12 hours.

Against all the difficulties we face as professionals in being involved in clinical research [7] and in being adequately represented in academia [8], today is the time for ARIR and for all the Italian professionals involved in the respiratory physiotherapy care to bet on a different editorial future. After 25 years, ARIR official publication *Rivista Italiana di Fisioterapia e Riabilitazione Respiratoria* changes its languages and will be indexed on several medical databases, with the diffusion of its contents within the section *Physiotherapy Area* of Monaldi Archives of Chest Disease.

This promising collaboration is in line with the *mission* of ARIR and we hope that many colleagues from Italy and from around the world would share and spread their clinical research and valuable clinical experiences in favour of an improvement of patients' care.

Despite the several barriers to publication encountered by physiotherapists and their absence in the Italian academia, ARIR will try to overcome the financial issues by co-funding the Monaldi Archives of Chest Disease journal. Indeed, ARIR recognizes to Monaldi Archives of Chest Disease the effort to support Open Access publishing, making research freely available and thus sustaining the diffusion of papers about respiratory physiotherapy.

A distinguished international board will join the ARIR editorial team: Tina Andersen (Norway), Arzu Ari (USA), Cristian Benay (Argentina), Miguel Gonçalves (Portugal), Maria Inez Zanetti Feltrim (Brazil) and George Ntoumenopoulos (Australia) will work with us in the advancement of the scientific level of the respiratory physiotherapy professional.

Nowadays, there is scientific evidence that rehabilitation plays a primary role not only in chronic disease and aging but also in the acute setting in order to decrease morbidity, mortality and improve

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health-related quality of life. By consequence, our choice to collaborate in a multi-disciplinary and multi-professional editorial product is an act of continuity with the founding values of ARIR: training and education of respiratory physiotherapist goes from the knowledge diffusion of one profession that meets the others.

We are strongly engaged in this enterprising project and we welcome with enthusiasm all the physiotherapy community to join us.

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