

Online Supplement 1: Lung function tests interpretation. lessons from French training in respiratory medicine

Respiratory training in France and Europe:

In France, medical training is organised in 3 main steps. (i) From the first to the third year, medical students have fundamental training in science, physiology, pathophysiology and semiology. (ii) From the 4th to the 6th year, they are trained on diseases and their management. They attend daily practical training in hospitals and are involved in patients care. The 6th year is roughly equivalent to the English foundation year. At the end of this 6th year, medical students have a national exam. Ranking obtained at this national exam determines the choice of their speciality accordingly and the city where they will do their residency. (iii) The residency lasts from the 7th to the 10th year. The choice of speciality is performed from the beginning of the residency. Therefore, residents follow dedicated training from the first year of their residency.

French respiratory training lasts 8 semesters. Respiratory trainees have to do 4 semesters on respiratory wards. They are also encouraged to do a semester in a LFT laboratory and in an intensive care unit. They can freely choose two semesters depending on their field of interest. Theoretical training is provided during inter-regional seminars. They are held every four months and are independently organised by 7 academic districts (East, Centre, North-West, Paris, South, South-West, South). Each academic district establishes its own training program in accordance to national guidelines. One academic district (South) incorporates HERMES curriculum for the training of its respiratory residents.

At the end of their 8 semesters of training, each trainee presents a dissertation to the professorial committee of their Academic district. This dissertation usually consists of a clinical study. This dissertation gives them the title of Respiratory Specialist. Trainees also need to present a Thesis in their local hospital in order to qualify as doctors.

Across Europe, the duration of respiratory residency is highly variable in its length and organisation. In Germany, Switzerland, United Kingdom and Belgium, residency is divided into two parts: one with a general training and one with the training of the speciality. In France, Spain, Italy and Portugal, the residency is only dedicated to the speciality but allows placements in other specialities. The length of the residency also varies: 4 years (Spain, France), 5 years (Italy, Portugal), 6 years (Netherlands, Switzerland, Belgium), 8 years (United Kingdom, Germany).

Table 1 – Online supplement : Baseline characteristics of responders to the questionnaire that had an internship in a LFT lab and of those who did not (SD: standard deviation)

		Responders without any internship in a LFT lab		Responders that had an internship in a LFT lab	
		Frequency / Mean	Percentage / SD	Frequency / Mean	Percentage / SD
Region of training	East	37	17.1 %	3	6.5 %
	Paris	32	14.8 %	19	41.3 %
	North-West	62	28.7 %	9	19.6 %
	West	27	33.3 %	4	8.7 %
	Center	25	11.6 %	2	43.5 %
	South	33	15.3 %	4	8.7 %
Gender (male)		122	47.2	21	51.2 %
Age (years)		27.0	1.7	27.9	2.6
Ranking at final national medical school test	First 500	19	8.9 %	9	22.0 %
	Between 500 - 1000	35	16.2 %	11	26.8 %
	Between 1000 - 2000	66	30.6 %	11	26.8 %
	Between 2000 - 3000	39	18.1 %	5	12.2 %
	Above 3000	48	22.2 %	4	9.8 %
	No answer	9	4.2 %	1	2.4 %
Number of semesters as respiratory resident		3.7	2.2	4.8	2.3
Number of semesters as respiratory resident on respiratory wards		2.5	1.6	3.3	1.7
Internship in a LFT laboratory (yes)		0	0.0 %	41	100.0 %
Self-assessed knowledge of LFT at the end of medical school	No knowledge	14	6.5 %	0	0.0 %
	Minimal knowledge	68	31.5 %	12	29.3 %
	Basic knowledge	96	44.4 %	23	56.1 %
	Good knowledge	36	16.7 %	6	14.6 %
	No answer	2	0.9 %	0	0.0 %
Dedicated theoretical training on LFT organised by the academic district (yes)		49	22.7 %	23	56.1 %
Dedicated theoretical training on LFT not organised by the academic district (yes)		42	19.4 %	14	34.1 %
Read at least one textbook on respiratory physiology (yes)		65	30.0 %	17	41.5 %
Interpretation of LFT outside a dedicated internship	No	209	96.8 %	14	34.1 %
	Yes	5	2.3 %	27	65.9 %
	No answer	2	0.9 %	0	0.0 %
Projected self-perceived skills on LFT interpretation at the end of speciality training	Will have no capacity at all to interpret LFT	9	4.2 %	3	7.3 %
	Will only be able to interpret simple LFT	67	31.0 %	9	22.0 %
	Will be able to interpret LFT of intermediate difficulty	93	43.1 %	20	48.8 %
	Will be able to interpret all LFT	37	17.1 %	9	22.0 %
	No answer	10	4.6 %	0	0.0 %