



# Thoracic surgery after the COVID-19 pandemic: keep going at full speed

For the 7<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Thoracic Disease (JTD)* presents a special issue collecting invited lectures presented during the European Society of Thoracic Surgeons (ESTS) Annual Conference.

During the past 2 years the COVID-19 pandemic hugely impacted on the organization of all medical conferences and educational programs, and the international restrictions prohibited the organization of on-site medical conferences, including the ESTS Annual Meeting.

In October 2020 a virtual 2-day ESTS meeting was organized, when invited lectures and abstracts were presented. The delegates' attendance and the participation of sponsors was beyond any expectation, and once again ESTS demonstrated to represent a strong, well-represented and top-quality Thoracic Surgical Society in the world.

In order to maintain the tradition of the European Perspective of Thoracic Surgery, we are happy that *JTD* accepted, even in this difficult period, to published relevant and focused articles from the October conference.

It was an honor and a privilege for the two of us to be considered as co-editors of this issue. After a careful search, we selected, reviewed and approved four papers which, in our opinion, cover a range of interesting areas of interest for the thoracic surgical community.

The topics include the followings: (I) the importance of learning after investigating and debriefing adverse events, which is becoming a crucial aspect of our daily clinical practice; (II) the fundamental role of training programs for robotic-assisted thoracic surgery (RATS) and for RATS lobectomy, in a period where robotic surgical programs are increasing worldwide; (III) a very interesting paper from a large-volume robotic thoracic surgical institution about a simulation model for team training during major crisis during RATS procedures; (IV) the optimal timing for chest wall stabilization of rib fractures after major trauma.

As you can see, the selection was intended to cover a wide range of topics, from medico-legal issues to education to management of particularly challenging clinical situations. It is our understanding that the selected topics in the present collection should be regarded as essential for the education of a complete, modern and competent thoracic surgeon.

We would like to express a special thanks to all the authors and to the editorial staff of *JTD* who, despite the current complicated and exceptional worldwide situation, were able to produce a top-quality collective volume, a precious tool for the education of the young generations of thoracic surgeons worldwide.

It is our hope that we will soon get back to a new normality, where people can reconvene in person at the ESTS Annual Conference, sharing experiences, physically interacting at the Conferences and at the associated social events.

We wish all the readers of this volume a healthy 2021, with the hope and the promise to meet together in The Hague, The Netherlands in June 2021.

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