

Dear friends,

Postgraduate medical education in the fields of Trauma and Emergency Surgery is extremely well developed in Coimbra, thanks to the pioneering efforts of Dr. Carlos Mesquita and the important work of all of us in ALTEC. In fact, our association, which will celebrate its 15th anniversary this year, has been responsible for organizing different courses, such as the ATLS (for a brief period), DSTC, DpNTC and ETC, and developing new ones such as the DATC. This has led many colleagues from Portugal and abroad to trust us with their training, coming to Coimbra for to the many courses we host. Furthermore, our association has also established important international collaborations, allowing for instance the start and development of the ETC and joint DSTC-DATC programmes in Brazil. Surely other countries will follow.

Although things are well underway in the postgraduate setting, there is still a significant deficit in undergraduate education. Nowadays, most medical students in our country, and in Coimbra in particular, do not get proper training in the immediate management of patients with severe trauma, either in skills, decision-making or teamwork. Several positive steps have already been done, such as the participation of medical students in the ATLS course as course assistants, and the engagement of ALTEC in the TEAM course. However, there is still a generalized lack of awareness at the academic level on both the importance of trauma management and the potential role of simulation in filling in the gap.

This was the idea behind the inception of the FMUC Simulation Week, that ran from the 14th to the 20th February. During these days, our university hosted simulation sessions, interactive clinical case scenarios and an Education Masterclass, where several issues surrounding the use of simulation in Medical Education were debated. This was only possible because of the visit of our good friend, Piotr Kołęda. Once again Piotr impressed us with his usual kindness and his outstanding contributions, both in the simulation sessions and in a memorable Education Masterclass. For the first

time ever, our students were able to train teamwork in trauma management, emphasizing the importance of non-technical skills. Hopefully, this week will have fulfilled one of its aims, which was to increase awareness on the role of undergraduate medical simulation in Trauma management.

As such, I would like to thank all of you for participating in this event, representing ALTEC and in bridging the divide between undergraduate and postgraduate teaching in Trauma and Emergency Surgery. Who knows, some of the medical students who took part in the Simulation Week may have felt inspired to follow a future career in the field of Trauma and Emergency Surgery, may later come as candidates to one of our courses and will maybe even join us afterwards as course faculty. In any case, I like to think that at least the patients who are going to be managed by these future doctors will be receiving better care.

I sincerely hope that this Simulation Week was the first of many to come and I am extremely proud to be involved in the expansion to the undergraduate setting of ALTEC's noble mission.

Thank you all for your unremitting support and for a great week!

Kind regards,

Henrique Alexandrino

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