

COVID 19 Advisory 4

14th March 2020 Webinar Association of Anaesthetists

We “attended” this excellent Webinar with live contributions from frontline Doctors from China, UK and **especially Italy**.

COVID 19 has an R of 2.5 – 3. This means that an infected individual can pass the infection on to as many as 3 other susceptible people in one contact. If these four individuals further infect more people, then after 10 cycles of infection there will be 10,000 infected people. If
you tested these people the Ascertainment would be 10,000, but 100% testing is never achieved.
Mortality is Ascertainment , higher in Health Care Workers but always overestimated.

Deaths

Viral shedding is highest in the early days of infection and can last up to 30 days. Patients may be ill for 10 days before progressing to ICU.

Northern Italy: the witness of Dr. Enrico Storti, Anaesthesia & General ICU Director, Ospedale Maggiore di Lodi, Regione Lombardia, **was very compelling**. He urged us **to avoid a similar fate** by any means. He summarised his experience

- ICU capacity had been overwhelmed. An exponential rise in cases in Lombardy produced 150 – 200 cases of adult respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) per day. Ordinarily, such patients would be on ventilators. The hospital had been forced to reshape its wards, medical and nursing staff activities completely
- ICU beds had expanded by 400%, taking over the High Dependency Unit (HDU), theatres and some wards
- Having too few ventilators, for **every patient ventilated** there were **6 on face mask delivered oxygen under mild pressure** (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure- CPAP) and **20 more breathing oxygen enriched air at atmospheric pressure** by mask
- New wall sockets for piped oxygen had to be installed, manpower and resources were soon exhausted
- Doctors had been forced to favour patients with better prospects (Reverse Triage?). This had included withholding treatment from patients developing renal failure. The critical shortage of dialysis machines had been highlighted
- The UK can expect Health Care Professionals to catch COVID 19. Some will die

By 17th March Italy’s new case rate was described as “Soaring”, with 2000 ICU cases.

19th March Italy. Over 35,000 cases, COVID 19 deaths now exceed Chinese Coronavirus mortality.

Other Webinar points included - no Anti-COVID 19 trials yet running. HIV experts were developing pragmatic guidelines – strong on compassion. ? Try Remdesivir and “phone a friend”!

The UK Strategy is to maximise our Ventilator ‘surge- capacity’. BOC has been asked to quadruple the production of Oxygen. The peak ascertainment is expected April/May, trailing into Autumn.

19th March Radio, a GP reported **No PPE**, so **wearing dust masks from the Builders ‘Merchants!**
For the first time I caught the whiff of serious administration failures causing critical shortages!

David R. Hughes President

IESF British Section

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