

Not only a day. Emergency Medicine Day is every day, at all times

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The 27th of May marks the birth of the European Society for Emergency Medicine (EUSEM) thanks to a group of visionary people, known as the club of Leuven, who signed the founding act in London in 1994 to create a system model to grant to every citizen in Europe a professional, competent and above all timely response to any life, organ or limb-threatening acute condition.¹ Over time, EUSEM has grown to encompass 38 national societies across Europe and now represents over 40,000 healthcare professionals working in the field of Emergency Medicine (EM).

The great mission of EUSEM is to enhance research, education, practice, and standards of the specialty of EM across Europe.

This includes promoting teaching, training, and research in EM, as well as facilitating the sharing of information through meetings, courses, research, and publications. EUSEM also encourages the development of standardized information systems and data banks in EM, fosters cooperation among national EM associations, and promotes international collaboration in the field of EM.¹

Currently, emergency care systems are central to the healthcare system, with a mission to provide appropriate, high-quality care regardless of why patients seek help or the reasons for their visit, even when their condition may not seem serious enough to warrant a trip to the Emergency Department (ED). Facing this significant challenge, EM remains a relatively young specialty in many European countries, as many physicians transition from various clinical settings and strive daily to meet their patients' needs. In this context, the role of EUSEM is multifaceted and can be executed at different levels. By offering high-quality training opportunities, whether face-to-face or online, and involving participants from diverse countries, EUSEM enhances the cultural growth of healthcare professionals and facilitates the sharing of experiences and solutions to common challenges faced in clinical practice. In addition to training, creating research networks, collecting data, and analysing results contribute greatly to the specialty's growth across Europe and are essential prerequisites for developing new solutions and improving our models of care.

At a higher level, one of the first needs of countries that recognize EM as a separate specialty is to define the specificity of Emergency physicians. ED is a clinical setting where time is crucial, and where, sometimes, you treat the patient before a definite diagnosis, where the question is "what does this patient need" and not "what do they have". Emergency physicians are specifically trained to work under time pressure, at any time, with undifferentiated patients and with the primary aim, in front of any chief complaint, to rule out life-threatening conditions and develop an adequate management plan for non-urgent conditions. Recognizing the value of this profession and promoting a sustainable work environment is a task that involves local hospital administration and national politics, adequately supported and addressed by national and supranational societies.^{2,3}

The 27th of May 2025 has recently come and gone, and with this new issue of Emergency Care Journal we would like to express our gratitude to all the emergency medical staff around the world who are working tirelessly and compassionately to care for all patients, regardless of their origin, faith, gender, or social condition. We are thinking of all the healthcare professionals, but particularly those who are working under bombs, in dreadful conditions, providing first aid for both adults and children. In 2025, there are 56 active armed conflicts worldwide, the highest number since the end of World War II. These conflicts involve at least 92 countries.⁴ More than 100 million people have been forced to migrate due to conflicts. Gaza,⁵ Ukraine,⁶ Afghanistan,⁷ Mexico, and Venezuela are just a few examples that highlight our responsibility in this crisis, not only as emergency doctors and nurses but also as fellow human beings.

We must promote a culture of peace, solidarity, and respect for

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human rights at all times and in every place. We must care for others, regardless of their origin, culture, language, beliefs, orientations, bodies, or ways of thinking. This is the essence of humanity — immense and extraordinary — defined by its diverse stories and identities. We have a moral duty, a commitment to society and the future of all, to ensure that every patient has the opportunity to be accepted and treated without fear of being themselves. Not discriminating does not mean erasing diversity; rather, it means embracing it as a shared value. It involves providing the care and respect that every human being deserves.⁸

Change must begin with us — emergency doctors and nurses — who are the first to welcome those in need of care, attention, and help. It depends on the words we choose, our gestures, and our ability to listen to the stories of others, recognizing their value and meaning. Every patient has the right to respect, attention, and care. Yet, we still hear stories of discrimination, even in the Emergency Room, a place that should embody democratic care, as guaranteed by Article 32 of the Italian Constitution. Unfortunately, our society often fails to condemn discrimination, choosing instead to justify it. This undermines the quality of care and the integrity of our profession.

As emergency doctors and nurses, we are the first defenders of equity because health and care should be available to everyone; they are universal rights, not privileges for a few. Effective, ethical, and fair medicine can only exist in an environment free from discrimination. Therefore, we encourage everyone to engage in personal reflection, acknowledging their own cultural and mental limitations. It is essential to strive for improvement by listening — both to others and to ourselves.

Recognizing our limits, reflecting on our (in)voluntary prejudices, and rethinking our behaviours and models is the first step in combating discrimination and working with true respect and

awareness. Being a genuinely good doctor or nurse goes beyond simply fulfilling a role; it involves promoting a respectful and inclusive work environment, always acting with humanity, even in the chaotic and challenging atmosphere of the Emergency Room.

Good emergency medicine starts with respect and listening — these are the foundational and irreplaceable elements of care.

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