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# Breathe: continuing education in respiratory medicine

Concepts of what constitutes a good education go back many thousands of years and have never remained static, varying with the times, the culture and available means of disseminating that knowledge.

In more recent decades, theories of education have arisen and then been applied in a more pragmatic manner to a wide variety of disciplines from history to medicine. Educational programmes have taken the forefront as valuable activities for many professional bodies including the European Respiratory Society.

In this issue of *Breathe* we showcase a number of endeavours undertaken by the society to further education in respiratory medicine, including an update to the ERS international Adult Respiratory Medicine syllabus for postgraduate training [1]. The initiative to harmonise education and training throughout Europe has been a tremendous success with early adoption by a number of countries as part of their certification and training. In addition, the HERMES (Harmonising Education in Respiratory Medicine for European Specialists) examination has been taken by hundreds of individuals seeking to ensure recognition of their training under different systems in a pan-European setting.

Ongoing education for professionals is important to maintain currency in practice as well as assist in mobility and act as a guarantee for patient safety. Continuing education is important for patients too [2], particularly those with chronic, long-term conditions, in order that they can also play a role in safe-guarding their appropriate care. The patient-healthcare professional partnership highlights a

collaborative approach to medicine, which can assist in prioritising certain aspects of management for all parties concerned, and how these can best be achieved.

Apart from the usual rubrics, we are introducing a paediatric editorial section [3], which we hope will continue in future editions. The *Breathe* journal club will also be restarting and your attendance at this valuable educational forum is encouraged. This may be of especial interest to those of you who may be in solo-practice, have limited time to attend meetings physically, or who simply wish to read and discuss important and current papers in the field with an international panel of experts. Previous editions of the journal club can now be accessed online ([breathe.ersjournals.com](http://breathe.ersjournals.com)).

Thank you again to the hard-working editorial team in Sheffield and all contributors who have given of their time and knowledge in creating this issue!

I hope that you enjoy this edition of *Breathe* and leave you with the words of Plato to ponder:

“...excellences of the mind [techne] perhaps resemble those of the body, in that they are not in fact innate, but are implanted by subsequent training and practice; but knowledge, it seems, must surely have a diviner quality, something which never loses its power, but whose effects are useful and salutary or again useless and harmful according to the direction in which it is turned.”

Plato, *The Republic*, Book IV; 519.

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The March issue of *Breathe* focuses on ERS activities to further education in respiratory medicine

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### Conflict of interest

None declared.

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3. Bhatt JM, Bush A. Myths and maxims in paediatric respiratory medicine. *Breathe* 2018; 14: 5-7.