



**Report 2014 from ARIR – Associazione Riabilitatori dell'Insufficienza Respiratoria -  
ASSOCIATION FOR THE REHABILITATION OF RESPIRATORY FAILURE – ARIR – Italy.**

[www.arirassociazione.org](http://www.arirassociazione.org)

Simone Gambazza, PT – [simone\\_gambazza@hotmail.it](mailto:simone_gambazza@hotmail.it)

Sergio Zuffo, PT, MSc - [s.zuffo@meyer.it](mailto:s.zuffo@meyer.it)

## Summary

1. News
2. Ongoing
3. Routine
4. Future
5. Acknowledgments

### 1. News

- a. The **new book** “*Il ricondizionamento all'esercizio fisico del paziente con patologia respiratoria* [Exercise training for patients with respiratory disease]” was launched during last June. Seventeen chapters, 293 pages, with a preface by Prof Blasi (ERS President) and Antonio Bortone (Italian Association of Physiotherapists, AIFI President), describe this third book from ARIR. The volume addresses all aspects useful to set up and run a program of exercise training, taking into account the latest scientific evidences. Not only a treatise on physical exercise but a valid tool for those professionals involved in the respiratory care of lung diseases.
- b. Starting from the initiative of the ERS school committee, the **HERMES** (Harmonizing Education in Respiratory Medicine for European Specialists) **Respiratory Physiotherapy** project keeps going on. Our association has three representatives participating in this project (Francesco D'Abrosca, MSc PT, Sara Mariani PT and Luciana Ptacinsky PT). The result of this 18 month process has been the publication of the curriculum content for training. Following the publication of the syllabus (that can be found online at <http://ow.ly/zYkOD>), it is the intention of the task force to consider how this content should be taught offering a complete guide for national training programs to follow.
- c. The homecare provider Domedica s.r.l. launched last January an **home-based project** that involves respiratory physiotherapists, aimed to follow-up patients with Cystic Fibrosis taking a specific formulation of colistimethate sodium. Physiotherapists deliver home visits to educate patients on the proper management of their therapy, monitor global performance and collect qualitative and quantitative data on their health status and adherence to therapies. Ten Italian CF Centers are now participating, with almost 75 patients enrolled. Although it is just started, feedback from patients is enthusiastic. This experience represents not only an innovative service within CF but a chance to show how respiratory physiotherapists play a key role in fostering patients' education.
- d. ARIR and the **Italian Association of Physiotherapists** (AIFI) signed for the first time an agreement aimed to promote advanced training of Physiotherapists during February 2013. These associations are now building together their first project, that is drawing up a *position paper* on aerosol therapy. This will help physiotherapists defining their role and responsibilities in the prevention and treatment of chronic respiratory diseases and, moreover, placing themselves over the narrow bounds of rehabilitation. Furthermore, ARIR has been involved recently to develop, with AIFI, a manual for the evaluation of communication of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, to be used by the **National Institute of Health**. The participation of a respiratory physiotherapist has been asked to AIFI for the group dealing with Locked-in patients during invasive mechanical ventilation. A member of ARIR, Barbara Garabelli, has been nominated as ARIR-AIFI national representative.



## 2. Ongoing

- a. ARIR and the sub-group of respiratory physiotherapists involved in the respiratory care of Cystic Fibrosis are now ready to start **two multicentric observational studies**: a) Habitual physical activity and performance in adolescents with Cystic Fibrosis and b) Six Minute Walk Test in Italian children with Cystic Fibrosis: a comparison with healthy peers. This is the first time that the Italian Society of Cystic Fibrosis (SIFC) approves and supports physiotherapists' researches.
- b. ARIR is continuing its work for **GARD – Italy** (Global Alliance Against Chronic Respiratory Disease). Three board members of ARIR, namely Emilia Privitera, MSc, PT, Sergio Zuffo, MSc, Pt and Marta Lazzeri, PT, are referees of commission ii (Surveillance of respiratory diseases), iii (Asthma and allergy in children: educational interventions) and v (Continuity of care: respiratory failure).
- c. Our association sponsored and is coordinating a controlled, randomized multicenter study on the **“Effects of home-based pulmonary rehabilitation in patients with severe or very severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)”**. We are currently continuing enrollment of study participants. 101 patients have been enrolled so far. The data still remain to be analyzed and statistically processed.
- d. ARIR is coordinating now a **multicenter randomized controlled study** on the **"Effectiveness of noninvasive ventilatory support in post pulmonary lobectomy physiotherapeutic treatment"**. The study aims to determine if the addition of CPAP and NIV would be more effective than just physiotherapy alone in a random selection of patients who had undergone pulmonary lobectomy and bi-lobectomy. 50 patients have been enrolled so far.
- d. **Multicenter participation protocol for colorectal surgery** prepared by Società ERAS (Enhanced Recovery After Surgery Society) c/o l'U.O. Chirurgia Generale e d'Urgenza della Fondazione Policlinico sulla chirurgia colon retto [Department of General and Emergency Surgery of Fondazione Policlinico – Milan]. Enrollment is open.
- e. In conjunction with NITp [North Italian Transplant program] a shared **protocol for the evaluation and respiratory physiotherapeutic treatment of lung transplant patients** was launched last year (presented at the 2012 Congress of SISQT - Società Italiana per la Sicurezza e la Qualità nei Trapianti [Italian Association for Safety and Quality in Transplant Surgery]: *Rehabilitation in lung transplantation: a shared protocol development*. E. Privitera et al. U.O. Chirurgia Toracica e Trapianti di Polmone , Fondazione IRCCS Ca' Granda Ospedale Maggiore Policlinico, Milan. We are currently continuing enrollment of study participants.

## 3. Routine

As usual we are:

- **Disseminating information about respiratory physiotherapy and the importance of what we do in Italy**
- **Continuing education, training and teaching:**

As of today, more than 290 health-care facilities in Italy have turned to our association for ongoing training in respiratory care.



The course topics of this year have been:

- High frequency oscillation devices as airway clearance techniques;
- Clinical evaluation and kinesiology of the respiratory system;
- Field tests. From theory to practice;
- Severe neurological acquired disease: how to deal with respiratory issues?;
- Myths in respiratory care;
- Cough: assessment of its efficacy and treatment;
- Can we train breathing? Training respiratory muscles in obstructive and restrictive pulmonary diseases.

On the whole, and not counting university credits for the master's program, 84 continuous medicine education credits (CME) were given in 2014 by ARIR.

- In conjunction with the University of Milan, we are continuing a:
  - **Master's Course in Physiotherapy and Respiratory Rehabilitation: the course will be held again in 2015** for its *ninth* consecutive year.
    - The eighth edition, this year, has 21 physiotherapists enrolled (146 participated so far)
  - The **Specialization Course on Sleep Disorders –OSAS –** will be starting for third edition in September 2015.

- **Publications**

ARIR publishes two journals:

- ***"Rivista Italiana di Fisioterapia e Riabilitazione Respiratoria"***
  - and, in cooperation with AARC –on line :
- ***"ARIR's Selections from Respiratory Care and AARC Times"***

- **Affiliations**

Our association is affiliated with many associations and especially with the

- ✚ *American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC)*
- ✚ *Italian Association of Physiotherapists (AIFI)*
- ✚ *Italian Association of Hospital Pneumologists (AIPO)*
- ✚ *Italian Society of Cystic Fibrosis (SIFC)*
- ✚ *European Respiratory Care Association (ERCA)*

- **Communication**

Our **website** is also visible in English, and we are also on **Facebook**.

From January 2014 ARIR reaches its members through newsletters, containing update of literature, information, events and job opportunities. 102 email newsletters have been sent so far.

For a full picture of what ARIR has done and is doing, see the report and slides presented at the previous ICRC Meetings, visit our website [www.arirassociazione.org](http://www.arirassociazione.org).

#### 4. Future

- ❖ ARIR is working in finding optimal strategies to reach citizens and patients directly, in order to meet their needs on the matter of respiratory care, in terms of education, treatment and prevention.
- ❖ ARIR has announced its program for the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Respiratory Physiotherapy, to be held in 2016



## **5. Acknowledgments**

ARIR, representing Italian respiratory physiotherapists, is continuing its work for the establishment of respiratory care in Italy.

Our decade-long relationship with AARC has been stimulating and has helped us greatly in achieving our goals and pursuing our mission.

Many sincere thanks to the entire international group and to our colleagues.

Most cordially,  
Simone Gambazza and Sergio Zuffo,  
Las Vegas, Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup> 2014