Introduction to the fourth “Focus-on” issue devoted to Disaster and Military Surgery in EJTES

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Published online: 4 April 2012
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Welcome to a new “Focus-on” issue devoted to the field of Disaster and Military Surgery!

The fact that the Section for Disaster and Military Surgery is now responsible for its fourth issue of this kind since 2008 illustrates the continuously growing interest for this topic in Europe. The Section for Disaster and Military Surgery is also continuously growing and is recognized as one of the most active sections in the society, with an extensive educational program and several scientific projects.

The extent of this field is also illustrated in this issue, which includes papers on disasters caused by both nature and climate as well as terror attacks, papers on wound ballistics, and a paper on the use of a simulation model for the evaluation of hospitals' response to major incidents.

One paper presents analyses of injury patterns from the Sichuan earthquake in China, thereby, continuing the valuable reporting from the earthquakes in China from the last “Focus-on” issue. We highly appreciate our colleagues from China selecting our journal for sharing their experiences with us and I think that we all are in agreement that their reports are valuable contributions to the knowledge in this field. We look forward to your continued contribution to the journal!

Three papers deal with wound ballistics: two very valuable reviews, one on the indications for bullet removal, presenting proposals for practical clinical guidelines for European trauma surgeons, and another on the technical data of modern body armor, which is important knowledge in the evaluation and management of ballistic injuries. A third paper on wound ballistics is based on an analysis of the causes of death in patients with limb warfare trauma.

A paper from Israel presents experiences from the use of a simulation model with a live exercise based on data from real patients for the assessment of hospital disaster plans. Since it is very difficult to perform prospective clinical studies in the medical response to major incidents, the need for relevant simulation models has been increasingly recognized during the last several years as a way to scientifically analyze and develop the methodology in planning and response. However, very few such models have been available so far, and this is an important field for further development.

There is a need for the promotion of the scientific part of Disaster Medicine, and we hope that this forum in EJTES can contribute to that and also to a continuously increasing interest among trauma surgeons in this important field.

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