

ESICM LIVES 2013: Key Role for Intensivists in Global Health



Critical care medicine has transformed medicine, but can do even more by changing the way global health operates, said Professor Jeremy Farrar, Director of the Wellcome Trust, at the opening ceremony of the European Society of Intensive Care Medicine's annual congress in Paris. "You've reached into all aspects of medicine, and you've made the rest of us better."

When it comes to infectious diseases it is impossible to distinguish between what can be a pandemic and what can be ignored. Emerging infections bring enormous challenges. Surveillance is much better today than even ten years ago but our ability to respond to that has not caught up with that, Farrar noted. Every epidemic has been picked up not by public health experts, but by intensivists.

Intensive care specialists have a critical role to play in global health and public health, said Farrar. The ICU must become part of the public health response. When it comes to critical care, clinical research and rapidly emerging health threats, clinical research needs a new paradigm. We need to be better prepared and ready to act. When it can take more than 600 days from having an idea to recruiting a patient on to a clinical trial, research can be more timely by developing pre-approved standardised protocols. Open access should not just be for the results of research, but throughout. Pre-epidemic and inter-epidemic research is needed, before the pandemics develop.

More than 5200 intensivists from 106 countries will attend LIVES 2013.

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