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To the on. Beatrice Lorenzin  
Ministry of Health

To the on. Roberto Maroni  
President Regione Lombardia

cc. dr Ezio Belleri  
General Director ASST Spedali Civili di Brescia

17 May 2016

Dear Minister and President,

We have learnt from the Italian Society of Emergency Medicine (SIMEU) that the appointment of the director of the UO Pronto Soccorso Presidio Spedali Civili Brescia has been reserved to specialists in Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care.

We are writing to express our strong concerns that a specialist in Emergency Medicine is not being considered for the position, as it is in the best interests of patients that the director is suitably qualified and experienced in the provision of high quality emergency care.

The European Society for Emergency Medicine (EuSEM) is aware of the fact that in Italy the speciality of Emergency Medicine has only been established since 2009 and therefore suitably qualified Emergency Physicians may be few in number. However, the main objective of EuSEM, of which SIMEU is a member, is that the speciality of Emergency Medicine should continue to develop to the standards endorsed by the Council of UEMS in order to ensure the highest quality of emergency care for patients. This care should be delivered by physicians trained in Emergency Medicine.

Emergency Medicine training, according to the UEMS Board of Emergency Medicine, requires a *minimum* of five years full time training in a dedicated programme whilst working in an Emergency Department, being exposed to a full range of urgent and emergent illnesses and injuries. The period of training and exposure may also but not exclusively include pre-hospital emergency care.

In this view it appears very difficult to understand how a specialist in Anesthesiology and Intensive Care, whose title precludes from working full time in the Emergency Units according to Italian law, could be fully competent in directing the same Units given their lack of specific expertise. It is also doubtful that someone not suitably qualified in Emergency Medicine could ensure good quality training for Emergency Medicine residents nor provide expert supervision for the young doctors, specialists and non specialists, that will work in the Emergency Department. Such qualifications are essential for providing a safe environment for patients and staff.

On this basis, we hope that the decision to assign the position of Director of the UO Pronto Soccorso Presidio Spedali Civili Brescia to a specialist in Anesthesiology and Intensive Care will be reconsidered, and a new procedure of selection for assigning a competent director will be activated.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Barbara Hogan  
President of EuSEM

Dr Roberta Petrino  
President-elect of EuSEM