



Physiotherapy Provision and Practice: A EuropeAn Intensive CarE Unit (ICU) Survey (PEAiCE) – mapping of ICU physiotherapy in Europe

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INTRODUCTION

Physiotherapists play a crucial role in the respiratory management and rehabilitation of patients in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). However, provision and practice of physiotherapy in ICUs across Europe may vary.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To map the current provision of physiotherapy across European ICUs
- 2) To explore physiotherapists' role and practice in the delivery of respiratory care and rehabilitation in European ICUs.

METHODS

An a-priori piloted survey via an online platform (JISK V.2). Three sections targeted ICU structure, physiotherapy roles and provision, and current practice. Physiotherapists' education, professional development and experience were also recorded. Primarily, the responsible physiotherapists were invited per ICU, or in their absence, a senior team member. To maximize recruitment, professional societies, networks, and social media critical care networks and social media were utilised. Ethical approval was obtained from Coventry University (P136453).

RESULTS

The survey was open from 19/02-21/07/2024.

Responders: After duplicate removal, 845 responses from 33 countries were included (Figure 1). The majority of respondents per ICU were physiotherapists (740/845, 88%) working in university hospitals (583/845, 69%) with adult patients (731/845, 87%). Almost in all hospitals, physiotherapists treat patients in ICU (839/845, 99%) but may need a referral to start physiotherapy (437/839, 52%). Less than half were dedicated to ICU (346/839, 41%), although most had specific ICU training (672/740, 91%).

Practice: Predominantly, both respiratory care and rehabilitation to mechanically ventilated patients are provided (See figure 2). Variability was seen regarding respiratory techniques (Figure 3) and early mobilisation techniques for ventilated patients (Figure 4), including sitting at the edge of the bed (596/703, 85%), standing (557/703, 79%) and walking (304/412, 74%).

CONCLUSIONS

This large, rigorous study provides an overview of current ICU physiotherapy provision and practice in Europe, identifying variations in the use of specific techniques.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Figure 1. Respondents by country (n=845)

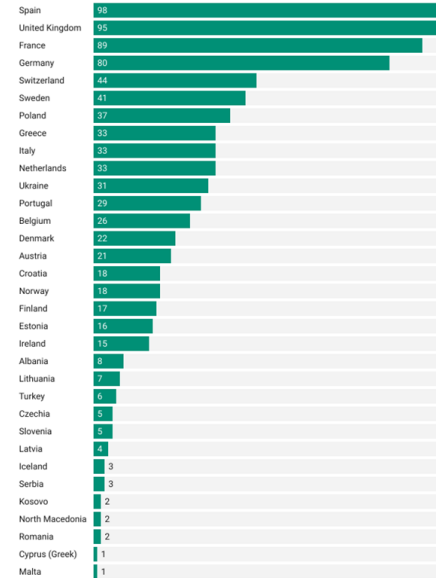


Figure 2. Physiotherapists treating mechanically ventilated patients (n=740)

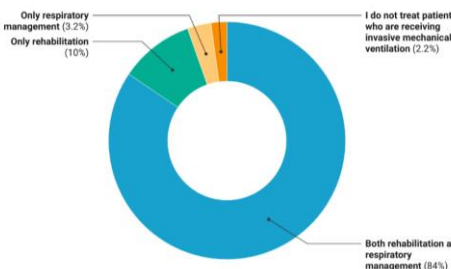


Figure 3. Respiratory physiotherapy techniques.

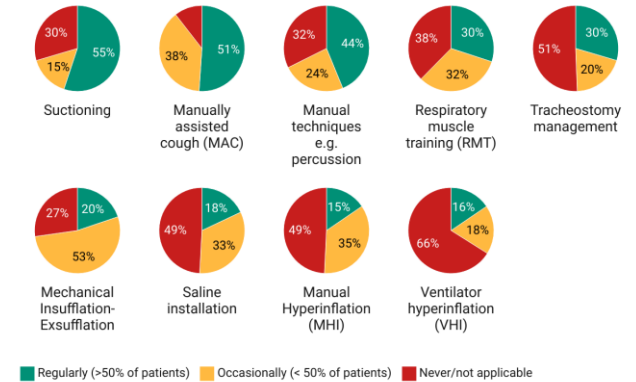
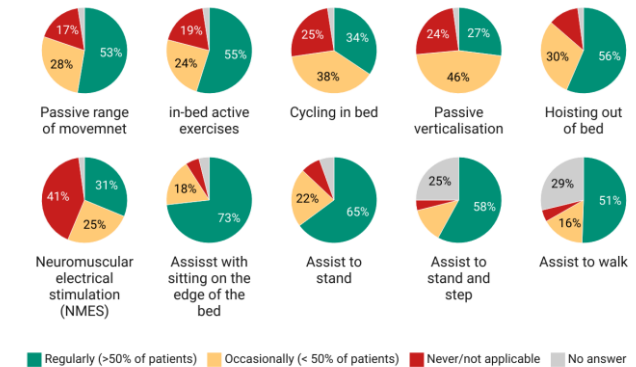


Figure 4. Early rehabilitation



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