

INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 and neurosurgery

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THE COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the lives of almost all inhabitants of the world. Many countries faced periods of lockdowns with serious economic consequences, resulting in a reorganization of hospital protocols, including the transformation of operating rooms into supplementary ICU units. In early 2020, when we thought about this *Neurosurgical Focus* issue dedicated to preparedness and guidelines related to COVID-19 and neurosurgery, many departments had been forced to close, with the neurosurgeons being placed in other wards.

In this issue of *Neurosurgical Focus*, we had the opportunity to address all aspects of “our” involvement, such as 1) the production of guidelines related to the protection of healthcare workers and patients and how best to continue our activities; 2) lessons learned from the experience of centers that were most affected; 3) how to deal with specific pathologies, such as brain tumors as well as the most risk-prone endonasal approaches to the skull base; 4) reorganization of outpatient clinics via telemedicine; and 5) innovative ways to keep neurosurgical training ongoing through webinars and virtual education.

We received an overwhelming number of submissions, and many interesting papers could not be accepted. The published papers cover 4 continents with papers coming from all socioeconomic levels. What did we learn from this terrible situation? We are doctors first and then neurosurgeons. We can assist our communities

in cases of need by extending our expertise. We are able to reorganize and prioritize our activities and keep performing emergency surgery in a very difficult situation such as a pandemic. We were prepared to use alternative forms of education such as webinars and remote teaching. We also realized that many of our young neurosurgeons who did not have the opportunity to join courses and congresses are now actively participating in the life of our neurosurgical community.

As the Latins said, “necessitas mater artium” (necessity is the mother of inventions). Let us take from the papers published in this issue a positive message of hope and pride for what we have been able to do and for what we are still doing in our journey as human beings, doctors, and neurosurgeons.

We dedicate this entire issue to the colleagues and friends who have lost their lives in the battle against COVID-19.

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Disclosures

Franco Servadei serves as a consultant for Finceramica and Integra LifeSciences.

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