



Elie Azoulay

Je suis jeune, il est vrai ; mais aux âmes bien nées la valeur n'attend point le nombre des années.

Pierre Corneille. Le Cid. Act 2 Scene 2

No one better illustrates these words from Pierre Corneille than Prof. Elie Azoulay, who for more than two decades, has been one of the most talented and imaginative ICU physicians in our community. It therefore gives me tremendous pleasure to write a citation for him as he becomes the youngest ICU professional to receive Honorary Membership from the ESICM.

This is a well-deserved and timely recognition of his achievements, as our Journal Intensive Care Medicine reaches a record impact factor of 10.125 under his leadership as Editor-in-Chief.

Born in Morocco, just in time to witness (initiate?) the May 1968 events in France, Elie Azoulay grew into an independent, curious and smart teenager, fascinated by every possible learning opportunity. He graduated from the Pierre & Marie Curie University (Paris 6) as an MD and a pulmonologist, then obtained his Intensive Care degree from Paris Diderot University (Paris 7). He also completed his research training and obtained a PhD in Respiratory Physiology with the late Alain Harf in Créteil.

In 1996, he joined the team led by Prof Jean-Roger Le Gall in St Louis Hospital in Paris and became one of the most knowledgeable ICU specialists for patients with hematologic malignancies. Since then, he has never stopped being a thought-provoking, resourceful ICU physician, always available for patients as well as for every member of his team.

Elie Azoulay is currently Full Professor of Critical Care Medicine (Paris Diderot University) and Vice-Chair of the Department of Critical Care Medicine at the St Louis Hospital in Paris. His research interests are broad and include care of the immunocompromised critically ill, pneumonia, as well as ethical aspects of care, including patient and family needs in critical care.

Elie Azoulay has distinguished himself as a prolific, world-class investigator, who has developed a most diverse and comprehensive clinical research agenda, served by research networks he has imagined, created and organised.

With over 500 papers, cited more than 12,000 times on Google Scholar, his scientific achievements are outstanding. He is the founder and director of the FAMIREA group, a multidisciplinary collaborative network aimed at improving the effectiveness of communication with family members of ICU patients. He has been the director of the Grrr-OH research group on the management of acute respiratory failure and outcomes in critically ill immunocompromised patients since 2005.

Elie Azoulay is also an active contributor of Outcome Rea, the prolific research powerhouse created by his long-time friend Jean-François Timsit, which functions with limited funding, unlimited creativity and good will.

Beyond the number of publications in prestigious journals, it is important to underline that his work changes the way we practice and deliver critical care around the world and this statement holds true for doctors as well as nurses and allied health professionals.

Our Society can be proud to count Elie Azoulay among its most active contributors. Past Chair of the Ethics Section, Past member of the ESICM Council and ex-officio member of the Executive Committee, his input has always been creative and generous. Logically, he was selected to become the Editor-in-Chief of Intensive Care Medicine, as the Selection Committee was seduced by his vision for the Journal. The way he has approached this task is typical of the atypical hard-working, energetic, imaginative and enthusiastic person he is.

He has formed, and led by example, a brilliant team of individuals, and their collective efforts have helped Intensive Care Medicine to become the first journal of the discipline of intensive care. All contributing editors acclaim his vision, his work and the amazing spirit that he infuses into the team.

In addition to being a super physician scientist, Elie is a warm person, friendly, loyal, and fun. I feel fortunate to be one of his close friends and can testify that dinner with him (he is actually a good cook) is a recipe for a perfect evening, filled with joy, laughter and unconditional friendship.

I remember vividly when he came to greet me during my first congress back in France in 1998, after having spent a few years in the USA. He kindly told me that I had strongly influenced him to become an Intensive Care physician when he was working as a medical student under my supervision in Prof Dreyfuss' ICU. I was flattered and most importantly relieved that my behaviour had not discouraged him to pursue this path!

We often meet good students, but more rarely come across truly visionary individuals. Elie Azoulay is one of the most exceptional members of the latter category. We are lucky that he decided to practice and advance Intensive Care Medicine as a discipline and the ESICM can be especially proud to consider him an Honorary Member from now on.

JEAN-DANIEL CHICHE

ESICM Past-President
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