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Rehabilitation in Italy

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This speech was not on the programme and therefore I apologise for the lack of iconographic material.

ACISMOM's St. John the Baptist Hospital is specialised in neuromotory rehabilitation and has 240 beds.

It was established around thirty years ago as the first unit in Rome devoted to the rehabilitation of hemiplegics; in recent years, albeit still with the emphasis on stroke patients, it has extended its treatment to cover traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, and neuromuscular diseases.

A very important section involving the entire hospital, and requiring a great deal of commitment, time and energy, was opened two years ago: the "reawakening" unit for patients with neuropathologies.

This unit is at the moment led by Dr. Viselli and has ten beds; it is a unit in which patients coming out of the assisted respiratory stage are directly transferred from the intensive care units to be assisted and re-educated during the reawakening and stabilisation stage up to the "voluntary stage".

Our hospital has another four in-patient units: they all accept hemiplegics but each tends to favour its own rehabilitation intervention. Each therefore specialises in a certain type of pathology: one unit treats patients with brain injuries, a second those with spinal cord injuries or incomplete medullar lesions, a third specialises in orthopaedics and the fourth in ataxia.

Each in-patient unit has its own team of doctors, nurses and rehabilitation therapists whereas the neuro-psychology service is centralised with two psychologists plus speech therapists and social workers.

The hospital has a radiology department with CAT section (we are also hoping to acquire magnetic resonance equipment), an analysis laboratory, an oculist service and a neuropathology unit with EMG, EEG and evoked potentials; we are also hopeful that an internal medicine department will be shortly set up to deal both with traditional neuropathology and with evoked potentials and "events". I hope that this brief overview has given you an idea of the activities of our hospital for neurorehabilitation.