

COMMENT



# ECI Highlights Biocommentary: Dr. Silvia Martini

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I grew up in Italy, on the Adriatic coast. After completing my high-school education in 2005, I attended the Medical School at the University of Bologna. Since childhood, I grew an interest in becoming a pediatrician; hence, as a medical student, I applied for a graduate thesis in the neonatal field. Working on the thesis project, which was focused on cerebral and splanchnic near-infrared spectroscopy (NIRS) monitoring in preterm neonates, represented a key opportunity to discover my interest in neonatal research; of note, the results were published in *Pediatric Research*.



In 2011, I obtained the medical degree with top marks at the University of Bologna. In the following years, I participated in several research projects under the mentorship of Professor Luigi Corvaglia, gaining advanced research skills and deepening my

knowledge in neonatal gastroenterology and nutrition. Presenting my research results at international conferences also constituted a unique opportunity to share ideas, meet leading experts, and establish international contacts.

In 2013, I entered the pediatric training program of Bologna University. Being keen to expand my knowledge in neonatal neurology and brain monitoring, in 2016 I did a clinical and research fellowship at the Rosie Hospital, Cambridge (UK), under the supervision of Professor Topun Austin. Collaborating to the activities of his research group, made up of clinicians, psychologists, physicists, and engineers, was of great inspiration and confirmed my willing to pursue a research career. To this end, in collaboration with the Brain Physic Laboratory of the University of Cambridge, headed by Professor Marek Czosnyka, I designed a research proposal aimed at shedding light on transitional cardiovascular and cerebrovascular hemodynamics in preterm infants using novel non-invasive technologies. In 2017, I obtained a PhD at the University of Bologna, and this research proposal became my core PhD project.

After my doctoral graduation in 2021, I obtained a post as a Researcher and Consultant Neonatologist at the University Hospital of Bologna, IRCCS Policlinico di Sant'Orsola. In the same year, I won the European Society for Paediatric Research (ESPR) Post-Doc Research Grant with a project on non-invasive cerebral hemodynamic monitoring in neonatal encephalopathy. I am particularly interested in exploring neonatal physiology and hemodynamics, and I am member of the ESPR special interest group on NIRS.

In recent years, I have mentored several students and trainees in their initial research experiences. To them, I suggest to feed their curiosity by asking questions and making observations, to catch any precious occasion to learn, and, finally, to be humble and aware of the importance of teamwork.

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