

Bronchoscopy In The Intensive Care Unit: When Interventional Pulmonology Helps



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BACKGROUND

- In some European countries like Portugal, **Pulmonology and Intensive Care Medicine (IMC)** are two different specialties.
- Intensivists have now **training in flexible bronchoscopy**, mainly with diagnostic purposes, occasionally referring more complex cases to Pulmonology.

METHODS

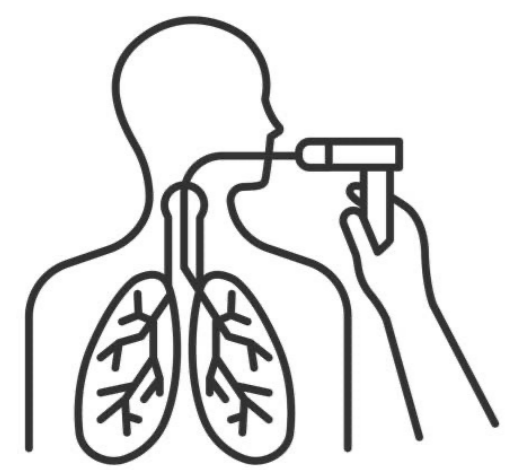
Retrospective Study

January of 2015 to December of 2021

First 6 years since Intensive Care Medicine is a recognized specialty in Portugal

Bronchoscopies exams performed under mechanical ventilation at ICU by an interventional pulmonology team

RESULTS



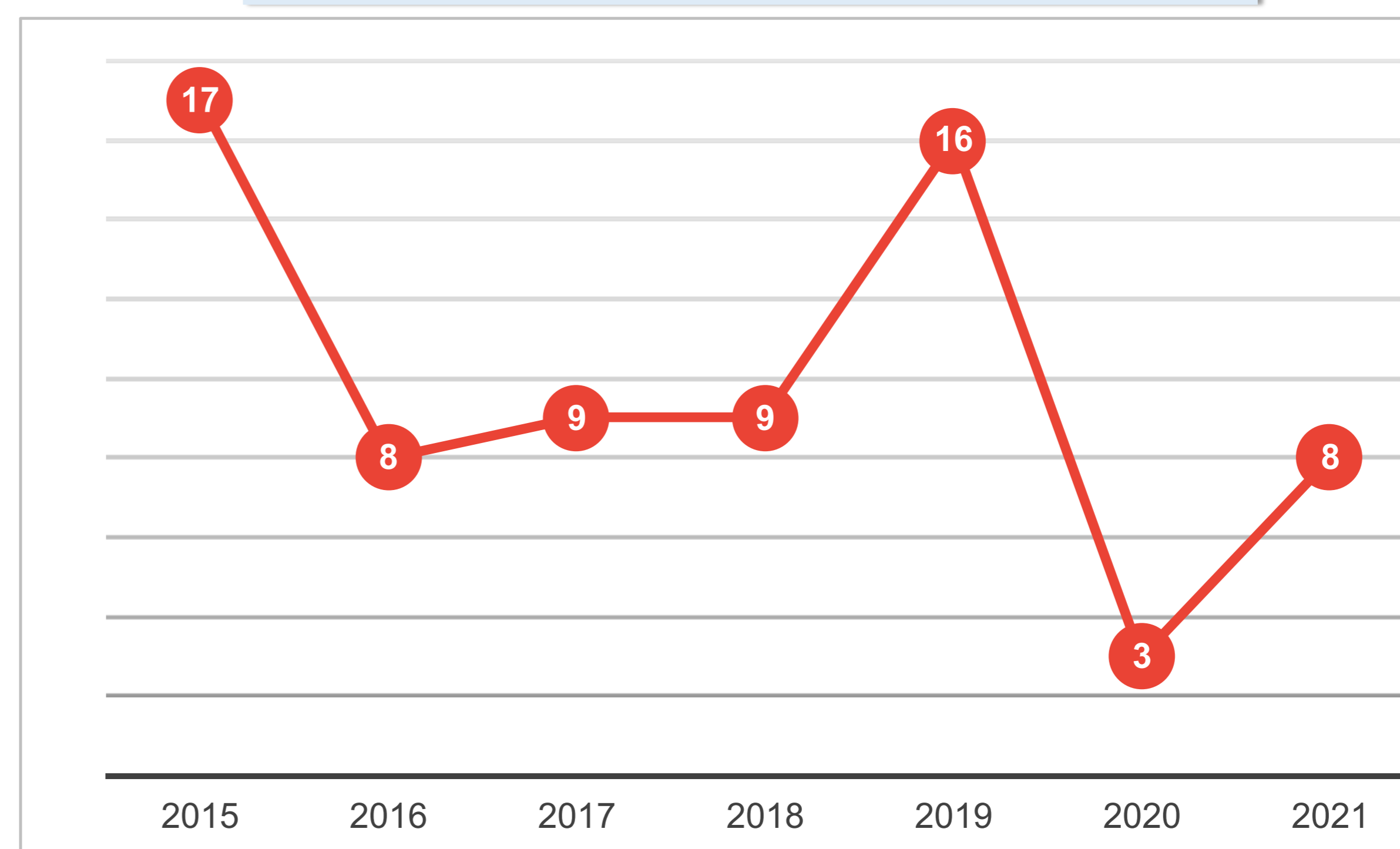
70 Bronchoscopies

61 (87%) flexible bronchoscopies
9 (15%) rigid bronchoscopies

Demographic data (n=79)

Mean Age (years)	62 ± 18 years
♀ Female	68% (n=42)

Median of 10 exams/year



during the covid-19 pandemic

Flexible Bronchoscopies (n=61)

Indications	n	%
Haemoptysis	16	26
Suspected lung infection	10	16
Diagnosis or Staging of lung cancer	9	15
Lung Atelectasis	9	15
Tracheal Lesion	8	13
Difficult entubation	4	7
Stridor	4	7

3 radial EBUS

Endoscopic Techniques	n	%
Aspiration of bronchial secretions	57	93
Bronchoalveolar lavage	23	38
Bronchial toilette	10	16
Bronchial biopsy	8	13
Medical treatment of active bleeding	5	8
Fogarty balloon dilatation	2	3

Rigid Bronchoscopies (n=9)

Indications	n	%
Benign tracheal stenosis	4	44
Haemoptysis	3	33
Revision of tracheal stent	1	11
Revision of bronchial stent	1	11

Placement of tracheal stents in all

Endoscopic Techniques	n	%
Tracheal Stent	4	44
Mechanical dilatation	4	44
Bronchial biopsy	1	11
Medical treatment of active bleeding	3	33

CONCLUSION

- Although bronchoscopy training has been recently included in ICM programs, a negative trend in the number of endoscopic exams performed by pulmonology in ICU was not noted.
- Complex diagnostic and therapeutic cases need to be referred to a dedicated bronchology team.