

GIRONA DECLARATION

Just like any other modern, advanced society, Catalonia is undergoing profound sociodemographic changes. The increase in our life expectancy is most certainly a great collective success, but it also leaves us with the challenge of facing the progressive aging of society and the healthcare needs that result. In this scenario, we are also faced with a number of other significant challenges. One of the most outstanding is the need to achieve the political and social consensus necessary to maintain the quality and the equity of our health services, and to guarantee that our system will continue to be a fundamental tool for justice and social cohesion even at times like the present, which are defined by a lack of economic resources.

Constant progress in the area of communications technologies has helped to form citizens that are increasingly well-informed and willing to actively participate in the decisions that affect their health. Although they represent a broad spectrum of different beliefs and sensibilities, these citizens also want to decide how, where and from whom they receive medical care, and they ask that their health professionals accompany them until the very end.

Of course, as doctors we are fully aware of the changes affecting society as a whole. As a matter of fact, our profession is also immersed in a profound process of transformation as a result of which we know, among other things, that in the coming years we will have to face a significant generational shift.

As a result, we find ourselves before a stage full of opportunities for change and for innovation, although we are also aware of the need to face a whole series of new ethical dilemmas. We especially need to address the increase in the number of patients with chronic illnesses and the resulting loss of personal autonomy. At the same time, we need to take on challenges having to do with the use of computer and communications technologies and with new demands on the part of our fellow citizens.

With this context in mind, one of the principal challenges facing our profession is the need, now more than ever, to always place individuals and their family and social environments at the center of our professional activity. This means working together with other professionals in multidisciplinary teams that provide us with a complete image of each person and their needs.

It is essential that, as professionals, we spend our careers learning and training with the aim of obtaining excellence; not only scientific excellence, but also excellence in our habits and our attitudes. At the same time, we cannot forget that our participation and leadership within health organizations is essential if we want to effectively respond to the needs of individuals.

As doctors, with our calling to service and our commitment to patients and to human beings, we are willing to face all of these challenges and would like to declare our willingness to renew our contract with society. As a result, gathered at the 3rd Congress of the Medical Profession of Catalonia, we declare the following:

1. Our professional activity and our professional calling are all about people. We firmly believe in maintaining bonds of trust with patients that are based on scientific knowledge, respect and empathy. We want to share the decisions we make regarding our patients' health with those patients, and we commit ourselves to accompanying them, especially at times of uncertainty or at the end of their lives.
2. Once again, we feel the need to state that we fully identify with the values of professionalism: honesty, commitment, altruism, integrity, personal commitment, quality work, and excellence. At the same time, we would like to take on emerging values such as leadership, teamwork, capacity for management, adaptability and accountability.
3. We defend organizational models that guarantee continuity, quality and security in healthcare, that facilitate collaboration among professionals, institutions and fields, and that favor research and innovation.
4. We believe in collaboration between healthcare, social and community professionals. We firmly believe that this is the best way of providing a well-rounded response to the needs of individuals, and of facing the challenges resulting both from social change, new scientific knowledge, and constant technological innovation in the field of medicine.
5. We are committed to keeping our code of conduct up-to-date, as the principal point of reference for our actions. In doing so, we hope to respond to the new dilemmas posed by society, science and technology.
6. We demand excellence of ourselves all throughout our careers. As a result, we are committed to perpetual education, and to periodically certifying our competency.
7. We are committed to ensuring that the training received by the doctors of the future will be excellent –both technically and humanistically— and that it will include training in areas such as ethics, communication, all-around health and clinical management, among others.
8. We demand the autonomy to make decisions, and to participate more actively in the management of healthcare institutions. We want to lead projects designed for the future, and we would like to have the necessary resources to do so.
9. We need organizational and working environments that promote quality medical practice, and that allow us to build bonds of trust with our patients.
10. We would like to renew our commitment with our fellow citizens and with our country. We hope to work together to build a profession of the future that exists to serve human beings.

Girona, November 10, 2016