



**ASSOCIATION EUROPÉENNE DES MÉDECINS DES HÔPITAUX  
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF SENIOR HOSPITAL PHYSICIANS  
EUROPÄISCHE VEREINIGUNG DER LEITENDEN KRANKENHAUSÄRZTE  
EUROPESE VERENIGING VAN STAFARTSEN  
DEN EUROPÆISKE OVERLÆGEFORENING  
ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟΣ ΣΥΛΛΟΓΟΣ ΝΟΣΟΚΟΜΕΙΑΚΩΝ ΙΔΤΡΩΝ ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΤΩΝ  
ASSOCIAZIONE EUROPEA DEI MEDICI OSPEDALIERI  
DEN EUROPEISKE OVERLEGEFORENING  
ASSOCIAÇÃO EUROPEIA DOS MÉDICOS HOSPITALARES  
ASOCIACIÓN EUROPEA DE MÉDICOS DE HOSPITALES  
EUROPEISKA ÖVERLÄKARFÖRENINGEN  
EVROPSKO ZDRŽENJE BOLNIŠNIČNIH ZDRAVINIKOV  
EUROPSKA ASOCIACIA NEMOCNICNÝCH LEKAROV  
EUROPSKA UDRUGA BOLNIČKIH LIJEČNIKA  
ΕΒΡΟΠΕΪΣΚΑ ΑΣΟΪΑΪΑΝ Α ΣΤΑΡΣΗΤΕ ΒΟΛΝΗΧΝΗ ΛΕΚΑΡΗ  
ASOCIAȚIA EUROPEANĂ A MEDICILOR DIN SPITALE**

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## **SPANISH GCMC NATIONAL REPORT FOR THE AEHM-OSLO May, 11th, 2.019**

*Demographic situation of the medical profession and spanish doctor's work conditions. Continuous professional development and Periodic Validation of the Profession. Pseudosciences and Pseudotherapies. Attacks on physicians. Euthanasia and Medical Deontology. Cordoba 2020: Next World Medical Association Assembly.-*

Before introducing the Spanish Delegation Report, we must highlight that, from June 2018 to the present, three ministers have headed the Ministry of Health and, as a result of the recent general elections, a new change in the Ministry of Health may arise.

At present, in Spain we have a health policy which is fully decentralised. By this, each regional government has their own health policy. If we had a centralised health ministry that could promote common policies in Healthcare, Technologies, Human resources, Quality Control and Guarantees in reducing waiting lists, would decisively contribute and be much more beneficial to the Equity and Solidarity of the Spanish Health System and the citizens of our nation.

### **1.- Demographic situation of the medical profession in Spain.-**

Due to the problems detected on filling vacancies of medical personnel throughout the nation, it was considered and required to create a report on the demographic situation of the medical profession in Spain. Therefore, we set up an ad hoc working group. In July 2018, the General Council of Medical Professional Colleges of Spain (GCMC) showed the results of this study, available on the following web site<sup>1</sup>

The most relevant conclusions are the following:

1. The age of medical professionals is emphasized in the study. 41% of doctors older than 55 years, with 70,000 medical retirements forecasted for the next 10 years, out of 221.470 active doctors by 2017.
2. A progressive feminization of the medical profession, which reaches 67% of Bachelor of Medicine students in Spanish universities.
3. Lack of generational renewal: Despite the forecast of an increase in expected retirements for the coming years, there is an insufficient supply of trainee resident doctors positions via Public competition (MIR), which contrasts with the high number of Faculties of Medicine in Spain (42). Therefore, providing a high number of medical graduates yearly, which leads to a set of doctors without specialty certification being generated, who cannot be trained as specialists because of an insufficient supply of positions.

It is expected that, by 2020, this group will reach up to 16.000 applicants against an availability of 7.000 specialty trainee positions, which incides in a paradox for the coming years, as a result we will expect a shortage of medical specialists in Spain.

### **2.- Working Conditions of Physicians in Spain**

Since 2014, GCMC has conducted annual national surveys to assess the working conditions of physicians in Spain. The report of the 5th survey was presented in May 2018, available on the following website<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.GCMC.es/sites/default/files/estudio\\_demografia\\_2017/](https://www.GCMC.es/sites/default/files/estudio_demografia_2017/).

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.GCMC.es/sites/default/files//u183/informe\\_de\\_resultados\\_-\\_5o\\_muestreo\\_encuesta\\_situacion\\_profesion\\_medica\\_en\\_espana-30\\_mayo\\_2018\\_0.pdf](https://www.GCMC.es/sites/default/files//u183/informe_de_resultados_-_5o_muestreo_encuesta_situacion_profesion_medica_en_espana-30_mayo_2018_0.pdf).

Among the most significant results of this survey, it was highlighted that only 37% of medical professionals, including public and private sectors, have a Secure Civil Service position. There is evidence of a defining characteristic of the working conditions of doctors in Spain, such as job insecurity, based on short-term contracts, being 25% of those contracts shorter than 6 months in length in the public health system. As secondary conclusions of this study, 80% of the professionals surveyed consider that doctors' salaries should be increased and 70% that Doctors' professional recognition should be improved.

To conclude, there is clear dissatisfaction and demotivation among medical professionals, with a high percentage of precarious, poorly paid and poorly recognized contracts, with a general degree of satisfaction with the national healthcare system spread among the Spanish population. At the same time, the Health System doesn't provide decent salaries, doesn't have good consideration of the professionals, and due to the government cuts in the healthcare system coming from the economical crisis, the population take out their frustrations on medical professionals, and this has been reflected by the high number of attacks against them.

### **3.-Professional associations as a guarantee of Continuous Professional Development in the European context.**

The National Professional Congress held in Madrid in January 2018 addressed the role of professional associations as guarantors of Continuous Professional Development in the European context and of the self regulation. We are currently expecting the promulgation of a continuous Professional Development Decree to comply with the guidelines set out in Directive 2013/55/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council (from 20th November 2013) amending Directive 2005/36/EC introducing the requirement of periodic assessment of vocational development and continuous training of regulated professions, as a doctor, for free professional practice along the Spanish territory.

Similarly, GCMC continues to work on the implementation and development of the Periodic Validation of Collegiation at National level, as a consequence of the previous guidelines, essential for a responsible and updated professional practice.

### **4.- The health professions and the State Police Forces, together to eradicate aggressions.**

Attacks on health professionals remain high in Spain. The overall number of attacks on health professionals during 2018 has reached 2000 attacks, among doctors, nurses or other healthcare professionals, according to the Medical Union data. Although reported attacks on doctors in 2018 decreased by 20 compared to the previous year (when a record number of 515 attacks on doctors was reached), there has been more attacks with higher physical intimidation or higher impact on physical integrity of doctors, evolving these attacks to be carried out with blunt objects, showing an upward trend in stab wounds, as a consequence of the slow implementation of policies and protocols against attacks on the healthcare professionals carried out by the National Government.

At sight of this situation, protocols for action continue to be developed among the highest representatives of the General Councils of doctors, nurses, pharmacists and dentists, with the so called police interlocutors (role created by the Ministry of Home office and the Ministry of Health), who set up a joint action to stop this scourge of attacks on healthcare professionals.

The GCMC of Spain keeps a Log of Attacks on Medical Professionals, available on its website, where in 2018 was published a detailed summary of the attacks on medical professionals, their incidence, types of attacks, the evolution of these and the legal and criminal consequences of the legal proceedings undertaken, among

other factors under consideration. As a result of the active monitoring of such attacks, a scientific article was published by the Spanish GCMC working group in 2018.<sup>3</sup>

### **5.- Support from the World Medical Association to proposal for a declaration about the pseudotherapies.-**

By 2017, the World Medical Association Council approved the proposal of GCMC of Spain for a public declaration on pseudosciences, pseudotherapies, intrusism and health sects.

As a consequence of the activities of the described groups, the joint signing was promoted in January 2019 of the Declaration of Madrid against pseudotherapies and pseudosciences between the highest representatives of the Ordem dos Medicos of Portugal and the General Council of Medical Colleges of Spain (GCMC). The Declaration recommends that such practices should be banned by law, excluded from the public spectrum and that they should be recognized, for all intents and purposes, as practices that undermine public health and patients safety.

At the same time, in a letter to the Ministry of Health with the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science signed on October 10th 2018, the GCMC of Spain urged to establish a Plan for the health protection towards pseudotherapies, which at the end of parliamentary process will be reflected in a Royal Decree, since such adjustment foresees important legislative changes up to three previous Royal Decrees.

The objectives of this ministerial plan are: to erase all pseudosciences in health centres and specialized training, to combat fraudulent promotion and advertising, improve outreach and communication with the public society and to fight against professional intrusion. This ministerial plan has identified and targeted up to 73 pseudotherapies, including homeopathy, acupuncture and osteopathy, and 66 disciplines are under study in order to be included in this group.

### **6.- Declaration of our Organization on euthanasia.-**

Following the proposal for an Organic Law on the Regulation of Euthanasia in May 2018 at the Congress of Deputies, the Assembly of the General Council of Medical Colleges, in accordance with positions of the World Medical Organization, approved during the General Assembly, held in Melilla in May 2018, a Declaration recalling that the Code of Medical Ethics establishes that "the doctor will never intentionally cause the death of any patient, even if the patient expressly requests it."

This debate has been intense in the previous months and will continue to be of the utmost interest in the future for the medical profession in particular. Since the political party that proposed the Law on decriminalization of euthanasia has won the General elections, recently held on April 28th 2019, it is foreseeable that this proposal will go ahead and finally be approved, taking Spain to join the list of countries that currently allow the practice of euthanasia and/or assisted suicide.

### **7.- 6th National Congress of Medical Ethics.-**

This congress was held last April 2019, with the participation of about 350 doctors, most members of the 52 Medical professional associations of Spain, where topics ranging from ethics and deontology were discussed, its part on teaching at the undergraduate stage and compliance with ethical and ethical standards in the practice of virtual medicine or telemedicine.

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<sup>3</sup> National report on aggressions to physicians in Spain 2010-2015: violence in the workplace-ecological study. BMC Res Notes (2018) 11: 347 <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13104-018-3393-7>

The meeting reviewed the degree of compliance with the Badajoz Commitment, signed in 2009 by the Dean's Council of Medical Schools of Spain, with the commitment to train undergraduate medical students in ethics and medical ethics, with the growing recognition that a higher number of faculties are adhering to this commitment, increasing the number of ECTS University credits on training and, in addition, evaluate the ECOE tests on ethics and ethical criteria that are held at the end of undergraduate education.

#### **8. Cordoba 2020: Next World Medical Association Assembly.-**

During World Medical Association assembly held in Reikiavik on October 2018, Cordoba was approved to be the next venue for the following assembly of this organization.

This decision was based on these reasons: the 100 years anniversary of the GCMC of Spain, and in order to highlight the old tradition of excellence that city of Cordoba has showed in biomedical sciences área. It is the home of historically referred physicians such as Maimónides, Aberroes and Albucasis  
Another important point of reflexión is to take into consideration the fact that Cordoba, at its zenith in the Xth century, was the political, economic and cultural centre of al-Andalus as well as being the largest city in Western Europe.