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EUROPEAN SOCIETY FOR EMERGENCY MEDICINE

The European Society for Emergency Medicine (EUSEM) strongly supports the Spanish Society of Emergency Medicine (SEMES) in its objective of establishing Emergency Medicine as a primary specialty with a five-year training programme.

Emergency Medicine is a medical specialty based on the knowledge and skills required for the prevention, diagnosis and management of the acute and urgent aspects of illness and injury affecting patients of all age groups with a full spectrum of undifferentiated physical and behavioural disorders. It is a specialty in which time is critical. The practice of Emergency Medicine encompasses the pre-hospital and in-hospital reception, resuscitation and management of undifferentiated urgent and emergency cases until discharge or transfer to the care of another physician. It also includes involvement in the development of pre-hospital and in-hospital emergency medical systems.

Emergency medicine is not only a definition but is a core content of activities like organisation of care, observation medicine, appropriateness, emergency critical care, disaster medicine preparedness and response, not forgetting education and research, that only a well organised system, with dedicated and competent medical and nurse staff can perform in an efficient and efficacious way.

This message has been received and transposed into practice by the majority of European countries in these last 20 years. While in 1995 the specialty of Emergency Medicine was recognized, among the EU, only in the UK and Ireland, now all the EU countries except Spain, Portugal, Austria, Germany and Greece, and many outside the EU, have activated the specialty. Most of these countries have a 5 year specialty program that is in line with the European Curriculum of EM, while a few have a shorter training program of 3 or 4 years. Nevertheless, the activation of a supraspecialty, or of a specialty less than 5 years in length is not advisable, because it will prevent from the European recognition and thus the mutual recognition among the EU member states and the possibility of exchange.

The EUSEM is, since its creation, very much engaged in supporting and ensuring the highest quality of emergency care for all patients in need throughout Europe, and is convinced that the only way to grant this is by specialists trained in Emergency Medicine. For this reason, together with the Union

Europeenne des Médecins Spécialistes (UEMS) section of Emergency Medicine has developed the

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European Curriculum of EM that is conceived as a guideline for the implementation of training programs and represents the competences and knowledge every Emergency Physician in Europe should have; the European Board Examination that is evaluating these competences and represents a certification of excellence.

The EUSEM is also proposing education, reference documents, congresses and research opportunity in EM, with the aim to increase the culture and awareness of Emergency Medicine in Europe.

SEMES is one of the biggest national societies of EM member of the EUSEM and has been always active in Spain and in Europe in promoting EM. We believe that, as it happened in many other countries during the development of the specialty, SEMES has created in Spain the culture and the discipline of Emergency Medicine and is the body that at the moment is granting the competence, through many scientific and educational activities of great value. We believe that this should be recognized by the National Authority in Spain, to allow all the doctors that are working in the Emergency Departments to be certified and recognized as European specialists in Emergency Medicine.

This is a crucial step to create a sense of belonging and a feel of recognition among professionals that have decided to dedicate their working life to this job. Through the recognition and the acknowledgement that a proper workforce and defined standards are needed, the job in Emergency medicine that could appear as unbearable for a lifelong career, will become not only sustainable but welcome by the young generation of doctors, being appealing and exciting, various and fulfilling. A job that makes the difference, that helps reducing mortality and morbidity and increases the appropriateness of admission and the safety of discharge.

Finally, the Emergency physicians have knowledge and skills for organising good response to medical crisis like disasters, terroristic attacks, multiple casualties etc. Let's think of the recent attacks in Europe where the response in hospitals with well trained emergency doctors was excellent and very effective.

I am sure that Spanish authorities will recognize the value of Emergency Medicine for the health care system and on the importance of activating a 5 year specialty according to the EU directives.

Yours faithfully

Roberta Petrino

President of EUSEM



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