



## EDITORIAL

## [TRANSLATED ARTICLE] UPDATING AND RECERTIFICATION IN ORTHOPAETIC SURGERY AND TRAUMATOLOGY: SECOT AS PROTAGONIST



What we understand in theory by update is the process of replacing a product or content for a new, improved version of it. Recertification, however, is the act of supervising professional training and performance by which an individual or a group can continue engaging in it. Both terms would fall under the same process of the active, continuous teaching and learning involved in Ongoing Professional Training. To a certain extent, being updated would be a commitment of personal responsibility to be concluded by individual initiatives. In contrast, being accredited would be a responsibility which transcends the individual and involves a supervisory entity. In our environment, updating and recertification are rights and should be obligations for maintaining and optimizing medical practice competency and our professionalism.<sup>1</sup> The beneficiary in all these cases would be the same: in the abstract sense, the healthcare system and society.

Focusing on recertification, the empirical obligation of supervision is coupled with the pragmatic, that may become the demand of our patients. To sum up, society may hold us accountable for what we do and how we do it. The starting point would be the ECMEC credit systems of the European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS), in force since 2000. In Spain, leaving aside the accreditation commissions of the autonomous communities, this would be the Spanish Accreditation System for Continuing Medical Education (SEAFORMEC for its initials in Spanish).

Recertification in Spain is regulated by Law 44/2003, of 21st November, of the Health Professions Regulation.<sup>2</sup> However, despite good intentions, it has not yet got off the ground. In fact recently, the Ministry of Health insisted on the need for permanent review of teaching methodologies and teaching for a better adaptation of professional knowledge to scientific and technological evolution, and to the population's health needs. It also proposed the proce-

cedure for the creation or revision of the title of Specialist in Health Sciences, which would be initiated by the Ministry of Health at the proposal of one or more national scientific societies or the Regional Ministry with competence in specialised health training in an Autonomous Community. The review procedure could also be initiated at the request of the corresponding National Specialty Commission.

Conceptually, Bernstein has reflected on several weakness of recertification, including cost, which he considers "insignificant" when it is divided by the years over which it is amortised. Its real cost would be the time professionals spend studying subjects of little value to their everyday practice which, on many occasions, are aimed at a specific activity.<sup>3</sup> Another issue to emphasize would be the time that should pass to justify the update. In other words, when is it considered the case that there are truly novel contents one needs to be updated in and to assess? In this respect, in our environment the maximum period of assessment is specified as 6 to 10 years,<sup>4</sup> although at the pace of events it is no exaggeration to think that the update is akin to a never-ending training treadmill. It has also been questioned that aspects relating to new knowledge resources are not being addressed, hand in hand with new technologies. This questioning has led to the proposal for training assessment with frequent feedback to overcome deficiencies in the best interests of patients and professionals.<sup>5</sup>

In compliance with the statutes of our Society, which specify that the best scientific preparation and continuous training of its members shall be ensured, SECOT shares the individual desire for updating and the obligation for recertification, similarly to that sought and demanded by other societies in Spain.<sup>4</sup> Against this backdrop, SECOT demands to be a protagonist and position itself for the standard to become official, pending a project based on a rigorous analysis of the requirements. The kickoff of this project will soon be the launch of the third edition of the SECOT course on Updating and Recertification

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