

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

On professionalism in the management of thyroid tumors and multidisciplinary working groups[☆]



Sobre la profesionalidad en el manejo de los tumores de la tiroides y los grupos de trabajo multidisciplinarios

Dear Sir,

I read attentively the article on the professional characteristics of specialists and the advantages of multidisciplinary teams in the management of thyroid cancer, by Diez et al.¹ I found the article very interesting because it reflects the opinions of many specialists involved in this field, though there are some aspects I would like to comment on:

1. Mention is made of the positivity of multidisciplinary teams, but most of those surveyed belong to hospitals, and we should not forget that their organization is established on a multidisciplinary basis. Provided the objectives for which the different services were created are being met, is such professional regrouping still needed?
2. It is stated that multidisciplinary groups allow for “patient-focused” work, in contraposition to what happens with so-called “authoritarian physicians”, who consider themselves the guardians of their patients. I believe that the fact that a group is involved does not guarantee that patients will be treated individually, and unfortunately responsibility toward the patient often proves suboptimal.²
3. The authors also state that such groups “treat diseases” in a coordinated manner and facilitate communication among professionals, but the mistake of “treating diseases” and not “people with diseases” persists in this regard, as was pointed out long ago by Hippocrates (480 BC) – the two concepts being very different.

“Treating diseases” has negative consequences. One of them is the strict application of previously established protocols, obviating the desired individualization of therapies, which is obviously more complex because it requires experience on the part of the clinician, but is clearly fairer and more beneficial for the patient.³

It would be interesting to contrast this article with another study in which the users are surveyed, since the different health systems tend to only take into account the preferences of the different professional groups that work at the hospital centers, while mostly ignoring the opinions of the users.

References

1. Diez JJ, Galofré JC, Oleaga A, Grande E, Mitjavila M, Moreno P, et al. Características de profesionalidad de los especialistas y ventajas de los equipos multidisciplinarios en cáncer de tiroides: resultados de una encuesta de opinión nacional. *Endocr Diabet Nutr.* 2018;66:74–82.
2. Kleinman A. The art of medicine. Castastrophe and caregiving: the failure of medicine as an art. *Lancet.* 2008;371:22–3.
3. Sacristán JA. Medicina centrada en el paciente, medicina personalizada y medicina de precisión: ¿de que estamos hablando? In: Sacristán JA, Millan Núñez-Cortés J, Gutiérrez Fuentes JA, editors. *Medicina centrada en el paciente: reflexiones a la carta.* Madrid: Unión Editorial; 2018. p. 33–40.

Ricardo V. García-Mayor

Instituto de Investigación Sanitaria Galicia Sur, Unidad de Endocrinología y Nutrición, Hospital HM Vigo, Vigo, Pontevedra, Spain

E-mail address: ricardo.garcia.mayor@sergas.es

2530-0180/

© 2019 SEEN and SED. Published by Elsevier España, S.L.U. All rights reserved.

[☆] Please cite this article as: García-Mayor RV. Sobre la profesionalidad en el manejo de los tumores de la tiroides y los grupos de trabajo multidisciplinarios. *Endocrinol Diabetes Nutr.* 2019; 66:528.