

Spanish Society of Emergency Medicine (SEMES): winner of the 2012 Avedis Donabedian Award for excellence in quality in scientific societies

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The year 2012 has begun with good news for the Spanish Society of Accident and Emergency Medicine (SEMES): the Avedis Donabedian Award for Excellence in Quality of Scientific Societies 2012. This award aims to distinguish scientific societies for the actions and strategies adopted in the field of quality care, and that play a crucial role in raising awareness of its members in the field of evaluation and quality improvement and in facilitating associated activities.

The philosophy of the Foundation Avedis Donabedian is that the role of a scientific society is a key strategic element that acts as a scientific point of reference for its affiliates and has a decisive impact on attitudes and care culture of professionals working in the health care system. It aims to reward the effort of a society that supports, promotes and leads the culture of evaluation and quality improvement¹. SEMES has been awarded for its commitment and involvement in improving the quality of care through the implementation of different strategies such as: a) a model of standard accreditation of accident and emergency services²⁻⁵, b) a model of quality indicators for accident and emergency services⁶, c) a patient safety program (Program SEMES-Patient Safety)^{7,8}, d) a system of professional accreditation (CME EUEB and CTES)⁹, e) a system of triage for emergency departments (Spanish Triage System)¹⁰, f) inclusion of its Journal EMERGENCIAS in Science Citation Index¹¹, and g) training programs in accident and emergency medicine, the development of research projects in quality and safety, and alliances with other national and international institutions and societies.

The commitment to continuous quality improvement, begun by SEMES some years ago, along

with the introduction of new programs and recent projects, has been particularly recognized, along with the difficulty of reconciling daily care in our professional services with a commitment to continuous improvement in quality and standards achieved by SEMES. This award is therefore the culmination of a great stage of innovation in the field of quality care. SEMES joins a select group of scientific societies such as the Spanish Association of Surgeons (2006), the Spanish Society of Palliative Care (2007), Spanish Neurological Society (2008), the Spanish Society of Family and Com-



Figure 1. Avedis Donabedian prize 2012 for Excellence in Quality of Scientific Societies awarded to SEMES. Award Ceremony held on January 12 at the Palau de la Música Catalana in Barcelona, where Dr. Santiago Tomás (right) collected the award on behalf of SEMES.

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munity Medicine (2009), the Spanish Society of Primary Care Physicians SEMERGEN (2010) and the Spanish Society of Intensive Care, Critical Care and Coronary Units (SEMICYUC) (2011)¹.

SEMES commitment to quality care has been constant since its inception. The statutes of our society¹², founded in 1987, make specific reference to its policy on quality, and the organization of the SEMES board of directors has always recognized the figure of the quality manager in the different working groups. Initiatives on quality date from 1998, and are specifically part of training plans. Our conferences, both national as autonomous, explicitly contemplate quality issues in general, with special emphasis in recent years on areas of accreditation of emergency services and patient safety, with specific tables. Concern about the quality of care and the need for training has been increasingly demanded by SEMES members, and addressed in various forums. This has resulted in an increase in scientific production on issues related with the quality of care by our professionals, both in our journal and in other scientific media.

Three main actions are worth noting (pre- and post-intervention assessment) in 2011 in the field of quality: the consolidation of the patient safety program and its network of trainers, the dissemination and implementation of the accreditation system of accident and emergency services, and the completion of the EMERGE project with the achievement of its first impact factor by the Journal EMERGENCIAS. For 2012, the objectives include continuity of all programs and commissioning new projects, such as collaboration with the National Transplant Organization and developing a map of health risk areas in hospital EM, to further involve our scientific society in the quest for continuous improvement in quality of care.

Various stages have been passed on the way: from the initiative started by the last board of directors under José Milla, through the work of boards chaired by Luis Jimenez, to completion achieved in the current period. And it is our purpose to

acknowledge and show, with this editorial, our gratitude to all the people, partners and leading professionals who have contributed in different ways to our society receiving this prestigious award. Listing them all would be endless and certainly some worthy figures would be omitted, but we would like to specially extend our appreciation and gratitude to Martín Tejedor, Luis Andujar López, Josep Gómez, Fermí Roqueta, Óscar Miró, Julian Mozota and Manel Chanovas for their invaluable contribution.

On January 12 we had the pleasure of collecting the award in a special setting: the Palau de la Música Catalana in Barcelona. At the end of the ceremony, Dr. Albert Oriol i Bosch, winner of the Homenot de la Sanitat 2012 prize for his professional career, said in his speech in Catalan: "Ningú es ningú per si sol" ("Nobody is anybody alone") ... with humility, we would paraphrase his words ... SEMES would be nothing were it not for all of you!

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