

As a result of Barcelona Hospital's Oncology Plan over 3800 tumours have been analysed since 2004

| Editorial

Barcelona Hospital has published the results of its Oncology Plan, including the only registers of tumours compiled by a private institution anywhere in the country. Since 2004 it has been working on the diagnosis, treatment and termination of the illness through a programme based on the coordination of all the professional staff involved and the five key aspects of the Cancer Department: operational protocols, standardisation of treatment, systematisation of surgery, the approach to the final stages of life and the tumour register itself. Analysis serves to bring about substantial improvements in results, patient care and their quality of life.

In 2004 Assistència Sanitària and Barcelona Hospital implemented protocols for the cancer department and the Oncology Plan, establishing a powerful private healthcare tool for the purpose of cancer treatment. The protocols were drawn up with three aims in mind: to provide patients with the most up-to-date resources; in terms of both diagnosis and treatment, in accordance with the wishes of both sufferer and relatives; to provide professionals with guidelines for their actions; and to provide in-house data on the results of the treatment and evolution of the illness. The approach to cancer is, then, a holistic one, from diagnosis and treatment up until the conclusion of the illness, taking into consideration the appropriate use of diagnostic resources.

Coordination is the bedrock of the Oncology Plan and is achieved by means of the Oncology Liaison Committee, which meets twice a week and is open to all doctors on the Assis-

tència Sanitària medical lists. At its meetings, the committee performs an individual analysis of all new cancer cases, as well as the most complex ones which, in the judgement of the specialist, require a multi-disciplinary approach.

The Oncology Plan is based on five core procedures. First, operational protocols have been drawn up in line with scientific advances, which help in clinical decision-making and increase uniformity. Secondly, radiotherapy and chemotherapy treatment has been standardised, through measures such as publication of the Oncological Pharmacotherapy Guide and the opening of the Oncology Daycare Clinic at Barcelona Hospital. Thirdly, the medical procedures record has its own established protocol in the form of surgical datasheets to help standardise surgery on the most common tumours (breast, colon, prostate, lung, ovary, urinary tract and kidney). Fourthly, one key aspect of the programme involves the inclusion of treatment in the final stages of life: the palliative medical team now provides support for patients at the hospital and at home 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, guaranteeing absolute respect for the wishes and privacy of the patient's personal and family environment. All this has a direct impact on substantially

improving quality of life.

Lastly, particular mention should be made of the establishment of a register of tumours, which includes all new cases of cancer diagnosed, and which are analysed in terms of a number of parameters. The results of the actions taken by Barcelona hospital provide the basis for devising future policies, since the analysis of statistics from other countries does not necessarily coincide with the figures at home. Each year approximately 800 new tumours are recorded, with more than 3800 having been analysed overall since 2004. Examination of the data drawn from the register of tumours provides information on the cancer department and can be used to produce valuable statistics.

Barcelona Hospital, which opened in 1989, is owned and managed by the SCIAS user cooperative. It belongs to the Assistència Sanitària group, an exponent of health cooperativism run in accordance with the distinctive self-management model conceived by Dr Josep Espriu some fifty years ago. This is based on the equality of doctors and users on the organisation's decision-making and management bodies. Assistència Sanitària now has some 200,000 policyholders and a list of almost 5400 doctors.

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