

## E-LEARNING

IN GENERAL PRACTICE/FAMILY MEDICINE  
NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING

April, May and June 2008



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### Letter from the Congress Chairman

In a world and society in constant transformation, medicine itself is also shifting and developing. New health problems and new risks are emerging continuously. The health system is getting more and more complex, and there is a growing disquiet concerning quality and security. Information technologies increase in power and complexity, and the citizen's expectations are in constant maturation.

In this context, nowadays, it is generally accepted, nationally and internationally, that the ideal medical practice is people-centred, health oriented and community extended.

Therefore, in most developed countries, family doctors occupy a central position in the assurance of global, continued, coordinated and personalized health care assistance. Their role, along with the one of the remaining primary care providers, is recognized as being essential to the optimization of the available resources and to the accomplishment of quality, equity and efficiency in health systems.

The contemporary family doctor has their own professional identity, appropriate skills and a quite exact set of qualifications. The core of General Practice/Family Medicine's aim is providing global, integrated, continuous and personalized health care to citizens in their family and social contexts.

The family doctor is quite well placed to provide primary care, to deal with a great variety of health problems, and to fulfil the integrator's part, which the growing specialization has made essential. It is, for sure, the one who better carries out the concept of health, today understood as a dynamic balance between intrinsic factors to the human being, of biological, psycho-affective and of behavioural nature, as well as extrinsic factors concerning the physical and relational environment surrounding him.

However, in order to be effective and to encounter the people and society's needs, it will be necessary to establish some priorities and redirect our efforts in order to:

- Increase accessibility, namely in cases of acute disease
- Centre the attention on prevention and early intervention
- Improve management of chronic disease
- Support multidisciplinary cares' integration and provision
- Select available evidence for effective providing of quality care
- Use technology to support good practices

Good primary health care is good for the people and good for the Country. For that, it is necessary to maintain high levels of quality. In order to maintain high levels of quality in care providing, a solid politics of Continuous Professional Development is necessary, which is only achieved with lifelong continuous learning.

Good training makes professionals more confident and more competent in their performance. A defective formation leaves people frustrated, anxious and discouraged. We must make use of the abilities that the new technologies put ahead of us, and in this way make easier this required lifelong continuous learning.

This 1st Virtual Congress of Family Medicine will be unquestionably an excellent opportunity to learn with each other.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luis Pisco', with a large, stylized initial 'L'.

**Luis Pisco**  
Congress Chairman