

Letters to the editor

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Medical practice, mass media impact and professional insurance guarantee

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Dear editor:

We will start by showing our amazement at the association made between the dissemination of health news by the non-scientific press and the economic impact on the professional activity of the physician, as stated in the letter to the editor recently published by Medwave [1].

We agree with the authors on the importance and repercussion of this kind of news in the media. The medical profession conforms to both the principles of freedom and veracity of information so much, the Provincial Medical Officers' Colleges (as well as the General Council of Medical Associations of Spain), have a communication and press office that advises on these questions.

We have in our country, in spite of the malicious intentionality of some written medium that issues news of "little agreement with reality", a high valuation by the population on the professional activity of Spanish doctors, especially in primary care [2],[3].

We remember that the doctor has the right to sue for defamation the person responsible for a news that is not true, and the media that publishes it.

Regarding professional liability insurance, we must state that in Spain in the 1970s, some State Medical Colleges already had a coverage policy of this type. In public health, the first policies were signed in the 1990s.

The major breakthrough was provided by Law 44/2003 on the Management of Health Professions [4], which in its article 46 establishes the obligation of coverage for civil liability. It was extended in 2007 with Law 2/2007 of professional societies [5], which in its article 11 contemplates the regulation of the patrimonial responsibility of the professional society and of the professionals.

Sixty percent of the members of our state college are subscribed to this corporate policy, to which is subscribed the Excellency Medical College of Cadiz.

We emphasize the great impact of the absence of insurance on the part of the doctor, because without it, he must respond personally to the economic consequences that a possible demand might cause to his professional activity.

Notes

From the editor

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Declaration of conflicts of interest

Authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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