

CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE SPANISH SOCIETY OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY MEDICINE (SEMFYC) CONFERENCE 2009. WONCA PRESIDENT-ELECT'S SPEECH

Her Excellency Mrs Ministry of Health of Spain
Mr. President of SEMFYC
Mrs. President of CAMFYC
Mr. President of the Scientific Committee of the SEMFYC Conference 2010
Dear friends of Family Medicine

When they ask me to speak in a language I am not fluent in, I spend more time listening

In this last two days I have had a marvellous experience and I have made many new friends and I have been listening.

I have been in meetings with young family doctors, trainees and leaders of the Health Service and I have been listening.

This is what I have listened:

1. Primary Health Care in Spain and made great advances in the last twenty years.
2. Spanish Family Medicine has become a leader in Europe and in the World.
3. The computer software program of the Catalan Health Institute (Instituto Catalán de la Salud) is one of the best I have ever seen.

But Spanish Primary Health Care can and should do it better.

A population that gets older, immigration, social inequalities, all of them and more, make primary health care more complicated than ever.

Spain may follow USA model and spend more and more in specialists and hospitals and their population health will be worse and worse.

Those countries with the best Health Systems are those with the best primary health care systems.

Primary Health Care is the best investment a country can make.

It may sound presumptuous on my behalf to give you advice but as you give me the opportunity I would like to tell you that:

1. I would assure that Family Medicine would play an important place and visible pace in the Schools of Medicine
2. I would assure that family doctors and patient would have enough time to develop a relationship of confidence. If they only have a mean consultation time of ten minutes and nine of them are devoted to the computer it is probable that they will not establish any kind of relationship.

I strongly believe that it is time, as it was 20 years ago, that Spain develops and promotes a new model of Primary Health Care based on relations.

I strongly believe that the Spanish primary care is about to lead once again to the World to a new system of health care.

I strongly believe that the Spanish Family doctors are ready to lead this change.

I strongly believe in you.

I have been listening.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to talk.

Dr. Richard Roberts
WONCA President-Elect.