

Empathy is the best virtue we can practice and promote with patients and their families

February 11, 2021

- *Non-Government Organizations (NGO's) promote the World Day of the Sick.*
- *Specialist call attention to be thoughtful with the purchase of medicine, oxygen tanks, and concentrators.*
- *The COVID-19 pandemic pushes to reinforce the International Patients Safety Goals.*

The International Patients Safety Goals established by the World Health Organization (WHO) are priority strategies to credit and strengthen the quality and safety of healthcare in hospital and clinics that adopt these actions for sake of their patients.

In light of the World Day of the Sick, the Medical Manager of Psychiatry and Central Nervous System (CNS) at Grupo PiSA, Rodrigo Natalio Durán Muñiz, M.D., explained that empathy is the fundamental base for these norms; not only for doctors and healthcare staff, but also for users and beneficiaries of the public health systems. Specially after the reconversion of hospitals and clinics of the National Health System (NHS) to attend Coronavirus.

"During the sanitary emergency for the COVID-19 pandemic, we must explain and reinforce the International Patients Safety Goals by promoting empathy among people who cherish of good physical health; since we have the obligation to understand the environment of patients who fight other kinds of diseases or those who have been forced to postpone surgical interventions, and those people who are hospitalized", emphasized Durán Muñiz, specialist in sleep medicine.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), some of the International Patients Safety Goals are: 1) Identify patients correctly, 2) Improve effective communication, 3) Improve the safety of high-alert medications, 4) Ensure safe surgery, 5) Reduce the risk of health care-associated infections, and 6) Reduce the risk of patient harm resulting from falls.

"These WHO Goals have a direct relation with empathy. We have to create awareness about the psychological impact that comes from the fact of facing a disease, particularly in children, the elderly, and those patients in palliative care for terminal illnesses. The individual condition that each patient lives, forces us to respect their dignity and integrity", said Rodrigo Durán Muñiz, M.D.

On the other hand, Irma Luisa Ceja Martínez, M.D., Medical Manager of Endocrinology and Nutrition at Grupo PiSA, made a call to be aware and respect people who live with pathologies or clinical conditions that are not COVID-19, by making a rational consumption of medications with the correct supervision and medical prescription in order to keep supplies for the medicine that help other illnesses.

"In these sanitary emergency, it is of paramount importance to avoid fear or panic purchase of oxygen tanks and concentrators, driven by the risk of getting infected with the virus SARS-CoV-2. The demand of these equipment and medical devices has increased dramatically, because patients who rent these, often keep them. We have to have empathy and think of the situation that other patients with severe symptoms might have, or that present other kind of respiratory disease",

concluded Ceja Martínez, physician and governor of the American Chapter of the American College of Physicians (ACP).

The World Day of the Sick has the objective to raise the society awareness about the needs of people who live with illnesses. Health professionals must give quality attention and guarantee safety for patients in hospitals and clinics, based on the International Patients Safety Goals established by the UN.