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The need of collaboration and integration of services between health care systems, patient associations and fitness centers, the case of MS

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a nervous system disease that affects the brain and spinal cord. It damages the myelin sheath, the material that surrounds and protects the nerve cells. This damage slows down or blocks messages between the brain and the body, leading to the symptoms of MS. They can include among others muscle weakness, trouble with coordination and balance. This progressive disease affects women more than men. The patients are usually diagnosed between 20 and 40 years old. Medicines may slow down the evolution of symptoms and physical and occupational therapy may help. The aim of this communication is to analyze the situation of the collaboration between one of the best reference centers in MS of Spain, the Vall d'Hebron Hospital in Barcelona, a very active patients association (FEM) and some fitness centers of the city of Barcelona. The project, developed during 6 months, has been based on semi-structured in-depth interviews with patients affected with different levels of disability and with physicians, nurses, physiotherapists, psychologists, speech therapist, occupational therapist, social workers and physical education specialists. The qualitative approach adopted allowed to discuss the need of improving the coordination between the health care providers participating on taking care of these patients and the resources of the community. At this point, we emphasize the need of empowering the role and knowledge of the professionals working at the fitness centers to help the patients suffering of this illness.

Biography

Josep M Picas, MD of University of Barcelona has done his Diploma from ESADE Business School of Barcelona. He is the President of the European Association of Healthcare IT Managers. He has been the Director of the Primary Care of Barcelona City and CIO at the Hospital de St. Pau. At present he is promoting Adaptive HS.

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