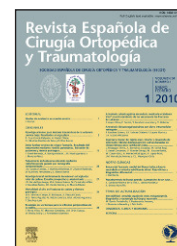


Revista Española de Cirugía Ortopédica y Traumatología

www.elsevier.es/rot



EDITORIAL

Convergence in Orthopaedic Surgeon Training

Convergencia en la formación especializada de cirujanos ortopédicos

The system for selecting physicians for specialist training through a universal objective test, popularly known as the MIR exam, was introduced in Spain in the nineteen-seventies, and spread to the health institutions of the whole state over the next decade. This system, unanimously felt to have been an advance, introduced objectively fair criteria, but not necessarily based on quality. The selection process by means of this test guaranteed, and continues to guarantee, that any graduate in medicine would have an equal opportunity to access a training post solely and exclusively on the basis of the final outcome of the same objective test and not as a result of any reasons other than the measurement of the candidate's merits. It is certainly true that the exam measures general medical knowledge and not the skills required to develop a different set of specific new skills, in addition to the aptitudes and attitudes making up their professional expertise, but it was a marked improvement on the previous model that was clearly obsolete and lacking in transparency.

In the social context of Spain at that time the introduction of a selective test on the basis of equal opportunities represented a major leap forward in the rights of citizens who had attained a qualification and were accessing a job that promised them a higher quality of diploma with which to access the labour market. Paradoxically, the guarantee of fairness rather than quality has been the hallmark of the "MIR system", something that has objectively gone unnoticed in a situation of self-complacency with the system.

Nonetheless, by the middle of this decade, more than thirty years on, with the introduction of the final voluntary test after the 5 years of residency, our speciality has been a pioneer through exemplary collaboration between the Ministry of Health, through the National Commission for the Speciality, and its corresponding scientific society, the

Spanish Orthopaedic Surgery and Traumatology Society (SECOT), focusing the discussion on the need to measure the quality of the training received by the doctors graduating from the health institutions accredited for the purpose, something previously unheard of. This test, initially a voluntary measure, is as much of a milestone as the introduction of the MIR system itself, thus complementing the execution of specialist medical training under criteria not only of fairness but also of quality. Yet, despite the recognition heaped on the test by some institutions, the hospitals and orthopaedic surgeons of Spain, as a whole, have not yet assessed the colossal dimension of this fact, as shown by the fact that, although on the increase, the demand for taking the exam is not yet an unavoidable goal at any orthopaedic surgery and traumatology department with "MIR" teaching accreditation.

The Commission would take a step forward if, on the one hand, the test included an analysis of whether the candidate masters research methodology and, on the other, if it published every year, through the web site of the Ministry of Health and Consumer affairs the number of specialists in training at each centre and the number taking the test. So a doubt, this would facilitate a convulsion in MIR training. First of all, those aspiring to a training place would know, before choosing their posting, the quality each centre offered them with the probability of successfully demonstrating it through the test. Secondly, the centres would have to review their programmes and emphasize their determination vis-à-vis this training so as not to be relegated to positions out of the ranking and, probably, run the risk of losing their accreditation. This public communication would be a step further in the historic paradigm for the "democratization of science". This journal, the Spanish Review of Orthopaedic Surgery and Traumatology, is ready

to take part, contributing to the education in research methodology for Spanish orthopaedic surgeons by facilitating the methodological pulchritude of the papers received, with the vocation to improve scientific communication in the training departments in Spain and abroad, thus taking another step forward in the SECOT's contribution alongside the Institutions and the scientific community.

E. Guerado Parra
*Editorial Committee of the Revista Española de Cirugía
Ortopédica y Traumatología
Department of Orthopaedic Surgery and Traumatology,
Costa del Sol Hospital, University of Málaga, Marbella,
Málaga, Spain
E-mail address: eguerado@hcs.es*