



# INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL REVIEW ON DOWN SYNDROME

www.elsevier.es/ sd



## EDITORIAL

## Full citizens

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The UN Convention on the rights of people with disabilities in December 2008 ([www.un.org](http://www.un.org)), and subsequent Member State ratifications, has provoked analysis into how these persons are currently enjoying full citizenship, or in other words, to what extent “societies” are respecting and guaranteeing their equal rights and opportunities.

In November 2009, during our 10th International Conference on Down Syndrome, we created a forum for reflection which would allow us to analyse the options and support needed to kick start individual life projects for each of these people as full citizens.

In the 15th World Congress of Inclusion International ([www.inclusion-international.org](http://www.inclusion-international.org)) with the slogan “Inclusion —Transforming Rights into Action”, recently held in Berlin (Germany), over 2300 people from more than 70 countries highlighted that there is a need to put the UN Convention into practice with concrete actions and measures which allow its main objective to be fulfilled as *magna carta* for people with disabilities.

It was the first time that a global platform was presented for different countries to unite and denounce cultural, economic and political realities showing that disabled people have continued to suffer discrimination and segregation. The platform also was a perfect opportunity to be able to work together and demand their civil rights.

For this to be possible, all the organisations and entities that work in this field have to consider in depth how we could transform our current actions and representation, how cooperation networks between these people, their families and the entities can be created to put pressure on the local, regional, state and international governments so

that they will take concrete, transversal and unidirectional measures.

The economic argument is not valid anymore, given that it is no longer about injecting more resources, but the need to reorganise and redistribute them in accordance with this new approach. The improving of their quality of life has generally been gaining in recent years and, in these days, disabled and elderly people prefer the opposite: that the resources adapt to their needs. It is for this reason that we should renounce the many monopolies and pressure groups that have been created to date, given that they encourage disabled people to be dependent and in no way make it easier for them to gain personal and social independence.

Based on these experiences, a work group (in which the Fundació Catalana Síndrome de Down will collaborate) will be set in motion over the next two years and will approach the deinstitutionalisation and community life of people with disabilities. The project reaches its highlight when we present a report in the next Inclusion International congress, to be held in Washington in 2012.

This year “Me voy a casa” [I’m going home], our support service which encourages independence, celebrates its tenth anniversary and has successfully achieved 50 independence projects.

Encouraged by this demanding and passionate international environment, our battle will continue with the collaboration and determination from our different services, ensuring that people with disabilities and their families receive the support needed to help them create their personal and social life project.