

Preparatory note for the meeting of the ERO working group « Quality » in Salvador da Bahia

In today's western society health has taken a dominant place which is not even questioned in the actual time of economic and financial difficulties and therefore seems to be indispensable.

Three requirement criteria are worrying the population: quality and security of medical/dental care, as well as transparency; which means the patient's right to be informed on the planned therapeutics, the eventual risks, etc., in order to give the practitioner an informed consent.

In order to meet the requirements of quality . security, transparency, the authorities being responsible for the health of their population enact legal or regulatory measures which are more and more compulsory for the health professionals, sometimes under pressure of the media and in the name of precautionary principles, without considering the opinion of the professionals themselves.

We think that we dentists have a major role to play in our respective countries in the definition of quality and security, of the environment of care and our acting it-self.

The definition of a standard quality which can be applied everywhere, cannot be subject to an international organisation even as complex as ours. Quality is not an absolute concept, it is relative to the state of technological, medical and economic advancement of the country, but can always be ameliorated on the basis of the following general principles

- a basic education as complete as possible,
- a continuing education during the whole professional career, for example.

It will be the task of the group, if you agree, to define a minimal base of quality and the objectives towards which we will tend on the base of criteria to define.

The group could also be a support for those associations that wish to set up structures that allow the practitioner to actively participate in quality / security for the patients, by exchanging experiences, tools, structures already set up in certain countries, as for example the *collèges de bonnes pratiques*, or colleges of good practice, which are being built up in France at the time being.

In short, we think that our objective could limit itself reasonably to

- the definition of quality criteria,
- the definition of a minimal base,
- a methodology for « imposing » our concept of quality/security for the patients on our governments.

I therefore propose that . when we meet in Salvador - we will list the criteria of a consensual definition of quality for the profession of dentist and to fix a working plan and objectives that could be appropriate for every country.

I am open for all your remarks, suggestions and registrations as member of our working group.

Looking forward to see you in Brazil I send you my best regards.

Roland LHERRON
President