

Closer

Más cerca

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The specialty of Emergency Medicine (EMUE) has a long-standing history in Europe, dating back 50 years, with a European curriculum formally agreed upon since 2009 by the European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS), known as the European Curriculum for Emergency Medicine.¹ In the Americas, this structured training has also existed for more than 40 years.

After years of effort by many—both those present and those no longer with us²⁻⁵—and after unfulfilled promises by 6 different Ministers of Health, the last one in May 2020 by Minister Salvador Illa, who formally announced before the Spanish Congress of Deputies his intention to recognize Emergency Medicine as a primary specialty before the end of 2020.⁶ As you will recall, this occurred during the height of the COVID-19 crisis, when Emergency and Urgent Care Services were giving it all—24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. After the promise was again broken, we once more felt left behind vs the rest of Europe—still without this essential specialty in the civilian health system, even though it has existed since 2016 within the Spanish Military Health Service.⁷

We now stand close to a major milestone: the establishment of a regulated and standardized training framework for professionals working in Emergency and Urgent Care. The long-awaited and necessary EMUE⁸ appears to be within reach. We are at a turning point—on March 21, the request to create the specialty in Spain was approved at the plenary session of the Human Resources Commission of the Spanish National Health System, which includes representatives from all Spanish Autonomous Communities (ACs.) and the Ministry of Health. This agreement initiated the official procedure for EMUE before the Ministry of Health per se, which must now issue a resolution within a 6-month dead-

line, as stipulated by Royal Decree 589/2022.⁹ In that meeting, consensus among the ACs was nearly unanimous—all but one (which abstained) supported the request. We expect the Ministry to rule favorably and as soon as possible.

If this final step by the Ministry of Health is favorable—as we expect—meeting the criteria established in Royal Decree 589/2022 on the creation of new health science specialties, the Ministry will proceed to draft and approve the Royal Decree officially establishing EMUE. That document will legally create the specialty. At this time, so close to Holy Week, it feels as though we are reaching the end of a long “Calvary”, and approaching the day of great (though still cautious) joy—when we finally read the Royal Decree of the specialty in Spain’s Official State Gazette.

There is still work to do, but we are confident it will be achieved in the coming months. Logic, the current state of Spanish health care,¹⁰ its potential for improvement,¹¹ the commitment to citizens,¹² and the work of so many over the years¹³ all point in that direction. The Spanish Ministry of Health has demonstrated its willingness to honor commitments swiftly, as it recently did with the creation of the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry specialty.¹⁴

We express our gratitude for this progress toward establishing the specialty to Minister Carolina Darias, and we trust that her successor, José Manuel Miñones, together with the President of the Government, Pedro Sánchez, will bring the process to completion as soon as possible. We also extend our deep appreciation to the ACs for their support.

Once achieved, this milestone will improve the quality of care, facilitate better human resource planning within the Spanish National Health System, and ultimately benefit our patients, who remain our final and daily objective.

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