



12 MAY

INTERNATIONAL AWARENESS DAY FOR FIBROMYALGIA AND CHRONIC FATIGUE SYNDROME 2014

Looking back without anger but with a will to fight and overcome, we see people suffering from Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome struggling every day, all the days, to find their place of dignity in a society that, in some cases, too many cases, still refuses them this dignity.

Looking back, we also see people who, from institutions providing aid to sick people, fight alongside them. These people, all of them, give off a special inner beauty, the beauty that emanates from the strength of spirit they have had to search in the depths of their being. As Elisabeth Kübler-Ros said:

"These persons have an appreciation, sensitivity, and an understanding of life that fills them with compassion, gentleness, and a deep loving concern. Beautiful people do not just happen."

On this International Awareness Day for Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, we pay tribute to patients and associations that are crossing the desert while struggling to break negative stereotypes towards them and who have decided to make very clear their priorities concerning the disease they suffer. And they wanted to do it through a rigorous scientific study.

According to the Transversal Epidemiological Study on Family, Labour, and Social Impact of these diseases conducted with patients in health centers at national level, people with Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome consider the following factors to be crucial to improve the quality of life of them and their families:

- Recognition of the disease by professionals, institutions, social partners, the general public
- Research for better diagnosis, treatment, and early detection
- Improving healthcare and establishment of unified protocols to ensure equality in the quality and accessibility of resources and services of the Public Health System
- Access to work, working places adaptation, and new forms of employment
- Fair social benefits in the cases when one cannot work

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The patients have distinct needs and priorities. With these priorities, on this International Awareness Day for Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, the sick raise their voice, proclaim their demands, and accept the challenge of being co-responsible for the management and improvement of their diseases.

To do this, they ask to be accepted as partners through Patients' Entities and demand RESPECT, CONSISTENCY, CO-RESPONSIBILITY, QUALITY, and FULL ACCESS TO PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL SYSTEM under the same conditions as any other disease.

The people suffering from Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome want a better life for themselves and their families. It is the responsibility of those who have it. The time for excuses has passed, now it is the time of RESPECT and SOLIDARITY, on one hand, and health and social care, on the other.

