

Commitment to Humanization

In response to the need to emphasize the humanization of healthcare, the Commitment to Hospital Humanization (CHH) was approved by the Ministry of Health in 2019 and endorsed by all hospital bodies within the National Health Service (SNS).

More recently, through the “Action Plan (dated March 27, 2024)” of the National Commission for the Humanization of Healthcare in the SNS (CNHCS-SNS), the Executive Directorate of the SNS has committed to continuing the strategic guidelines of the SNS CHH signed in 2019 and with it expanded its scope to primary health care after adopting the local health unit organizational model across the SNS.

Humanization of healthcare is also an important value in the National Health Plan and the Charter of Patients' Rights and Responsibilities. Therefore, it is critical that SNS healthcare facilities continue to promote and value the humanization of care, particularly in their relationships with the communities they serve, their patients, families and staff, to improve healthcare service interaction and quality provided to improve care.

Humanization foregrounds the individual as a unique human being, and in this sense, “commitment to humanization” emphasizes the human condition in social and professional relationships. It emphasizes principles such as empathy, kindness, warmth, compassion, benevolence, solidarity, hospitality, justice, autonomy, dignity, informed participation, “active listening”, respect for individuality and personal beliefs, and consideration for emotional, psychosocial, cultural, among others spiritual and ethical state of patients, families and staff and their occasional vulnerability and physical and/or mental fragility.

In this context, people are at the centre of care, which is why personalization in communication, greeting, comforting, diagnosis, interaction and treatment is crucial. This is also a fundamental requirement for the quality of services and for strengthening the relationship of trust between patients, families, carers, healthcare professionals (both clinical and non-clinical), volunteers and managers of SNS health facilities.

Based on these premises, the Lisbon Western Local Health Unit (ULSLO) recognizes the importance of a “commitment to humanization” in which it sets out the foundations and principles for promoting, evaluating and strengthening humanized interpersonal, interprofessional, and multidisciplinary practices and relationships with the Aim to develop and consolidate a culture of humanization and well-being in their organizational philosophy.

In this regard, ULSLO prioritizes the provision of high quality, humanized healthcare in scientifically safe conditions, guided by the values and principles set out in its internal regulations. It is the responsibility of its professionals to ensure their applicability and compliance, strictly adhering to the principles enshrined in the ethical and deontological codes that guide their daily work:

- Respect the individual dignity of each patient: ensuring privacy, intimacy, autonomy and respect for the individuality of each patient;
- Provide personalized, clear, honest, understandable and compassionate communication;

- Promote dialogue and reflection: promote transparent communication and the constructive exchange of ideas, opinions and feelings;
- Cultivate Healthy Relationships: Build genuine connections based on trust, empathy, and collaboration;
- Diversity of values: recognizing and respecting cultural, spiritual, ethical, philosophical, socio-economic, gender and other differences (e.g. people with special/sensory needs, people of different nationalities, etc.);
- Promoting a Welcoming Environment (Facilities): Creating a humanized environment with comfortable spaces and appropriate physical conditions that contributes to the well-being of patients, families and staff;
- Invest in ongoing training for staff to be responsive to the rights, needs, expectations, experiences and perceptions of patients and families;
- Invest in the availability of human, material and technological resources, both in quantity and quality, to meet demand.

Together we take care of everyone!

Quality and Safety Committee – Humanization Unit

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