

# Unifying our efforts to dignify medical training and work

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Dear reader,

The Asociación Argentina de Ortopedia y Traumatología (*Argentine Association of Orthopedics and Traumatology* - AAOT) has an academic tradition of more than 86 years in the training of professionals in this specialty in Argentina. However, we are currently facing important changes, especially in terms of dignifying medical work, restoring adequate financial remuneration, and protecting our profession in the face of the increasing prosecution of medicine. For this reason, the Board of Directors that I chair will work together with the Regional Associations, SUTYO, FAAOTEP and the *Agremiación Argentina de Ortopedia y Traumatología (Argentine Orthopedics and Traumatology Trade Association)* to improve agreements with health funders, defend professional interests, and mediate in conflicts between associates.

However, it is important to remember that, to achieve these objectives, the participation of all traumatologists in the country is essential. Therefore, it is essential to identify the problems we face in our daily practice and take steps to solve them. One of the areas where we can make a difference is in the training of new doctors. In 2022, approximately 346 residency positions in Orthopedics and Traumatology were offered in 140 health centers in the country. According to data from the AAOT Residency Committee, Argentina has a higher number of trauma specialists per inhabitant than the average of other countries. In fact, we form one resident for every 131,000 inhabitants per year, while in Uruguay, one is formed for every 315,000 inhabitants; in Colombia, every 678,000; in Ecuador, every 840,000; in France, every 500,000; and, in the United States, every 379,000.

We need to overcome the old misconception that having a large number of residents reduces employment costs and sometimes exposes recent graduates to excessive workloads, administrative work or paramedical activities, leading to a market oversupply of professionals who renounce their labor rights in order to work. In addition, this excess of new professionals leads to a reduction in the practical experience of these doctors, associated with the deficient theoretical training that is observed in many training centers, as reflected in the increasing failure rate in certification exams.

For this reason, we must reflect on whether the current number of vacancies and the quality of the training system are adequate. For this, we will carry out awareness meetings with the heads of services and directors of the country's training programs and we will try to expose this situation to the national and provincial Ministries of Health, Universities, and Medical Colleges to take measures that improve the quality of our professionals.

As of 2022, all specialists certified by the AAOT must be recertified every 5 years to guarantee their constant updating. The AAOT and its committees intend to make available to its members all the educational tools at our disposal through a new Virtual Campus, where members will be able to freely access practical instruction courses, surgical techniques, and contents of courses taught in previous years, as well as orthopedic and trauma guides

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complementary to the Triennial Course and other useful educational content for their training. A basic course for first-year residents will also be created in order to accompany professionals throughout their residency. In addition, courses in critical reading and preparation of scientific papers will continue to be offered to stimulate the presentation of scientific papers and improve the quality of our journal.

To optimize the practical training of professionals, various surgical skill courses and anatomical workshops will be offered at the AAOT Skills Center and in different parts of Argentina. Also, training opportunities will be provided to colleagues from all over the country through transfers and training scholarships in national centers. These and other measures will be implemented soon.

Finally, we will seek to obtain new funds and resources, and optimize those already available through austere and sensible management.

I wish all of you the very best in this new year.

Sincerely,