

## **Brazilian Association for Palliative Care**

The Brazilian Association for Palliative Care was founded in 1997 to promote the scientific and professional link between health professionals who study and practice the disciplines connected with the care of chronic diseases, promote the development of the elements and diffusion of their practices. Brazil is a huge country with more than 180 million inhabitants, 5 regions and 26 states with different cultures, characteristics and contrasts in services in the access to healthcare. Pain is the main symptom that is inadequately controlled. The statistics show that this problem will increase in developing countries as Brazil. In 1997, the hospice and palliative medicine movement was gaining momentum and it was necessary for us to organize a national movement. Thus, the Brazilian Association for Palliative Care was founded. Implementing a multidisciplinary approach and improving professional education and research were necessary to introduce this philosophy of care in our country.

We have a lot of obstacles to access health services and basic healthcare is still a dream. Our reality is changing but we still receive patients with advanced diseases. We need to implement palliative care in a national level with: adoption of an official policy, availability of morphine and increase the level of medical morphine consumption. This requires the physicians and health care team to receive training in pain management and also implement guidelines in palliative care. To achieve this, we have to recognize this neglected public health problem, need commitment to train health workers, ensure availability of opioids, analgesics and provide laws/regulations protecting clinicians and also patients.

In 11 years, we have more than 30 palliative care services, with a multidisciplinary team, services that evolved from pain services. We also have been discussing national or state policies emphasizing the need to alleviate chronic cancer pain and other chronic diseases, drug availability and governmental support/ endorsement. Palliative Care is the essence of medicine. Whether we can cure or not, we can treat the symptoms of illness and offer dignity during these treatments and a peaceful death. As this movement evolves in our country we look forward to working with colleagues from around the world to making this a global movement.

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