



MOTHERHOOD

The hospital is equipped with a dozen incubators and two transport ones

The facilities incorporate cardiotelmetry systems to monitor the pregnant woman

The country's midwives want to start a research group to carry out research

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Coinciding with the recent publication of the Sombra report written by the president of the organization Stop Violències, Vanessa M. Cortés, where it is explicitly stated that Hospital Nostra Senyora de Meritxell «does not have incubators for babies», the midwife representative of the Andorran Health Care Service (SAAS), Cristina Pérez, explained that the hospital is currently equipped with six active devices, which can be converted into almost 12 if



Cristina Pérez

REFERENCE MIDWIFE OF THE SAAS

«We are very well covered, but we would need a reform in the obstetric block to catch up with the trends»

it was necessary. In this sense, she pointed out that «we have some of them unplugged so that they do not generate expenditure, but they are ready». In addition, the facilities also have two transport incubators, in case a newborn needs to be transferred to any Spanish or French clinic.

Regarding the aspects to be improved, Pérez indicated that «I think that we are very well covered at the hospital, the only thing we would need is a bit of reform in the obstetric block to catch up with the trends» and, specifically, when it comes to respecting natural childbirth to the maximum. Along these lines, the reference midwife of the SAAS indicated that «from the point of view of the midwives, we always try to use the minimum possible technicalities and external me-



▶▶ Archive image of the Hospital Nostra Senyora de Meritxell.

chanisms for the birth process», but she also explained that the moment a pregnant woman enters, there are minimum requirements that are required at the patient's health level, such as putting the peripheral line or the venous line or, from time to time, they can listen to the baby with a monitor to observe how the dilation evolves. «From here on, our goal is to respect all the natural procedure as far as possible, according to the parents' preferences to adapt to their requests», she remarked. Currently, cardio fetal telemetry is being installed throughout the hospital, so that from the Emergency Department, the obstetric block, the examination rooms or from wherever it is needed, there is a central screen

Healthcare professionals aim to respect the natural process of childbirth as much as possible

to continuously monitor the pregnant woman, «since it always improves the quality and safety of the patient».

Regarding the improvements that can be extracted from the effort over the years, Pérez reported that, previously, data registration was carried out on paper, and, at present, it has been achieved that the clinical history shared can register and maintain the traceability and security of the users' and babies' data. In addition, the leading midwife assessed that «instead of demanding it year after year», the monitors for controlling the heart rate, movements and contractions of the fetuses are no longer connected with cables, but through vitals

can be monitored by captors, so the woman can shower, walk or have more freedom while the midwives continue to listen to the baby. As for the rooms, the woman can also be with her partner or companion at all times from the birth of the child, with the aim of separating them as little as possible. Therefore, pediatrician visits, baths and tests are done in the rooms.

Finally, the midwives want to create a research group to be able to investigate in Andorra and, for example, observe «the incidence of smoking mothers on premature births», explained Pérez, while assuring that «we have always had the support of the «University of Andorra for any study we want to do». ≡

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NATIONAL INSURANCE

The elderly warn that the Government has removed pharmacy from the third payer

The regulation that deploys the proposal approved by the Council adds medical procedures but excludes medicines

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The elderly are angry. The reason? The withdrawal of prescription pharmaceutical products from the implementation of the third payer (paying 25% instead of paying 100% and then receiving 75% from the CASS), as provided for in the regulation that the Government is preparing to comply with the 'approval of the proposed agreement of the Social Democratic Party (PS), last June 30th in the General Council, which must enter into force from next September.

The measure approved in parliament provided for the expansion of the third-party payer regime for diagnostic, radiological and prescription pharmaceutical tests, as well as for those medical visits derived from the referring doctor. The Government, which had two months to make it effective, would have added other medical acts, but it would have brought down the pharmacy due to a computer problem with the electronic prescription, as the Executive would have argued to the collective.

«It is very sad that a measure that is essential for the elderly is being delayed due to a computer problem, bearing in mind that it is the greatest concern of this group and that the General Council just approved it a few days ago», lamented Jacint Risco, representative of pensioners on the board of directors of Caixa Andorrana de Seguretat Social (CASS). Of course, «on the one hand we are happy, since more coverage is coming in, but on the other hand not, so we call for reflection, because transitory solutions could be taken into account», asked Risco.

Precisely the representative of the pensioners in the CASS explained that in the plan to rationalize the expenditure that the parapublic made, it included the implementation of the third payer as another expenditure, although according to him this is not the case. Despite this, he approved the third universal payer, but the position of the CASS «is not binding», he specified. The president of the Federation of the Elderly of the Principality of Andorra



►► Jacint Risco and Fèlix Zapatero, at a press conference.

The federation asks the Executive to reflect, and consider transitory solutions or a pilot test

(Fggpa), Fèlix Zapatero, for his part, assured that the third payer «does not represent an added expense, it is even more agile and a benefit for the population as a whole». In this sense, he proposed to the Government that they do a pilot test for a limited time and then make a decision with more knowledge of the cause.

Zapatero began his intervention in front of the media by charging against the new Minister of Health, Albert Font, who replaced the previous incumbent, Joan Martínez Benazet, months ago, after leaving the presidency of the CASS. «Some rumors that reach us point out that the new minister is not too much in favor of the third payer and that is why the process is slowing down, so

we are very busy because it is getting longer», he emphasized. He also regretted that other proposals from his group had not been attended to either. «The minister made a commitment and in the meantime they have been giving us excuses», added Jacint Risco.

On the possibility that the College of Pharmacists could have influenced the Government's decision in some way, the group of elderly people did not want to say anything, but recalled, in the words of Robert Pastor, member of the board of the FGGPA, that «the pharmacies charge the citizen on the spot, while the CASS does not pay them this amount until the end of the month», he specified. «We don't know if there has been



Fèlix Zapatero

PRESIDENT OF THE FGGPA

«There are rumors that the new minister is not too partisan and that is why the process is slowing down and getting longer; we are very busy»

Jacint Risco

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PENSIONERS IN THE CASS

«It is very sad that due to a computer problem a measure is delayed that is essential for the godparents»

lobbying by pharmacists, but what we do know is that the pharmacy is the most important expense for the elderly,» reiterated Risco. Pastor also recalled that the average pension in Andorra was currently 650 euros and that, on the other hand, the minimum wage already reached 1,200 euros. «This is the drama that the collective is currently suffering», he replied.

Finally, the president of the Fggpa warned that it will be necessary to pay attention to the entire content of the new regulation approved by the Executive; specifically, «the devil of the fine print», since «despite the fact that there are more medical acts that are included in the measure, we will have to see if there is any limitation that we have overlooked», he said. ≡

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