

THE DISEASE WITH A THOUSAND FACES

Risco: "People hide this disease for fear of losing their jobs"

TRANA demands the creation of a specialized unit to treat neurodegenerative diseases

ELENA HERNÁNDEZ MOLINA
ANDORRA LA VELLA

In the framework of World Multiple Sclerosis Day, the president of the TRANA association, Jacint Risco, denounces that many affected people live with the disease in silence for fear of being fired. "People hide the disease", he states forcefully. According to him, the current legislation does not allow the disability pension to be compatible with a work activity, which forces many people to choose between economic support or staying active. "In Spain, for example, under the control of occupational doctors, a major disability does not prevent you from continuing to do something productive".

Another of TRANA's key demands is the creation of a neurological unit in the country's hospital. "Not only for multiple sclerosis, but also for Alzheimer's and other neurodegenerative diseases. This unit could become one of the strengths of the hospital system", defends Risco. At the same time, he denounces the long waiting lists and considers that referrals outside the country "are not the most appropriate". The lack of resources is also evident in the field of mental health. "If psychologists or neuropsychologists had accompanied me when I was diagnosed, I would have had a much better time", laments Risco,



The association demands more institutional support and legal changes to make work and social benefits compatible.

who highlights the emotional impact of the disease. "When you are diagnosed, you are completely lost. That is why we offer neuropsychological visits: we know how important it is".

Another critical point is the lack of coordination between administrations. "Even today, Social Security and the Ministry of Social Affairs are not connected. If a person is accepting their diagnosis and, in addition, suffers from a neurocognitive impairment, they cannot have to deal with all the bureaucracy alone. In a small country like ours, this should be easy", he



Jacint Risco

PRESIDENT OF TRANA

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complains. Along these lines, he makes a direct appeal to institutions: "What we are asking for is more resources to be able to offer people with sclerosis what they really need: quality of life, support and dignity". From his personal experience, Risco explains that he has been living with the disease since he was 35 and he is now 63. "Since the first outbreak, I don't know if I have my right leg. I can't feel it", he says. He also criticizes the ineffectiveness of some treatments: "After 20 years of taking medication, a doctor told me that it hadn't been useless". ●

FROM THE SCAR TO THE SYMBOL

ADJRA and Jose Ángel Diz offer a path of emotional transformation

A project that is committed to the vital reconstruction of people who have overcome difficult moments

ELENA HERNÁNDEZ MOLINA
ESCALDES-ENGORDANY

Sometimes we are ready to start a new stage without having completely closed the previous one. This overlapping of paths can lead to a turning point that invites reflection and change. This is precisely the philosophy that underlies the agreement recently signed between the Association for the Defense of Youth at Risk of Self-Injury (ADJRA) and tattoo artist Jose Ángel Diz.

"The goal is to offer a symbolic and positive way to close a difficult chapter," said Diz, who will collaborate with the organization by offering free tattoos to people who have overcome episodes of self-harm. "I think it is very beautiful to have the ability to cover with something aesthetic what you did to yourself. It is a way to start over," added the professional.

The president of ADJRA, Sandra Cano, stressed that the project was born with the desire to combat the stigma associated



Moment of the signing between ADJRA and tattoo artist Jose Ángel Diz.

with both marks derived from self-harm and tattoos. "When you see a scar from an accident, nothing happens, but if it is the result of a complicated emotional moment, it is perceived as something dark," Cano pointed out. "With this agreement we want to break taboos and offer

recognition to those who have completed a healing process," she added.

Cano has pointed out that the procedure will be subject to strict criteria: "They must have a therapeutic discharge, be of legal age and the tattoo must be small". She has also empha-



JOSE ÁNGEL DIZ
TATTOO ARTIST

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PRESIDENT OF THE ADJRA

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sized that Diz is participating in an altruistic way. "It is a gesture that says a lot about his desire to contribute socially", she has emphasized.

For his part, the tattoo artist has explained that his involvement is based on a personal motivation. "I have a 16-year-old son and two nieces of the same age. I only think about how I can help them", he has expressed. It is worth noting that the signing of the agreement has coincided with the presentation of Diz's first book, 'Propòsit de vida: Tatuar', an autobiographical work in which he recounts his personal and professional career. The author has announced that he will allocate one euro from each copy sold to ADJRA as a sign of commitment to his work. ●

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(+376) 353 424 / (+376) 379 769

(+376) 747 747

laportella@andorra.ad

Casa Nova Olivet 10 · Ordino

www.laportella.ad

