

Messages on family and community medicine and primary care directed at family doctors, residents, medical students and health and education managers

Mensagens sobre a Medicina de Família e Comunidade e a Atenção Primária à Saúde dirigida a Médicas e Médicos de Família e Comunidade, residentes, estudantes de Medicina, gestores e gestoras de saúde e educação

Mensajes sobre Medicina Familiar y Comunitaria y Atención Primaria de Salud dirigidos a Médicos y Médicas Familiares, residentes, estudiantes de medicina, gerentes y de salud y educación

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In the commemorative year of 40 years of the Brazilian Society of Family and Community Medicine (SBMFC) and 45 years of Family and Community Medicine (FCM) as a specialty in Brazil, this article, in the form of interviews, provides messages from guests and professionals who represent the past, present and future history of FCM and SBMFC here¹. They are professionals who relate to the history of these 40/45 years, considering some of their roles in FCM and SBMFC in that period. Their relations with FCM and SBMFC can be read in the Editorial of this commemorative issue. Messages about FCM and primary health care (PHC) are directed at FCM residents, family and community doctors, doctors working in PHC, medical students, health and education managers and the general population.

¹References and brief history of the authors can be read in the Editorial.

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RBMFC: Considering the historic moment of commemorating 45/40 years of FCM in Brazil and of SBMFC, leave a message for the specialists in FCM, for the residents of FCM and for the doctors and doctors working in PHC.

Ricardo Donato Rodrigues: Strong FCM and PHC/Family Health Strategy (ESF) are the path to consolidating health systems consistent with the “Health for All” goal. Being FCM “makes all the difference” in the lives of people, families and communities, as well as in environmental health, with special importance in the current scenario, in this Brazil with so many inequalities.

João Werner Falk: Time has taught me that it is necessary to always continue working with quality, resilience, patience and persistence. Believe in your dreams, because the search to make them come true makes a difference in transforming reality for the benefit of the population.

Airton Tetelbom Stein: The FCM career opens up many horizons and makes it possible, in fact, to contribute to making society more inclusive, with less inequality. There was a great development of the specialty in Brazil.

Maria Inez Padula Anderson: FCM is a complex, unique and passionate specialty. We have the privilege — and, at the same time, the responsibility — to advocate for the most adequate and necessary health services for people, families and communities, as we are living witnesses of their health and illness stories, in the context of life in which they occur. We are witnesses of the quality of life they have, the social and economic conditions, the daily sufferings, the violence in their personal, family and society lives, the set of factors that affect and make sick those we care for. Therefore, FCM makes sense and changes for the better our way of being doctors; it changes for the better our vision and the way we are in the world. Those on the path of PHC and FCM know that the road is long and bumpy, but it brings many rewards and compensation. If we do our job well, we will surely be, as therapeutic allies, present forever in the minds and hearts of those we care for. We know that it is not simple to be an FCM physician in Brazil. It is necessary to be aware that one must resist and not give up. And “hope”, as Paulo Freire teaches us — which is not waiting, but making it happen. The path is made by walking and utopia is not a blind spot — on the contrary, it is what makes us move forward, as mentioned by Eduardo Galeano. Strengthen SBMFC! And if not yet so, become a member!

Gustavo Gusso: Better to get it right by approximation than to get it wrong with precision (Kerr White).

Nulvio Lermen: FCM plays a prominent role in the health system. As a resource for a population, it must have clinical quality as its main focus, ensuring resolvability for its patients. Thus, FCM as a specialty will be increasingly valued and, consequently, you will also be experts in the field.

Thiago Trindade: Be persistent in your mission to care for people. Society in general can only be grateful for the work of each one of you, who make a difference for the families you serve. Count on SBMFC and state entities, seek out your entity and get involved in the development of our specialty in Brazil.

Daniel Knupp: FCM is certainly the most virtuous of the medical specialties. Today, it is possibly the main bastion of ethics and humanistic values that have been lost in Medicine in general. Recognize yourself as an FCM doctor, defend and exercise your principles, wherever you are practicing.

Zeliete Zambon: Look at yourself as an important healthcare professional. We are people’s health manager.

Ana Clara Arantes Gonçalves and Geferson Pelegrini for Resident Directory: FCM faces many challenges in working in the PHC context, but despite them, it is worth investing in constant improvement, because it is with good family medicine practice that the primary level of care will be increasingly recognized and valued.

RBMFC: Considering the historic moment of commemorating 45/40 years of FCM in Brazil and SBMFC, leave a message about FCM and PHC for medical students.

Ricardo Donato Rodrigues: FCM is a passionate specialty. It comes with this impetus, that learning in this field is essential to the training of every doctor.

João Werner Falk: Study a lot about what FCM and PHC are, understand their importance and value them. Participate in FCM academic leagues in your medical schools.

Airton Tetelbom Stein: Those who go to perform this specialty should know that they will be seeking an increasingly stronger SUS and will also seek to understand the cause of the causes, as well as contribute so that we have a society with less inequity.

Maria Inez Padula Anderson: FCM is an important specialty and area of knowledge for each and every undergraduate, even those who will not pursue the specialty as a graduate. It expands our understanding of the disease process, helps with medication adherence, and supports and encourages the bond with patients, while promoting their autonomy.

Gustavo Gusso: Try to focus on the concepts and study the basics and the main authors such as Barbara Starfield and Ian McWhinney. Be careful not to confuse it with preventive medicine, which is another area.

Nulvio Lermen: FCM is the specialty that offers the greatest opportunity to act on different fronts. The FCM has been increasingly valued in the clinic, teaching and management of health services. On any of these fronts, training in the area will be a great differential for your professional success.

Thiago Trindade: Believe in FCM as a specialty possibility. You will be delighted with the work, you will feel strong bonding relationships with your patients on a daily basis. At graduation, take advantage of your family medical professors to learn and get to know our specialty in its essence. FCM is a past, present and future specialty. We need more people who want to be FCM doctors. This is the country's need today and always.

Daniel Knupp: FCM is the only medical specialty that allows full professional development in the field of medicine. It is the essence of being a doctor, of being able to interact with people and populations in general. The practice as FCM is in itself a defense of equity and social justice. If these values make sense to you, don't think twice about choosing your specialty.

Zeliete Zambon: For me there are four fundamental disciplines to be a good doctor: biochemistry, anatomy, physiology and PHC. If you know these four, you can be a good doctor in any specialty. Being an FCM doctor also implies having other skills, one of the main ones being enjoying taking care of people. The importance of FCM in this new medicine will be vital.

Ana Clara Arantes Gonçalves and Geferson Pelegrini for Resident Directory of SBMFC: Always be open-minded and open-hearted to what FCM practice can offer, as it challenges your abilities as future physicians and can influence your practice on a permanent basis, no matter which specialty you choose to pursue.

Priscila Ferraz Bortolini for Brazilian Association of Family Health Academic Leagues (ALASF): There is a maxim in the faculty that we should be super-specialists, that we should focus on a single part of the patient's body and resolve that point. Having contact with FCM as an undergraduate forms critical thinking in relation to society and ourselves. "What kind of professional do I want to be?" This question surrounds us and, when we realize that comprehensive care changes a person's life, we begin to see FCM with new eyes, which gives us encouragement to follow this path.

RBMFC: Considering the historic moment of commemorating 45/40 years of FCM in Brazil and SBMFC, leave a message about FCM and PHC for health and education managers.

Ricardo Donato Rodrigues: The health production process — like what happens in education — is different, as it does not occur without the effective participation of professionals, people, their families and their respective communities. This notion is fundamental with regard to FCM and PHC; it transcends figures and quantitative data. This complexity refers to a participatory management model that every manager must treat with wisdom and very special care.

João Werner Falk: Become well informed about what FCM and PHC are, stay up-to-date about it, get to know the SBMFC and respect PHC professionals. Be responsible for producing more health for the population.

Airton Tetelbom Stein: Coordination of care, comprehensiveness of care and access to the most priority demands of patients will only be effective and addressed if the health system – public or private – incorporates FCM in the work of the front line.

Maria Inez Padula Anderson: Bet on and invest in FCM! Bet on and invest in quality PHC! Bet on and invest in the ESF! You will reap results, even in the short term, and you will be valued for it. The population will know how to recognize it.

Gustavo Gusso: It is essential to integrate PHC projects with the existing network and create a secondary care policy (referenced network).

Nulvio Lermen: PHC is the foundation of any successful health care system, as it adds clinical quality and cost-effectiveness to the system. FCM is the medical specialty formatted to work in PHC and has the potential to increase the added value of any health system.

Thiago Trindade: Support, at all times, the training processes of family doctors. Search for your FCM health care systems to qualify you. Seek to expand PHC funding and aim to offer quality PHC to 100% of its population.

Daniel Knupp: Appreciate FCM! FCM is critical for a strong PHC and therefore for health systems. It is only possible to carry out the necessary changes in the current paradigm in health from the perspective brought by FCM.

Zeliete Zambon: You may not even want to, may be not give it importance, but you will not be able to manage in good health without valuing the role of the FCM doctor and having PHC as the main level of health care.

Ana Clara Arantes Gonçalves and Geferson Pelegrini for Resident Directory: Valuing the work of FCM doctors and residents may seem like a step backwards at first, when thinking only about care demand and compared to the traditional way in which care usually takes place when PHC professionals are not specialists in family medicine. But, in their localities, investing in quality FCM and PHC is to provide health care that will result in a population with more health and more self-esteem, which will undoubtedly receive the best care possible.

RBMFC: Considering the historic moment of commemorating 45/40 years of FCM in Brazil and SBMFC, leave a message about FCM and PHC for the population.

Ricardo Donato Rodrigues: Health is everyone's right. Desire an FCM to call your own.

João Werner Falk: Value the SUS, the Basic Health Units and the ESF and have an FCM they can call their own.

Airton Tetelbom Stein: If you want to live in a more inclusive society, with more equity and clinical competence and that values human rights, demand that your mayor hire and value FCM doctors.

Maria Inez Padula Anderson: Do you already have an FCM doctor to call yours? Not yet? Know that in countries that have the most advanced health systems in the world, this specialty and quality primary care are valued. You deserve to have that kind of health care. Help us to make this specialty and PHC grow and be valued in Brazil. The ESF is an internationally recognized and valued care model. It is an advanced PHC model. We will encourage municipal governments to seek its implementation and development! And always remember: value the SUS! Be wary of those who want to privatize health. Health is not a commodity, it cannot be bought or sold.

Gustavo Gusso: It pays to have links with general practitioners. Invest in this idea.

Nulvio Lermen: The FCM doctor will accompany you at every step of your history. Having PHC as the basis of a health system will give you the opportunity to have this professional within your reach and will guarantee you greater access to services and better health care for you, your family and your community.

Thiago Trindade: Trust and defend the presence of primary care teams for your communities, with the family doctor making up these teams. It is essential that communities get involved in this demand and put pressure on their public managers to offer quality family health with FCM for their families. Have an FCM doctor to call your own.

Daniel Knupp: Do you already have an FCM doctor to call your own? If not, stay tuned. Your health could be at risk. Always look for an FCM doctor you can trust to take care of you.

Zeliete Zambon: PHC was not created so that you would not have access to health care, quite the opposite. The FCM professional wants to be with you to help you manage your health.

Ana Clara Arantes Gonçalves and Geferson Pelegrini for Resident Directory: Find out which health center is in your neighborhood, join the local Health Council and fight for it to have an FCM doctor that takes care of you and for a free, universal and quality SUS!

Final comments of some of the interviewees:

Ricardo Donato Rodrigues: I appreciate the opportunity. I was proud to be consulted. Listening is one of the virtues of good management.

Thiago Trindade: Long live FCM!

Zeliete Zambon: FCM is, together with genetics, the specialty that will grow the most in the coming years and will bring the vision of personalized and precision medicine accessible to everyone.