

# Educación Médica

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## *editorial*

This issue of the journal *Educación Médica* features all of the presentations made at the 11<sup>th</sup> **Internacional Ottawa Conference on Medical Education**, one of the most prestigious conferences on Medical Education (*Educación en Ciencias de la Salud*) in the world. This year's edition will be held in Barcelona from 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> July 2004.

Modern Medical Education, which as a discipline surfaced almost a century ago at the time of the Flexnerian revolution in the United States, have tended to favour a more interdisciplinary concept. Therefore, what is broadly classed as Medical Education should embrace all health professionals in 21st century who should, moreover, endeavour to work towards a common goal. This fact has not been ignored by the Ottawa conferences, which is clearly reflected in the almost 1,000 papers that have been included in this issue.

As can be observed, subjects that are of most concern to professionals involved in the world of health education are discussed here. Starting with the enormous contributions made by communication technologies to the learning process, moving on to the internal debate opened between professionals to redefine their role or the new challenges faced by staff and student bodies are just some of the aspects that have aroused interest in the light of contributions made and subsequently applied. There is a special section in this issue of *Educación Médica* on the research carried out by the BEME. The research carried out in the field of education is just as valuable as that done in other areas of bio-sanitary knowledge. By applying standardised scientific methods to new ideas, competent professionals in the world of research should be able to obtain the resources

necessary to carry out projects that contribute to improved teaching and learning methods in the future in all branches of the health sciences. The section devoted to the assessment and accreditation of health professionals, which was the original idea behind the Ottawa conferences, still has a predominant role although it now features many other facets related to education. The present needs of society, which have completely changed over the last few years, now require that professionals who go through the educational system should subsequently lend their services to that same system. Therefore, bringing the education and health services together is a real challenge in this century. Reforms in education systems and their implications have become a subject of great interest, as can be appreciated by the contributions submitted at this conference.

Great care has been taken to ensure that the contributions contained in this issue are a faithful reflection of this conference, whose goal is to foster the discussion of such highly relevant subject matter in the four corners of the world. This is especially true in this new world in which globalisation means that, excepting very local peculiarities, educators are duty-bound to ensure that their teachings are essentially the same on the five continents.

It is our sincere wish that these contributions, which appear in summarised form, have a significant effect on the advancement of knowledge in an area in the educational and medical sciences that is ever increasing.

*Ramon Pujol-Farriols. Conference Chairman*  
*Josep M<sup>a</sup> Martinez-Carretero.*  
*Chairman of the Organising Committee*  
*Carlos Brailovsky. Chairman of the Scientific Committee*