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Europa Donna Italy provides guidelines for voluntary associations working in breast centres

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«A common platform for a proper understanding of the interaction system and knowledge between voluntary associations operating in breast centres, specialists of breast centre, political and territorial authorities involved in the healthcare system and women»: this is the main goal of the **new guidelines** ("The Voluntary Associations within the **Multidisciplinary Breast Care Centers**") promoted by **Europa Donna** Italy, the movement created over 20 years ago by Italian late oncologist Umberto Veronesi with the support of the European School of Oncology (ESO). «Only knowledge, reliability and transparency can help to build solid foundations among all actors in order to promote the best possible care for woman and a support network for patient and her family» continues the paper, coauthored by Europa Donna Italy President Rosanna D'Antona with, among others, the director of the breast unit of Milan's Humanitas University Hospital, Corrado Tinterri.



Before going into the details, the multidisciplinary group identifies several basic elements that can encourage a trusted and transparent relationship between volunteers, patients professionals working in a breast centre:

- a formal constitutive act, in accordance with national regulations of the own Country of origin;
- a statute, that contains all the rules regulating the life of the association: the purposes pursued and the activities that can be carried out, the constituent elements of the voluntary association itself (association bodies, the role of associates and responsibilities), the ways of fundraising and dissolution;
- an assessment of sustainability, even economic, compared to the activities carried out annually;
- an ethical code and a mission, known and accessible to all volunteers.



Furthermore, the authors recommend to seek peer-to-peer consultancy and cooperation, which are effective only acting in a networked environment: «To affect at national / regional level, the single voluntary association should adhere to wider network, Advocacy, with the ultimate aim of contributing to the development of healthcare institutions that ensure all women: prevention and adequate information to gain access to prevention; qualified and accessible early diagnosis programs; effective, personalized care, respectful of women's integrity and ensuring the best possible quality of life; assistance throughout the entire course of the disease within breast centres according to the European recommendations adopted by individual States; access to rehabilitation services, which can promote psycho-physical recovery and reintegration into the own daily and working context».

«The application of minimum organizational and transparency requirements set out in Europa Donna guidelines promotes the voluntary association and amplifies the positive impact for women, breast center professionals and institutions that have to meet the needs of women suffering from breast cancer» conclude the authors. «The document in the integral form (available for download in pdf) may be: adopted in partial or full form. If followed in full form, it may be subject to certification and / or monitoring on a voluntary basis by Voluntary Associations; used as source of inspiration for the organization of the individual Association and / or for organizing a Network with shared principles; used as a tool for presenting the association to a breast centre, governmental structures and health policies, etcetera».



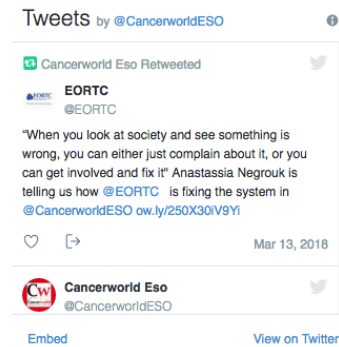
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