

Writing the editorial to this issue of the journal is particularly gratifying!

At the end of four years working on the project that is now a consolidated reality – the journal “Medicina Interna” – it is with great enthusiasm that I highlight the publication of two articles that support the ideals for which we strive, in the creation of this journal.

The publication of the work supervised by Dr. Jorge Crespo, the original article “Doença de Behçet – Casuística Nacional” (Behçet’s Disease – National Casuistic) deserves an initial and special mention. Behçet’s Disease is a well-known disease among internists, but until now, in Portugal, there has been no clinical and epidemiological study with the breadth and depth of the one presented here, and which will certainly become a reference. I would like to emphasize that this study is not limited to investigation of the clinical data, but evaluates the class I antigens in a significant number of patients that could be correlated with the normal population, furthering our knowledge of the phenotypical characteristics of the Portuguese population affected by this disease, and the relative risk of healthy carriers of HLA B5 and CREG B5 becoming infected by it.

But the publication of this article, besides its scientific importance, reinforces some of our convictions regarding the responsibilities of the internist, namely:

a) that internists have a role in bringing together clinical experience, and promoting scientific work in our area;

b) that internists should assume their role of coordinating and linking the various branches of knowledge/specialties around a common cause – a disease or group of diseases.

c) that it is possible to establish protocols for cooperation/investigation between multiple centers, which is the only way to achieve a number of cases that will enable scientifically valid works to be carried out, and thereby enrich the collective knowledge;

d) that it is possible to carry out, in our midst and with our working conditions, works with a high level of scientific rigor, particularly epidemiological, which in turn, constitute a solid basis for new works;

e) that with rigor and firmness it is possible for the study centers of our society, in this case the Center for Study on Autoimmune Diseases - through the



Behçet Disease Study Group – to present projects, carry out works and publish results, thereby making an unparalleled contribution to furthering scientific knowledge of our reality.

The second article to deserve a mention, “Quality Assessment in Intensive Care Medicine”, puts in new terms a question that always has always concerned internists; a theme they have always been interested in, but which should be addressed with a new rigor and a new methodology – one that is now being built, and for which internists can and should make decisive contributions for their strategic positioning in the hospital.

Are we capable of evaluating and improving the quality of our practices in order to better serve those who depend on us, and to question those practices that prove not to be useful for them? This is a new challenge that we must take up!

“Doing the right things right”. ■

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Faustino Ferreira".

Faustino Ferreira