

Beyond the Protocol: Toward an Ethics of Compassionate care in the Training of emergency Hospital Residents

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ABSTRACT

The training of residents in hospital emergency departments faces a persistent tension between the technical rationality imposed by protocol and the human dimension of the medical act. This article addresses this tension from an educational and bioethical perspective, assuming that emergencies demand not only speed, efficiency, or regulatory compliance; they also require an ethical sensitivity capable of recognizing the vulnerability of the other. The purpose of this study is to interpret, in light of contemporary pedagogy and the ethics of care, the theoretical foundations that allow us to envision a residency training oriented toward compassionate care, beyond the mechanical adherence to algorithms. The methodology employed is documentary-hermeneutic, within the interpretive paradigm, with analysis and critical interpretation of specialized sources in bioethics, medical education, and the philosophy of care. The findings show that the protocol, while indispensable, is insufficient when it is detached from a pedagogy grounded in virtue, ethical presence, and shared responsibility for the patient's suffering. In this way, compassionate care does not oppose the protocol; it humanizes it, redefines it, and endows it with pedagogical depth. It is concluded that the training of emergency medicine residents requires a hermeneutical shift toward an explicit hidden curriculum, where compassion is cultivated as a substantive ethical-professional competency.

Keywords: Ethics of care, medical training, emergency medicine residents, hospital pedagogy, compassion, hermeneutics.

Biographical Sketch: Medical graduate from the University of Carabobo and lawyer graduate from the Rómulo Gallegos University with medical specializations in Comprehensive General Medicine, Public Health Management, Hospital Management, and Epidemiology, and a specialization in Criminal and Criminological Law. She also holds a specialization in University Teaching from UNERG and is awaiting the defense of her doctoral dissertation in Educational Sciences from UNELLEZ. Currently, she is an attending physician in the Nephrology Service at HPAO and a university professor at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels at UNERG and UBV.