



Expatriate Ostomates of Spain (EOS)

Information Service

Working for ostomates in Spain



SPAIN - COUNTRY REPORT

Statistics: The Incidence of Ostomates in Spain

Out of a population of approximately 47 million, it is estimated that there are some 70.500 ostomates (ie. 0.15%).

The requirement for ostomy surgery can affect any person at any time in life - even babies. For statistical estimations at least, if a 20-year old has had twice as many chances of it as a 10-year old, then we can weight the likely percentages of ostomates according to the age profile of the population:

0 - 15 yrs:	2.100	patients	nationally.
16 - 44 yrs:	22.600	"	"
45 - 64 yrs:	24.000	"	"
65 and over:	22.000	"	"

Considering just the expatriate population that stands at 2.579.000 or 5.5% of the total, it is helpful to divide them between the workers in the cities and countryside, and the retirees on the costas (the coastal regions) - because the age profiles are very different.

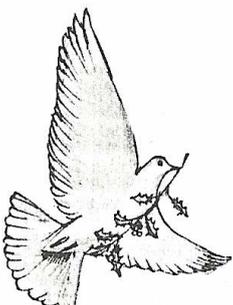
Cities and inland: 1.470.000 total (weighted according to age profile)

0 - 15 yrs	=	63	patients.
16 - 44 yrs	=	1.054	"
45 - 64 yrs	=	520	"
65 and over	=	116	"

Costas: 1.109.000 total

0 - 15 yrs	=	36	patients.
16 - 44 yrs	=	506	"
45 - 64 yrs	=	628	"
65 and over	=	581	"

Which is why the Spanish associations are all city-based while EOS is kept busy here in the remote but touristic port of Jávea.



Tel and HELPLINE: (+34) 96 646 0063

Mailing address: EOS, Apartado de Correos 336,

03730 Jávea (Alicante), Spain. E-mail: eostext@gmail.com

Organisation

The Federation of the ostomy associations in Spain (Federación Española de Asociaciones de Ostomizados - FEDAO) was founded in 2006 in Madrid, and was initially active in representing us to the Ministries etc., but sadly, this no longer so. It exists now in name only to provide a listing of its member associations in the Regions. There are ten associations believed to be active in their localities and whose contact details may be found on the FEDAO website.

By far the largest and most successful of the Spanish associations is the Bilbao-based ARGIA who celebrated their 25th anniversary in 2012. Argia's original president, Dr Bienvenido Sánchez was responsible for the only important publication on ostomy in Spain - the Bilbao Manifesto - presented at the last major Congress in 2005. AOMA in Madrid and EOS in Jávea have put on useful events mainly to mark the triennial World Ostomy Days. Apart from the publicity distributed by the associations, the IOA/EOA Charter of Ostomates Rights is not well promoted or recognised.

While there is no discrimination against ostomates generally, the Spanish greatly prefer to hide rather than celebrate their life-giving condition, and are mostly known only within their families. Support and participation in representative organisations is therefore insufficient for their effectiveness.

Product supplies

There is no local manufacture of ostomy products. Imports are from four principal suppliers - ConVatec, Coloplast, Hollister (which represents Dansac - whose products are not available here) and Braun. Some Welland products are also available.

The chain of supply is from the importer agency to regional warehouses which, in turn, supply the pharmacies on the latter's order. The pharmacies enjoy a monopoly on the retailing of ostomy products: they carry only minimal stocks and rely generally on obtaining their customer's prescribed requirements via their daily delivery arrangements with the warehouses.

Social Security

Spain, fortunately, has a comprehensive contributory social security system and health service with major hospitals in all provinces and busy clinics in most towns. All Spanish and legally-resident expatriates have free access through their allocated doctors. The rules for obtaining medical prescriptions have changed from time to time during this period of economic recession but, at present, they are in the form of a detailed personal schedule obtained from the doctor and fulfilled by the pharmacy on the due dates and for a small charge. Prescription charges are at 10% of cost but subject to an upper limit for each item (currently €4,20) and to an overall personal monthly cuota which may be either €8 or €18 according to income status: beyond that cuota, prescribed medical supplies are dispensed free of charge. The pharmacies often provide an excellent complementary advisory service: some have laboratory facilities, and can thus rapidly provide analysis results which are normally accepted by the Health Service.

Ostomy products available on prescription have a national Code Number and are limited to the required pouches or other necessary equipment: skin care is not provided for and must be purchased at full cost over the pharmacy counter. General Practitioners do not normally have the necessary Code details and may rely on their patients to supply these. The associations can assist

their members with this information, subject to the patient's own scant knowledge of their own condition and of the options available to them.

Ostomy surgery is carried out at most major hospitals, generally with expertise and care. The system may be criticised, however, in the poor availability of after-care. Very often patients are discharged from hospital prematurely, with little understanding of the essentials of stoma management and of the means of procurement of supplies. Qualified stoma therapist nurses (ETs) are available in some hospitals but in some regions they are very sparsely distributed. The representative national professional body for ETs lists a membership of only about 25.

Cynthia Robinson April 2014