

Champalimaud Clinical Center Fellowship

Champalimaud Clinical Center is a state-of-the-art medical facility, famous for both its architecture and location. The world's most popular architectural website, Archdaily, describes it in an article as follows:

"Charles Correa Associates designed this research and diagnostic center located in Lisbon.

The site, where the river Tagus meets the Atlantic Ocean, is steeped in history. Here Henry the Navigator, Vasco de Gama and other great Portuguese left on their journeys into the unknown – a perfect metaphor for the discoveries of contemporary science today.

Correa tried to create a piece of architecture. Architecture as Sculpture. Architecture as Beauty. Beauty as therapy. "¹



Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Ligia Szocs, I am a nurse from Cluj-Napoca, Romania. For the past nine years I've been working in the field of oncology, where I've also had experience with clinical trials.

Between April 24 - May 24 2023, I participated in the observership/fellowship programme organized by ESO-EONS, hosted by the above-mentioned Champalimaud Clinical Center in Lisbon, Portugal. The purpose of my participation was to broaden my perspective regarding the field of oncological nursing by directly observing the activity of a world renowned European medical institution.

1. <https://www.archdaily.com/140623/champalimaud-centre-for-the-unknown-charles-correa-associates>



My goals were to validate my own knowledge, enhance my own way of working and to observe various day-to-day aspects: the administration of chemotherapy, the organization of the chemotherapy department, the management of chemotherapy toxicities and, in general, the nurse's role in the entire process.

The most notable aspects discovered here have been the level of organization, the approach to integrating technology in internal processes and the emphasis on training staff members and informing patients.

The impressive facilities dedicated to research and scientific communication are a particularly remarkable aspect of the clinic's organization: laboratories, a dedicated conference building and an outdoor amphitheater.

Great emphasis is also put on ambiance, the architecture itself being complemented by an indoor tropical garden. The area between and around the two main buildings is organized as a promenade with interestingly framed views of the garden and the ocean.

The level of integration of electronically automated equipment and processes in the medical activity is just as impressive: transportation of treatments using autonomous robots, appointments preloaded onto dedicated mobile phones lent to patients and so on. This technology serves to aid the staff and complements the well-equipped and well-organized space of the departments.



As a nurse, I especially appreciated their culture regarding continuous development of staff members through clear protocols, internal conferences and dedicated informative materials. I was also impressed by their rigorous processes for informing patients about treatments and toxicities and for tracking their wellbeing through follow-up calls.



I had the privilege of working with a professional nursing team, whose members were also involved in continuous development activities such as participating in (and holding) presentations during internal conferences. The clinic helped keep the team informed and up-to-date on relevant topics by providing internal materials like well-organized protocols, oncological practice guides, medical magazines and informative posters.

I believe this experience has fulfilled its stated purpose. I am very grateful to the Champalimaud clinic and its staff for allowing me spend this with them, however short it was, and I want to thank ESO-EONS for sponsoring this experience. I encourage nurses to deliberately seek out these opportunities.