

## MY EXPERIENCE AT CHAMPALIMAUD CLINICAL CENTRE

Champalimaud Clinical Centre is located in a really beautiful place. In Lisbon, at the mouth of the River Tagus, almost already reaching the Atlantic Ocean. This building has been able to integrate the exterior into the interior of the hospital. It has such a luminosity and nice exterior views that it makes you think that the treatment of oncology patients starts with the eyes and the pleasant feeling that produces its warm and relaxing atmosphere. On top of this, you find a staff that is absolutely dedicated to the user's attention—with courtesy, kindness and professionalism.



My name is Nieves Gil and I am an oncology nurse with extensive clinical experience in the treatment of cancer patients. I think that in oncology it is essential to have a solid knowledge base. Besides that, continuous education and training are very important, both for the new treatments when it comes to fighting cancer with pharmacology, and for the evolution of our profession as cancer nurses. We are linked to a specialty that every day becomes more demanding in the emotional and the social sides. Every day patients are more informed and more aware of what it means to be diagnosed with cancer. Cancer nurses have to accept this challenge and train constantly, both academically, emotionally and personally. Get to find that motivation that keeps us wanting to improve our care for the cancer patient. That was what I was looking for when I applied for the ESO-EONS clinical fellowship and that is what I found at Champalimaud Clinical Centre.

Having the opportunity to visit for a learning period in an EONS accredited centre such as Champalimaud Clinical Centre was an experience I wanted to live. I think it has been a unique opportunity for me to understand how the expertise in oncology nursing not only serves as a basis for improving the daily work of nurses, but also allows us to work with more autonomy, because it is the nurse who spends the most time with the patient, being an invaluable help for patients and their families, throughout the entire process of getting cancer.

My mentor during the visit is Emilia Rito, supervisor of the Oncology Day Hospital. She has been the person who has enabled me to attend a variety of cancer services available at the hosting centre, Day Hospital, Radiotherapy, Breast and Gynaecology Unit, Lung Unit, Urology Unit, Digestive Unit, Haemato-Oncology Unit and Pancreas Unit. All these units not only work independently but form a great team. Each nursing unit treats patients of a certain pathology, but they are constantly interacting.



At Champalimaud Clinical Centre, nursing care is very relevant. Both in the Day Hospital or Radiotherapy and in the different Functional Nursing Units, you have all the necessary resources to provide complex care to complex patients such as cancer patients.

In the nursing consultation according to pathology, or in the Day Hospital or Radiotherapy nursing consultation, an interview is carried out to begin an oncological process. The patients are educated in the different phases of their treatment against cancer, cures and management of symptoms. Also, if prescribed by the oncologist, oral medication is given, reviewing the dose and schedule



of the takes, whether or not it should be taken on an empty stomach, possible side effects and recommendations for them. Patients are also telephoned to follow up on their condition after discharge, with active listening and emotional accompaniment. The nurses take part in diagnostic tests, biopsies, blood test, clinical trials, as well as

anything that may arise from the oncologist, haematologist or surgeon consultations like the administration of G-CSF, s.c. medication, i.m. medication and the provision of individualized care.

All units have up-to-date records and protocols drawn up by the nurses themselves enjoying continuous training with constant support from supervisors to promote care leadership, develop evidence-based care. Besides there is collaboration with the rest of the team's professionals and an active participation in multidisciplinary sessions.



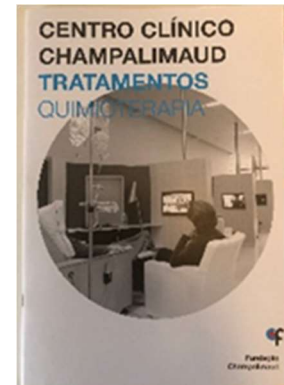
All this results in excellence in the care of oncological patients and their families, improving their quality of life both in surgical processes, administration of chemotherapy or support treatments, radiotherapy and clinical trials.



For me obtaining the 2019 ESO-EONS Clinical Fellowship for Cancer Nurses and to be able to be in Champalimaud Clinical Centre, has meant a very important reinforcement in my professional formation and personal growth.

I have come across an incredible team of nurses and I take with me many experiences that I will always remember.

I think it has been a period that has also allowed me to share my expertise as a nurse. At the level of concepts there is not much variability, but at the institutional level, oncology nursing has to be able to exercise care with adequate physical, organizational and safety resources for both the professionals and the patient.



Cancer nurses need specific health education to be able to cope with the diverse and complex needs that cancer patients and their families face, and this need is increasingly evident within European healthcare.



I want to thank my supervisor at the QuirónSalud Madrid University Hospital for her support in accessing to this clinical fellowship and to the Spanish Oncology Nursing Society (SEEO) for its support to European oncology nursing. But above all, I want to thank all the nursing staff of the Champalimaud Foundation for their wonderful welcome and EONS (to which SEEO belongs) and European School of Oncology for giving me this great opportunity to learn, share and grow as a cancer nurse.