

NGO: Plataforma per la Llengua
Speaker: Òscar-Adrià Ibañez Ferreté

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I'm speaking on behalf of Plataforma per la Llengua, an NGO based in Barcelona promoting the language rights of Catalan speakers.

The results of a research published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal showed that francophone and allophone patients who received language-concordant care had shorter hospital stays and lower risk of adverse events or in-hospital death.

Receiving care in the language of the minority is receiving better care. Despite this, the health care system is where more complaints for language discrimination are issued in Catalonia, the Balearic Islands and Valencia.

The use of Catalan by the population with medical professionals in Catalonia has fallen by eight points in the last fifteen years (47% to 39%). Since we do not have any system of allocating professionals who speak the language with Catalan-speaking patients, fewer and fewer patients can be cared for in their language, including senior citizens and children.

For this, we ask the Secretariat and the Special Rapporteur five things:

Proposals to request states

1. To protect minorities' language rights, also in healthcare provision.
2. To ensure that social care facilities offer the possibility of receiving and treating regional or minority language speakers who require care.
3. To provide health care systems with enough resources to be able to care for patients who speak the autochthonous minority languages.
4. And to train health care workers in minority languages, including making available studying medicine, nursing or other health care formation in these languages.

Include healthcare in minority languages in international protection

5. Finally, we also ask the Special Rapporteur to advocate for including in new international instruments mother tongue treatment as a specific right for minorities. Remind the Canadian research: our health is at stake.

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