REFLECTION ARTICLE

REVISTA ENFERMAGEM ATUAL IN DERME

SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE

LAS SOCIEDADES CIENTÍFICAS Y LA CONSTRUCCIÓN DEL CONOCIMIENTO

AS SOCIEDADES CIENTÍFICAS E A CONSTRUÇÃO DO CONHECIMENTO

[1]Kátia Furtado
[2]Carlos Casaquinha

[1] PhD in Nursing Sciences. Outpatient Department, Hospital of Portalegre, Unidade Local de Saúde do Alto Alentejo, Portalegre, Portugal.
Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1130-3678

[2] Specialist Nurse in Community Health. ELCOS Portuguese Wound Society.
Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0290-6127

Corresponding author

Kátia Furtado
Comprehensive Health Research Centre (CHRC), Universidade de Évora, 7000-671 Évora, Portugal. Nursing Research, Innovation and Development Centre of Lisbon (CIDNUR), Escola Superior de Enfermagem de Lisboa, Av. Prof Egas Moniz,1600-096 Lisbon, Portugal. E-mail: kaxfurtado@gmail.com

Submissão: 31-12-2024
Aprovado: 02-01-2025

ABSTRACT
Scientific associations and societies are fundamental pillars in promoting and advancing knowledge and cooperation between institutions, researchers and academia. Through the creation of robust national and international human networks, these organizations build projects, models, research and analysis tools, mapping the space, building new knowledge, facilitating the exchange of ideas, collaboration on projects and the dissemination of innovative discoveries.

RESUMEN
Las asociaciones y sociedades científicas son pilares fundamentales en la promoción y avance del conocimiento y la cooperación entre instituciones, investigadores y academia. A través de la creación de sólidas redes humanas nacionales e internacionales, estas organizaciones construyen proyectos, modelos, instrumentos de investigación y análisis, mapean el espacio, construyen nuevos conocimientos, facilitan el intercambio de ideas, la colaboración en proyectos y la difusión de descubrimientos innovadores.

RESUMO
As associações e Sociedades Científicas são pilares fundamentais na promoção e no avanço do conhecimento e da cooperação entre as instituições, os investigadores e a academia. Através da criação de redes humanas robustas, nacionais e internacionais, estas organizações constroem projetos, modelos, instrumentos de investigação e análise, mapeando o espaço, construindo novos saberes, facilitando a troca de ideias, a colaboração em projetos, e a disseminação de descobertas inovadoras.

REVISTA ENFERMAGEM ATUAL IN DERME

INTRODUCTION

> *The association is the nerve center of many activities that are essential for a richer and more supportive society. [...] it only depends on each one of us, on our creativity and participation, to improve the world we live in* [1]. *(Tradução nossa).*

Scientific associations and societies are fundamental pillars in promoting and advancing knowledge and cooperation between institutions, researchers and academia. Through the creation of robust national and international human networks, these organizations build projects, models, research and analysis tools, mapping the space, building new knowledge, facilitating the exchange of ideas, collaboration on projects and the dissemination of innovative discoveries.

In itself, this dynamism answers one question: why do successful professionals, researchers and scientists come together in scientific associations and societies? In addition to the desire to share knowledge and positively influence their field of study and work, there is also an intrinsic appeal to a sense of belonging and mutual support. Uniting around common interests not only stimulates professional growth, but also strengthens community spirit and enthusiasm for scientific research. The convergence of curious and dedicated minds creates an environment conducive to the flourishing of new ideas and continuous innovation, shared and mutually nurtured in a spirit of commitment, honesty, cordiality and ethics.

Beyond the obvious need to build and share knowledge, it is the deep sense of community and belonging that attracts researchers. Science, by nature, is a collaborative endeavor; great discoveries are often the result of joint efforts. Associative activity allows brilliant minds to converge, creating an ecosystem where curiosity is nurtured and critical thinking is encouraged.

Scientific societies therefore play a crucial role in building collective knowledge and continuous innovation. Since their conception, these entities have been engines of progress, providing platforms where clinical professionals, academics and health science researchers can share discoveries, debate ideas and collaborate on research projects. In addition, the diversity and richness of the discussions fostered between teams and between organizations drives advances that would be difficult to achieve in more formal models of institutional operation.

The appeal of these organizations lies not only in the opportunities to network for professional development, but also in the intellectual and emotional stimulation they provide. They offer a space for mutual support, where challenges and achievements are shared, creating an essential support network for researchers. The feeling of being part of something bigger, of contributing to the advancement of science and society, is a powerful aggregating and motivating element,

REVISTA ENFERMAGEM ATUAL IN DERME

and the strengthening of human ties is the support for solid scientific and clinical endeavors.

THE DYNAMICS OF ASSOCIATIONS

> *Organizations alone do not create knowledge; this is a process closely linked to individuals, since it is people who intentionally decide how they will teach others or share their knowledge with them* [2] *[tradução nossa]*

Scientific societies are not simply study groups, but vibrant communities that push knowledge towards new horizons. By stimulating collaboration and innovation, they not only shape the future of research, creating new knowledge, but also transport this new knowledge into clinical contexts, bringing new models, processes and techniques into practice that create or increase health gains for patients, productivity and satisfaction for institutions and professionals.

As builders of the future, scientific societies and associations are ecosystems that foster intellectual growth and the continuous advancement of science, through various dimensions: promoting and facilitating collaboration and involving people and organizations through training processes; creating platforms for conferences, workshops and seminars; promoting collaboration between scientists from different disciplines and geographical regions; generating new approaches and promoting innovative solutions.

Disseminating knowledge: by creating scientific publications, journals, pocket guides and organized conferences, scientific societies ensure that the latest discoveries are accessible to the entire scientific community and also to the community of practice. Well-disseminated information accelerates progress in the acquisition of knowledge, improving models, processes and practices to everyone's advantage.

Supporting professional development: mentoring programs, consultancy, the creation of awards and scholarships promote the development of young researchers, stimulating new research projects and generating productivity in the field of knowledge. This support helps build a solid foundation for future generations of scientists.

Establishing norms and standards: scientific societies take the lead in establishing norms and best practices, both for research (creating new instruments) and for clinical practice (establishing guidelines). These guidelines ensure the integrity, reproducibility and quality of scientific research and its translation into clinical practice.

Representation and protection: these bodies often represent the scientific community before institutions and governments, defending policies that support research, innovation and better patient care and even creating public petitions to support citizens.

Promoting education and scientific dissemination: education and training programs (undergraduate and postgraduate) and scientific dissemination initiatives increase society's

REVISTA ENFERMAGEM ATUAL IN DERME

understanding of and support for science. The more informed the population, the greater the support for investment in research and development.

In this way, scientific societies not only support the growth of science, but also ensure that the knowledge generated will permanently enrich humanity.

THE DYNAMICS OF ELCOS-PORTUGUESE WOUND SOCIETY AND ITS SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION

> *The dynamics of knowledge construction are relational, depending on the interaction between one or more individuals, in environments that provide a sharing context for the conversion of knowledge, through the network of interactions established* [3] *[Tradução nossa].*

In the paragraphs above, we noted that scientific associations and societies play a crucial role in scientific research and updating, in translating knowledge from evidence to clinical practice, and in innovation, with a high impact on health. Health is not built in hospitals. These are facilities that respond to illness. Health is built where people live and work; in the garden, playing with their children; it is built by adopting healthy habits; it is built with a good balance between working time and leisure time; it is built with health and work policies, with economic policies that allow for an equitable distribution of wealth.

In order to build health, we have to call on the whole of society. In this line of thinking, all dimensions of human life are contexts for associative intervention, be it scientific (epidemiological studies), sociodemographic (proposing the creation of a specialized leg ulcer consultation in regions where this pathology has a particular incidence), or political (promoting public petitions in favour of state funding for dressings, with a view to protecting the most disadvantaged populations).

Within this framework, ELCOS-Sociedade Portuguesa de Feridas (ELCOS), a multidisciplinary scientific society, includes doctors and nurses from various specialty areas; pharmacists, physiotherapists, podiatrists, nutritionists, psychologists, sociologists, health geographers, engineers specializing in multimedia supports applied to telemedicine areas, university professors and researchers.

With this multidisciplinary wealth of skills, ELCOS is organized as a Community of Practice, spread from the north to the south of Portugal through its district Regional Councils.

The Regional Councils are ELCOS structures which, at district level, link academic and health institutions, public and private charities, town halls and others in epidemiological research projects through partnership projects. These projects begin with epidemiological studies aimed at identifying and understanding the regional nosology related to wounds, and continue with the identification of existing resources, methods, techniques and practices used at institutional level. Once the existing problems in the response to wounds have been identified, tailor-made advisory and

REVISTA ENFERMAGEM ATUAL IN DERME

training programs are designed to meet the needs of institutions and professionals, with the aim of remedying the problems identified in the epidemiological research.

ULCUS - Centro de Estudos e Investigação em Feridas, is the ELCOS department that deals with research and training. In order to carry out the above activities, ELCOS establishes partnerships with educational institutions: Universities, Polytechnics and private Nursing and Health Schools, from Braga to Faro and the Islands, developing national education/training initiatives with these institutions, at basic education and postgraduate education level, adapting and implementing the EWMA curricula in various public and private schools in the country. ELCOS also has partnerships with care institutions, advising Local Health Units (ULS) from Guimarães to Faro. It also has scientific collaboration partnerships in Europe, Africa and America, with participation and representation in the EWMA, SILAUHE and WHO respectively.

In the field of training, ELCOS has created REFE.PT - the Portuguese Network of Wound Educators, which is designed to monitor health/nursing schools while maintaining curricular alignment with the EWMA and SILAUHE. REFE.PT also allows for the sharing of experience and good educational practices in the area of wounds.

As part of its drive to create value in healthcare, ELCOS has created Training Certification by Level/Expertise for its team of trainers, with the aim of keeping the level of training skills of its team of trainers up to date. This initiative has the partnership of the Orders of the main professional groups involved in the field of complex wounds.

The ELCOS International Department responds to international requests through collaborative partnerships with Portuguese-speaking countries.

We can see that scientific associations are more than just research and development entities, they are the backbone that supports the continuous updating and evolution of health and academic institutions. By promoting the exchange of knowledge, innovation and the implementation of evidence-based practices in clinical contexts, scientific societies guarantee the permanent improvement of healthcare, with the aim of improving people's quality of life.

In a world of constant change, where new health challenges are constantly emerging, the collaboration and commitment of scientific associations is essential to face these adversities with resilience, efficiency and effectiveness, as they not only shape the present, but also pave the way for a healthier and more equitable future for all.

Thus, recognizing and supporting the tireless work of the associative world is investing in the collective well-being and prosperity of future generations, as it has the power to transform lives and build a better world for all.

REFERÊNCIAS

1. Mendes V. Como Construir Uma Associação. 3 Ed. Porto: Legis Editora; 2008.

2. Fernandes FR. Comunidades de prática na perspectiva de Wenger: os constructos, a trajetória, os desdobramentos e suas relações com a gestão do conhecimento. Tese apresentada ao curso de Pós-Graduação Interdisciplinar em Gestão da Informação, Setor de Ciências Sociais Aplicadas, Universidade Federal do Paraná; 2022.

3. Nonaka I, TakeuchiH. Criação de conhecimento na empresa: como as empresas japonesas geram a dinâmica da inovação. 6 ed. Rio de janeiro: Cmpus; 1997.

Funding and Acknowledgements:

Nothing to declare.

Declaration of conflict of interests:

Nothing to declare

All authors contributed to the composition of the article

Scientific Editor: Francisco Mayron Morais Soares. Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7316-2519