



Attitudes of the medical profession toward the professional practice of healthcare social workers [

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Analítica

The aim of this article is to analyse the attitudes of the medical profession with respect to the professional practice of healthcare social workers. Serge Moscovici's theory of social representations was used to develop the article as it provides conceptual and methodological tools that facilitate an examination of subjects' attitudes. This was a qualitative study in which the techniques and instruments used to obtain empirical data were interviews and questionnaires aimed at contracted doctors and residents in the following specialist fields: internal medicine, paediatrics, gynaecology, oncology, intensive care and pathology at the Hospital General de México, a secondary healthcare public institution. The study findings show that doctors perceive social workers' practice as being confined to administrative tasks, which does not necessarily imply a negative attitude toward this professional practice. They consider social workers to be an important group for the functioning of the hospital, with a heavy workload involving handling various bureaucratic processes. However, healthcare social workers are not recognised as a group of professionals capable of contributing scientific understanding to improve patient health

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