
Humanization of childbirth: the motto for birth-related social movements in Portugal (presentation abstract)

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Maria Schouten: Unfortunately Professor João Arriscado Nunes and Dr Marta Roriz could not be present for health reasons. They are researchers on the project European Patient Organizations in Knowledge Society (EPOKS)¹ which includes research on the civic movements which advocate the humanization of childbirth (Nunes, Roriz and Filipe, 2012). The abstract of their planned paper has been distributed amongst you.

Presentation Abstract
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João Arriscado Nunes and Marta Roriz

The childbirth movement in Portugal is a recent phenomenon compared with other European movements, and involves different types of organizations. In Portugal there are mainly two types of organization: the first includes “experts-in-experience” such as HumPar (the Portuguese Association for the Humanization of Childbirth) which plays a key role in this field. The second is a more heterogeneous collection associated with professionals such as obstetric and maternal health nurses, midwives and doulas, which advocates on childbirth practices in maternity hospitals, such as the group *Pelo Direito ao Parto Normal* (the Right to Normal Birth group). This group developed a document with the support of the General Directorate for Health (a body of the Ministry of Health) aimed at seeking consensus amongst all professionals involved in childbirth concerning “humanized” childbirth practices for Portuguese women, and to broaden that consensus amongst all citizens.

¹ Projeto EPOKS: www.ces.uc.pt/projectos/index.php?prj=4240&id_lingua=1

However, their unfortunate absence has provided us with an opportunity to have a different, but related, paper by Rita Correia, who will give a presentation about the Portuguese Association of Humanization of Childbirth, HumPar. Rita has a degree in anthropology, has been working as a doula and is the current President of HumPar.