

# The role of family doctors in advanced therapies

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A recent study conducted jointly by the Tissue Engineering Research Group of the Department of Histology and the family medicine Unit of the University of Granada (UGR) has highlighted the conceptual,

attitudinal and procedural profile of resident hospital doctors specialising in family medicine in relation to advanced therapies.

According to the European Medicines Agency, cell [therapy](#), [gene therapy](#) and [tissue engineering](#) are among a range of innovative therapies whose application presents extremely rigorous biofabrication requirements.

The progressive increase in demand for such therapies and consultations about their possible use by patients with different pathologies calls for relevant health education—a task in which [family doctors](#) have an important role to play.

## Little training in this area

The study highlights a perception among resident doctors that they are receiving insufficient training, both at a conceptual level and also in terms of the regulatory framework in this area. It also notes a highly [positive attitude](#) toward the use and application of such therapies in hospitals and toward greater research into the topic. Furthermore, the findings point to a clear preference among these doctors for the necessary drugs to be developed within research centres, whereas the current regulation requires biofabrication to be carried out on principles of good manufacturing practice, wherever these may be located.

The resident doctors consulted in the study expressed serious reservations about the monitoring of the patients undergoing such treatments being conducted in health centres, and about the fact that the biofabrication process is linked to the pharmaceutical industry.

The results of the research are potentially valuable for the design of future training programmes for resident doctors dealing with the conceptual, attitudinal and procedural dimensions of this type of therapy.

The findings are also relevant to the role of family doctors in the health education of the population with regard to advanced therapies.

Prior to the study, the UGR's Tissue Engineering Research Group successfully designed artificial corneas and human skin as advanced therapy treatments. These were developed at the university, and later transferred to clinical practice.

**More information:** Miguel Sola et al. Evaluation of the awareness of novel advanced therapies among family medicine residents in Spain, *PLOS ONE* (2019). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0214950](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0214950)

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