

RESPONSE TO THE LETTER TO THE DIRECTOR

Reply

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Mr. Editor of the *Revista Española de Sanidad Penitenciaria* (Spanish Journal of Prison Health):

We would like to thank the interest of Muqbil Ali Al Shaban-Rodriguez and colleagues on our publication (Opioids in prison: Can we reduce their use?¹) We agree on the importance of a comprehensive approach of chronic pain in the correctional setting, therefore using whatever necessary measures, with all dedicated resources or treatments, as medical deontology obliges and the legislation in force in our country establishes. However, it is different when we are dealing with an opioid use disorder, where the only measures that have proven effective are pharmacological treatment and psychosocial interventions (and dual therapies including both modalities²). Among pharmacological therapies, opioid agonists (methadone, buprenorphine) and antagonists (naltrexone) have proven effective. Precisely in our previous letter we referred to complications derived from the use of other agonists (tramadol and codeine), which are not indicated for opioid use disorder, and are frequently associated with dependence disorders. Last and as a consequence of all this we can not but reiterate what

we already established in our last communication: we believe that we should consider the need to be more restrictive in the use of opioids for the use of chronic pain in the correctional setting.

The authors of this letter hereby confirm the absence of any conflict of interest.

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