

Career, power and authority

The fifth line of research stems from evidence about disparities between women and men in career and power. Women are not paid as much as their male colleagues, they hardly have the same chance to reach pivotal positions in their jobs, and they are too often subject to discrimination in the workplace. Moreover, men are usually considered more powerful and authoritative than women even when they perform the same role. In this research line, our aim is to gather data on the extent of these disparities – by comparing male and female presence in significant positions, in relation to their respective educational backgrounds; secondly, we seek to propose ways of avoiding such bias, and thus promote gender equality.

Women in science and philosophy

Finally, the sixth line of research aims at investigating why women are underrepresented in science and philosophy, even though statistics show that, in many fields, there are more women holding a master or a PhD than men. We aim at collecting data on the difference between graduation statistics and the number of people working in science and philosophy and we wish to understand why such a difference exists. Moreover, we intend to propose correctives for the underrepresentation of women in science and philosophy. Finally, even though the history of philosophy and science often misrepresents their contribution, women have in fact been crucial in terms of developments and revolutions in both fields. For this reason, we aim at discussing such figures, highlighting their significance in their specific domain, from both an historical and theoretical viewpoint. ■

The SIMG and gender-specific medicine

Raffaella Michieli

National secretary of SIMG and ULSS 3 Serenissima, Venice

The Italian Society of General Medicine and Primary Care (SIMG) is an autonomous and independent society that was established to promote, valorize and support the professional role of general practitioners, both in the Italian healthcare system and in European and non-European health organizations.

The association was founded in 1982 and is based in Florence. Throughout Italy it has more than 100 provincial and sub-provincial sections that are coordinated by a network of regional sections. In its capacity as the scientific and professional representative for general medicine that interacts with public and private institutions, the Society dedicates special attention to training, research and continuing medical education activities. The SIMG also promotes activities regarding clinical and epidemiological research in general medicine and in the field of quality assessment, with initiatives in the publishing, information technology, distance learning and profession management sectors. In order to promote partnerships with both public and private institutions, the Society interacts with the sector's leading national and international associations. It cooperates with the ISS (Italian National Institute for Health), the Ministry of Health, the AIFA (Italian Medicines Agency), the CNR (National Research Council), the WHO (World Health Organization) and with sector associations in many European countries (France, Switzerland, Greece, Ireland, Germany, Belgium, Holland, Spain and Portugal) and non-European countries (American Medical Association). Lastly, it participates in Italian Ministerial Commissions, European Union commissions and EU projects. Its scientific activities are broken down into clinical areas and support areas that an-

swer to a national area supervisor. The Society provides its institutional training activities through a research institute (Health Search) based in Florence. The SIMG has been interested in gender-specific medicine for several years now. In 2007, the Society published a Decalogue highlighting the fields in which the Society undertakes:

- to stimulate gender research projects, where they are lacking;
- to establish partnerships for gender research;
- to dedicate special attention to gender-related issues (sample selection, adverse events, etc.) in research;
- to identify literature evidence of gender issues (better/worse effect of a medicinal product, preventive action or diagnostic procedure, etc.);
- to publish the gender differences observed in research on its website and in its journal;
- to deal with certain topics from a gender-specific perspective, in all the congresses organized by the SIMG;
- to deal with gender issues in the SIMG journal;
- to stimulate, using all the tools at its disposal, greater attention to the suspicion and acknowledgment of possible situations of violence against women and against vulnerable categories;
- to stimulate, using all the tools at its disposal, greater attention to the suspicion and acknowledgment of sexual discrimination.

The SIMG recognizes the need to obtain a balance in the presence of physicians of both sexes in all roles within the society and is therefore committed, in the scientific secretariat and in sections at all levels, to stimulating the active cooperation of all female general practitioners, so that women and men achieve appropriate representativity within the association.

The SIMG has published and taken part in the publication of a number of volumes on general medicine: *La mente, il cuore, le braccia e... Guida alla salute delle donne* (Dipartimento

per l'informazione e l'editoria, Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri), *La medicina di genere. La nuova frontiera della medicina* (Hippocrates Edizioni medico-scientifiche), *Amiche del cuore* (Giunti editore), *Disease management: rischio cardiovascolare e differenze di genere* (Pacini editore).

We have taken part in the Ministerial Women's Health Commission and subsequently in all the National Days organized by the Ministry.

We participated in the drafting of the Ministerial publication on gender as a determinant of health.

We have been part of the FNOM-CeO Study, research and documentation monitoring center's gender medicine working group since 2014.

We have promoted medical profession literacy by including two supplements on the topic in the *SIMG* journal and we have spoken about it incessantly in the congress sessions organized by our regional sections and at our annual national congress.

We have developed a national project against violence against women, named "Viola", proposing the displaying of a dedicated poster in general practitioners' surgeries, informing

women that they can turn to their general practitioner for help or simply someone to listen.

This is, of course, an on-going mission that constantly sets itself new challenges and new goals, which we are tackling both on a national level and with training courses that are organized with the association of physicians and the local institutions.

The working group that deals with this aspect is formed of women and men of all ages who, at this year's national congress in Florence, recited a statement supporting the solidarity protests against violence. ■

The A.M.M.I. mission today

Elvira Oliviero Lippi

A.M.M.I. National President

The A.M.M.I., the Italian Doctors' Wives Association, was founded in Mantua in 1970 by a group of doctors' wives. Over the years it has changed and evolved to keep in step with the times. In addition to the female partners of doctors, its members are female doctors, pharmacists, biologists and mothers of health-care professionals. It is now present throughout Italy, with some 65 local sections located in Northern, Central and Southern Italy.

The A.M.M.I. is a public health association whose purpose is to promote health education and prevention and to inform the public – and in particular school children – by holding lectures and round tables on current affairs in the scientific and social sectors, in conjunction with medical professionals. Every year, on 18 October, the feast-day of St Luke, the patron saint of doctors, lectures and round tables are held across the country to discuss a specific topic of current medical or social relevance that is proposed and voted by the various local sections. On April 22 we celebrate the Women's Health Day.

Since 2011, the A.M.M.I. has promoted and encouraged awareness regarding gender-specific pharmacology and medicine. The aim is to inform the general public that medicine and therapy should be differentiated according to gender, as the symptoms of illness and the efficacy of medicinal products differ for women and men.

With a call for bids for a 10 thousand-euro grant, established 7 years ago, we support the gender-specific medicine and pharmacology. This call aims to bring young researchers closer to a different outlook on all areas of medicine.

A commission formed of professionals with expertise in the gender-specific medicine field reviews the very many, scientifically-valid research projects submitted. The young researchers who join it are numerous with many very valid research projects.

The SIMG against violence

*The young women and men who have become physicians
Proud members of the Italian Society of General Medicine and Primary Care
Will never stand silent in any place and under any circumstance
In which human beings are forced to be suffer distress and humiliation
violence is not strength but weakness
and it remains the ultimate refuge of the incapable
all of us, male and female, young and old, stand
with our patients
with their children
with our female colleagues who have been molested at work
with our male colleagues who have been assaulted while performing their professional duties
with those who are considered different
we will be their voice when they are unable to speak
regardless of the color of their skin, their origin, or their sexual preferences
as doctors, because avoiding violence is a question of health
as people, because solidarity and respect are still values
as men, because not all men are violent
and as women, because we are half of the sky and we want to continue lighting it.*