**JIMM 2012**

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**Is independence in the field of health a utopic concept?**

To my mind, it is indeed a utopic concept but in the noble sense of the term. In its common meaning, the term utopia describes a chimera, an imaginary construct that would be impossible to achieve “in vivo”.

However, not every dream is a chimera. And should the strife for independence of the medical world remains an unreachable idea, I wouldn’t bother with campaigning in the Formindep or even attending this symbolic first ever International Day for Medical Independence, alias JIIM (Journée Internationale de l’Indépendance Médicale).

If it is a matter of seeing the utopia as an exploration of the field of possibilities like a dream providing new ideas and not like a mere chimera, then our activism gains meaning since the purpose of all this, after a critical analysis of the harmful influences that bring scandals, is to imagine different ways to organise in concrete terms this independence of the field of healthcare.

**Throughout your own experience and offices, have you noticed an evolution of behaviours toward this concept during the last ten years?**

Yes, unfortunately because of numerous health scandals. To my mind, the Vioxx© scandal, the disastrous management of the H1N1 flu and lastly the Mediator© scandal have definitively upset doctors and citizens.

Several concrete examples:

* Many medical students understand the importance of industry influences at the heart of their universities, as young Formindep members can attest it.
* Subscriptions to the journal Prescrire have increased dramatically since the Mediator© scandal.
* Numerous official public reports on the question of nefarious links between the medical world and the pharmaceutical lobby have been published over the last ten years.
* Most of my patients are aware of the conceot of “conflict of interest” and the word “Mediator” hits home easily when it comes to stop the use of a medicine with a unfavourable risk to benefit balance prescribed by an eminent colleague.

**What is your opinion about such a day about medical independence?**

This day has a high symbolic value and is another sign of the beginning of a change in mentalities in the medical world (colleagues and institutions). Would this day have been possible ten years ago even with all the goodwill and energy of the organisers?