STUDY OF THE THANK YOU LETTERS RECEIVED BY AN EXTRAHOSPITAL SERVICE

F. Miguel Saldaña[1], A. Cano Navas[2], D.R. Ionica[1], A. Carrión Pereda[1], F. Arribas Hernández[1]
[1] SAMUR-Protección Civil, Spain   [2] Universidad Antonio de Nebrija, Spain

EMS2019 MADRID
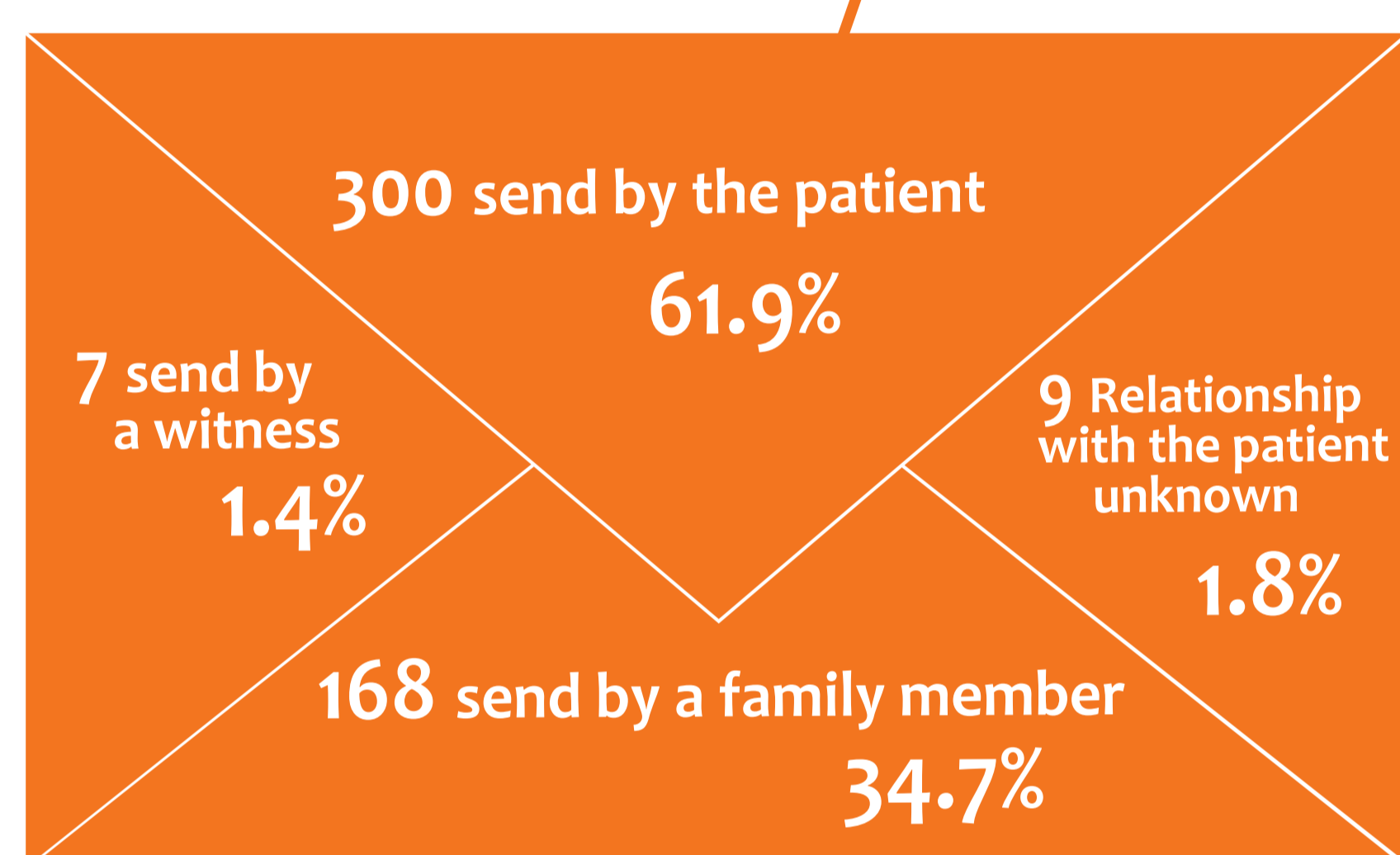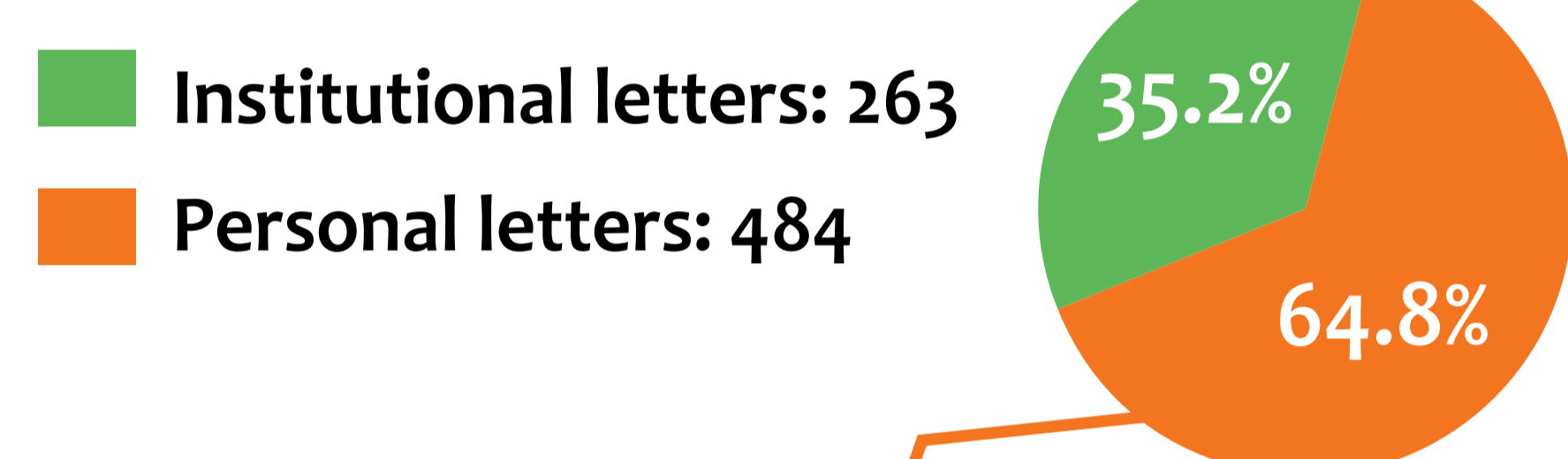26–28 APRIL 2019

Introduction

The study aims to identify, through letters of thanks received, which aspects of care are considered as "strengths" by patients and what are, for them, the main virtues of the health care provided.

We believe that the study of these letters can be a valuable source of original, direct and spontaneous information to improve care in the area of out-of-hospital emergency.
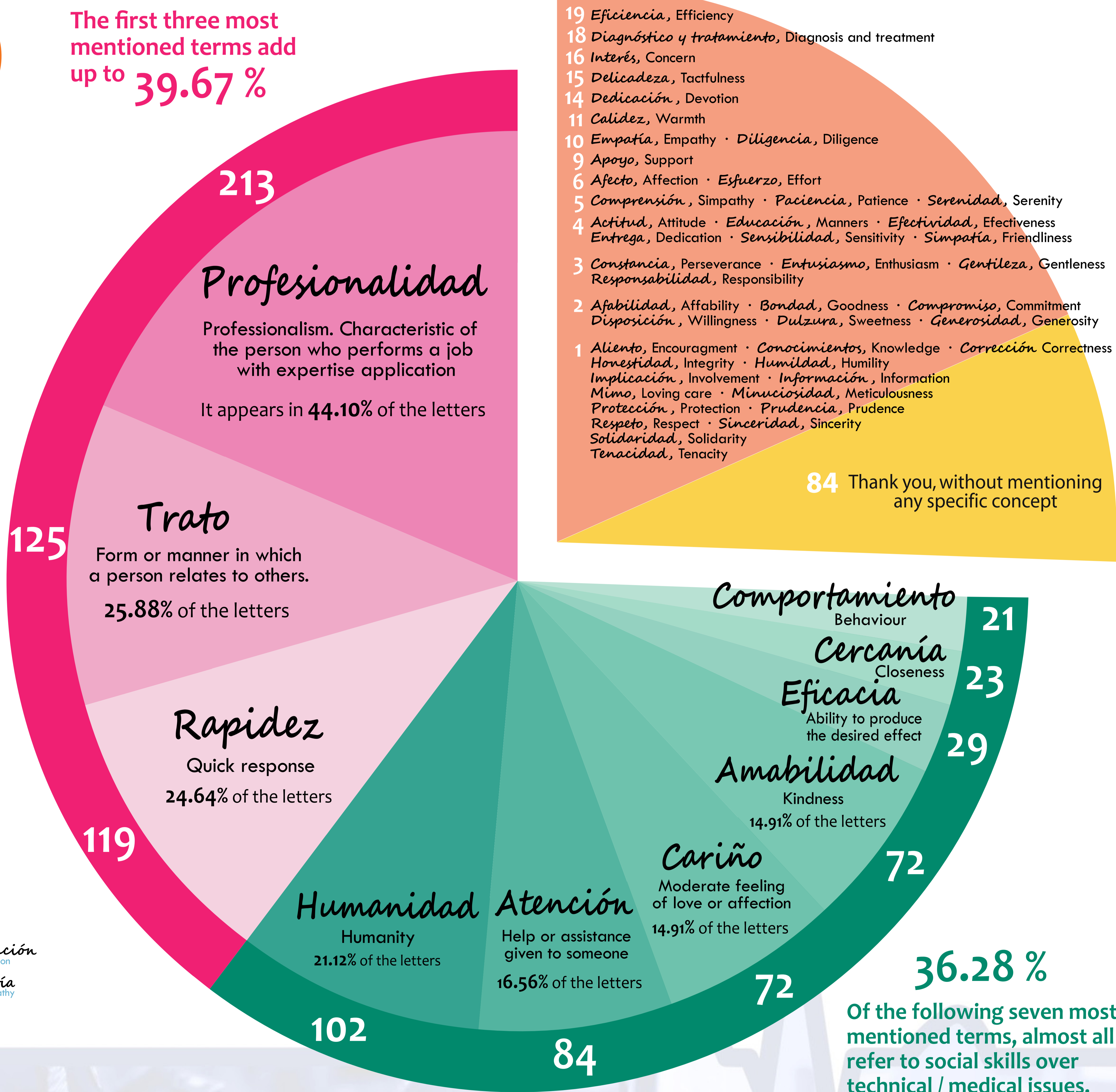
Methodology

Prospective cross-sectional descriptive observational study based on thank-you letters, sent by patients or their relatives, assisted by SAMUR-Civil Protección in a period of 6 years (2013-2018). N = 484.

Grouping by thematic areas has been avoided to achieve greater objectivity in the collection of data. For this reason, only the exact words have been selected.

Data treated with the Excel 2010 program and SPSS 17.0.

Results

A total of **56 differents motives of gratitude** were counted. In many of the letters there is more than one reason, **1152 in total**. In the graphics, the terms have been preserved in Spanish language for better understanding.

747 letters received in 6 years 2013 - 2018

- **Institutional letters: 263** — 35.2%
- **Personal letters: 484** — 64.8%

- **300** send by the patient — 61.9%
- **7** send by a witness — 1.4%
- **168** send by a family member — 34.7%
- **9** Relationship with the patient unknown — 1.8%

When there is only one motive of gratitude, what is it?

Letters with a single reason mentioned:

- **22** *Trato* — Form or manner
- **15** *Atención* — Help or assistance
- **7** *Profesionalidad* — Professionalism
- **7** *Rapidez* — Quick response
- **6** *Amabilidad* — Kindness
- **6** *Comportamiento* — Behaviour
- **3** *Esfuerzo* — Effort
- **2** *Cariño* — Affection
- **2** *Humanidad* — Humanity
- **1** *Apoyo* — Support
- **1** *Compromiso* — Commitment
- **1** *Dedicación* — Devotion
- **1** *Efectividad* — Effectiveness
- **1** *Eficiencia* — Efficiency
- **1** *Empatía* — Empathy
- **1** *Entusiasmo* — Enthusiasm
- **1** *Interés* — Concern
- **1** *Mimo* — Loving care

The first three most mentioned terms add up to 39.67 %

What are the reasons the senders are thankful for?

213 — Profesionalidad
Professionalism. Characteristic of the person who performs a job with expertise application
It appears in **44.10%** of the letters

125 — Trato
Form or manner in which a person relates to others.
25.88% of the letters

119 — Rapidez
Quick response
24.64% of the letters

102 — Humanidad
Humanity
21.12% of the letters

84 — Atención
Help or assistance given to someone
16.56% of the letters

72 — Cariño
Moderate feeling of love or affection
14.91% of the letters

72 — Amabilidad
Kindness
14.91% of the letters

29 — Eficacia
Ability to produce the desired effect

23 — Cercanía
Closeness

21 — Comportamiento
Behaviour

36.28 %
Of the following seven most mentioned terms, almost all refer to social skills over technical / medical issues.

Right-side list of terms:
- **19** *Eficiencia*, Efficiency
- **18** *Diagnóstico y tratamiento*, Diagnosis and treatment
- **16** *Interés*, Concern
- **15** *Delicadeza*, Tactfulness
- **14** *Dedicación*, Devotion
- **11** *Calidez*, Warmth
- **10** *Empatía*, Empathy · *Diligencia*, Diligence
- **9** *Apoyo*, Support
- **6** *Afecto*, Affection · *Esfuerzo*, Effort
- **5** *Comprensión*, Simpathy · *Paciencia*, Patience · *Serenidad*, Serenity
- **4** *Actitud*, Attitude · *Educación*, Manners · *Efectividad*, Effectiveness · *Entrega*, Dedication · *Sensibilidad*, Sensitivity · *Simpatía*, Friendliness
- **3** *Constancia*, Perseverance · *Entusiasmo*, Enthusiasm · *Gentileza*, Gentleness · *Responsabilidad*, Responsibility
- **2** *Afabilidad*, Affability · *Bondad*, Goodness · *Compromiso*, Commitment · *Disposición*, Willingness · *Dulzura*, Sweetness · *Generosidad*, Generosity
- **1** *Aliento*, Encouragement · *Conocimientos*, Knowledge · *Corrección* Correctness · *Honestidad*, Integrity · *Humildad*, Humility · *Implicación*, Involvement · *Información*, Information · *Mimo*, Loving care · *Minuciosidad*, Meticulousness · *Protección*, Protection · *Prudencia*, Prudence · *Respeto*, Respect · *Sinceridad*, Sincerity · *Solidaridad*, Solidarity · *Tenacidad*, Tenacity

84 Thank you, without mentioning any specific concept

Conclusions

The results show that patients not only show their gratitude for the technical skills of the professionals, such as the correct diagnosis and the therapeutic measures adopted, or even the quickness as expected, but also, and to a large extent, the **attitude and displayed behavior**, such as **affection**, **closeness** or **kindness**.

Many of the letters are written by a relative who was present at the intervention, to express their gratitude for the treatment given to the patient and for **the treatment they received as companions**. This should make us think about the need to care for these secondary victims.