

Fundación Cepsa Supports the Work of Gull Lasègue Favoring People with ED on the Canary Islands.

- **Through the project "Therapeutic energy: support for people affected by eating disorders," winner of a Social Value Award 2022**

Fundación Cepsa has witnessed the development of Gull Lasègue's project "Therapeutic energy: support for people affected by eating disorders (ED)," winner of an award for Social Value in 2022, and aimed at the biopsychosocial rehabilitation of the disorder and, therefore, at improving the quality of life of those affected and their families.

Eating Disorders (ED) are serious psychological disorders characterized by abnormal and problematic patterns of eating, weight perception and body image. They significantly affect the physical and emotional health of sufferers and can have very serious consequences if not properly addressed.

The aid granted by the Fundación Cepsa has allowed Gull Lasègue to hire a psychologist 25 hours a week for 9 months, until September, who is assisting 22 people affected by ED, usually through individual sessions or with the presence of family members when the situation requires it.

Initially, each person is assisted by the psychologist in a one-hour therapeutic session, on a weekly basis. As progress and improvement of the ED is achieved, the professional will decide, according to the criteria and therapeutic objectives of each case, to space out the sessions, until the improvement of the situation of each person is reached. This is complemented by weekly therapeutic group workshops on cognitive stimulation and resilience.

This psychological care is complemented by weekly nutrition and social care sessions offered by other professionals, thus forming the individual intervention plan for each patient, multidisciplinary and comprehensive, appropriate to the needs of each case. The project has the support of Antonio Ballester as a solidarity sponsor at Cepsa.

The head of Fundación Cepsa in the Canary Islands, Belén Machado, was accompanied on the visit to the organization by Natalia Domínguez, a Cepsa professional who is a member of the Jury of the Social Value Awards 2022. Both highlighted "the silent but immense work carried out by Gull Lasègue," pointing out that "it is crucial that its existence is known and disseminated to the population, so that those who have a family member affected by ED can access its services, with the peace of mind that they can find the support they need to move forward and overcome this disorder." They agreed that "it is a problem that is still largely unknown and full of prejudices and false preconceived ideas, so it is very necessary to give it visibility."

Julia Castellano, a member of the organization's Board of Directors, said during the meeting that "the support of Fundación Cepsa through its Social Value Awards has allowed us some respite and relief in the Association's waiting list, which still needs a lot more help to disappear. Our challenge continues, as the increase in the incidence rate of people affected by ED is alarming." "It is very necessary to join synergies and that more companies are informed and linked to the community in which they are installed helping to cover this type of social needs," she said.

Gull Lasègue is based in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, but its area of activity covers the whole of the Canary Islands. It was founded by parents who, witnessing the complicated life situation in which their children were immersed, decided to set up the association 24 years ago. It draws on its own and external, public and private economic resources, and has managed to become a reference entity, as it is the only NGO dedicated exclusively to the care and specific, comprehensive and specialized treatment of eating disorders in the province of Las Palmas, receiving requests and providing care to people from other islands, such as Lanzarote, Fuerteventura, Tenerife and La Palma.

Eighty-three percent of the people served by its program are women, of whom 25% are minors aged 13 and older, 35% are between 9 and 34 years old and the remaining 40% are between 35 and 49 years old.

ED can be cured, but a multidisciplinary approach to treatment is required, combining psychological therapy, nutritional support and in some cases, medication. These are long and complex treatments because a common feature of these disorders is the lack of awareness of the disease by the affected person, which leads him/her to not identify the need for treatment, nor its benefits. Early detection and family support are critical to a successful recovery.

Social Value Awards

These annual awards, which began in 2005, are one of the stand-out initiatives of Fundación Cepsa. They are held in the Canary Islands, Madrid, Huelva, Campo de Gibraltar, Portugal, and Colombia, and are aimed at supporting disadvantaged people, groups and sectors, in addition to promoting solidarity values by involving Cepsa's professionals, who sponsor the projects presented by the non-profit organizations.

A total of 69 projects have been carried out to date in the Canary Islands thanks to these awards, with a contribution of around €650,000 from Fundación Cepsa.

The 2023 call will begin on September 7.

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