

Margarethe Hochleitner

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When I obtained permission to teach Cardiology, Gender Medicine was in its infancy. It was exciting! Being a feminist as a young girl, Gender Medicine was more than a logical step for me.

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Gender Medicine Expert - “I can make it work!”

Not only she is a successful cardiologist, but she is also a leader in this developing area of [Gender Medicine](#). Gender Medicine recognizes differences in women and men’s health patterns, and adapts the diagnosis and treatment to suit these differing needs. “The field offers unbelievable opportunities, from basic research all the way to clinical medicine and real opportunities for careers with women's health centers.”

Margarethe Hochleitner built up a Women's Health Center at Innsbruck Medical University Hospital to provide women access to medical services. “The original idea was to concentrate on immigrant women, and they are still one of our main concerns. Today, we concentrate elderly women and poor women, such as from women's shelters and refugee hostels, etc.”

A Women's Health Center would do some justice to these women affected by the existing gender inequalities that society is not aware of. "Poverty is female and all poverty reports show that it clearly reduces life expectancy. The same is true for elderly women: once a woman has taken care of and even nursed everyone in her family, she ends up old and alone and maybe in a nursing home."

Healing hearts and breaking gender stereotypes – all in a day's work!

Being a cardiologist at Innsbruck Medical Hospital, she was the first woman who was granted permission to teach internal medicine. To overcome **the existing gender stereotype at that time, according to which women doctors cannot be good professors of medicine**, it was a matter of self-confidence: "I dared to reach for that goal and then pursued it systematically".

When Margarethe Hochleitner took on the position of Head of the Working Group for Gender Equality, at Innsbruck Medical University in the 1990's, **there was not a single female professor**. Also, there was not a single woman with a university degree on the staff across 17 clinics and departments. Her aim has been to promote women's positive contributions.

Her hard work and vision have seen that the University now boasts that 12.5% of all professors are women, namely eight so far; there are also 34 adjunct professors (15%); and, 12 female associate professors (39%).

Although medicine continues to attract more and more women, it still reflects patriarchal views on women's role in society. A young doctor choosing "women's agendas" will have to confront the gender inequalities that exist within the medical system that are not promising a career in our university medical system. They are more likely to be counter-productive.

Website

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Metadata

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