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## A PORTUGUESE EXPERIENCE OF MULTIPLE FAMILY DAY TREATMENT

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Families universally agree that Anorexia Nervosa takes over almost every aspect of their lives, becoming the central organizing principle of the family's life.

Over the last years focus for family interventions has been the Multiple Family Day Treatment approach (MFDT), which has a strong focus on helping families to maximize their strengths and resources, in order to help their patient member to recover. An important goal of MFDT is to help break the interconnections that have developed between the symptom and family interactions, and help overcome the sense of being unable to move and communicate freely about the problems. When families come together they witness each other, revealing their narratives about developed rules, roles, rituals and myths. The differences in the way that individual families have coped, allows for the possibility to look for alternative ways of managing the problem within the family.

The authors describe their first experience with MFDT, which occurred in a Portuguese hospital with 17 families of anorectic patients.

The shared experience of what it is like for families to live with anorexia quickly helps to create group cohesion and a supportive atmosphere in which difficulties can be tackled. Hearing how other families have overcome problems helps families to broaden their own time frame and consider trying new things.

The MFDT has attracted considerable interest as an innovative and effective treatment, and feedback received from families has been very positive emphasizing in particular the collaborative nature of the treatment.