

## Editorial

### Doctorate in Behavioral Sciences for Better Health: A program to address public health challenges from a scientific perspective

### Doctorado en Ciencias del Comportamiento Saludable: Un programa para enfrentar desde una perspectiva científica los retos de la salud pública

*Rubén García Cruz<sup>a\*</sup>*

The 21st century has been characterized by constant changes that have led to profound transformations in all aspects of humanity, one of the most obvious of them is health and, as a consequence, the increase in life expectancy, both in terms of preventing disease and promoting health.<sup>1</sup> Faced with this need, it has been a requirement for all institutions involved in the training of human resources involved in the study of health-related behavior, with the aim of training high-quality human capital in accordance with the problems of these new times.<sup>2</sup>

In this context, health sciences consider prevention and health promotion as important processes for improving well-being and quality of life, as well as for protecting and caring for the environment, in different contexts, for both healthy and sick populations, and at different stages of human development.<sup>3</sup> To achieve the proposal for prevention and health promotion proposed internationally by the World Health Organization (WHO) in the 2030 Agenda and in Mexico by the Ministry of Health, it is declared that the training of human resources in the health sector is a fundamental pillar, since having the necessary and trained personnel to meet the needs of vulnerable populations is a multiplying and essential strategic axis to achieve effective access to quality health services and, therefore, the growth of countries.<sup>2,4</sup> Therefore, it is imperative to increase the number of health professionals who research, develop and apply innovative interventions to promote well-being and healthy lifestyles, a requirement that is at the core of the postgraduate training program "Doctorate in Behavioral Sciences for Better Health" of the School of Health Sciences of the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo, Mexico.<sup>5</sup> This training program responds to international problems in the region and, in particular, for Mexico, based on the demands of the National Council for the Humanities, Sciences and Technology (CONAHCyT) of Mexico, since health sciences are required to expand and put into practice new theoretical and methodological paradigms that, through inter- and multidisciplinary, promote the attention of all sectors and, above all, those excluded in social areas of health and education, in order to improve the quality of life.<sup>6</sup> A relevant aspect of the conceptual models in public health is the historical perspective of the analysis of the health-disease process, incorporating epidemiological, ecological, cultural, and geographical variables under an interdisciplinary perspective.<sup>7</sup>

The above shows that health has become a serious problem for the economy of countries, so the WHO recommends the involvement of disciplines that study human behavior in relation to this problem, as well as the design of interventions that favor well-being and quality of life.<sup>4</sup> These interventions aim to raise awareness and promote service activity from their practice, in accordance with social needs, professional ethics and their involvement in solving health problems in their socio-cultural context.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE) states that health is a fundamental social investment.<sup>1</sup>

This proposal for the "Doctorate in Behavioral Sciences for Better Health" represents an important opportunity to train human resources in the field of health at a high academic and scientific level, in a face-to-face modality, which will make it possible to raise awareness among those involved in health systems and consolidate essential objectives for improving health culture and policies from the local to the global level. Therefore, the aim of this proposal is to train researchers who promote healthy behavior through procedures, strategies and models in the processes of disease prevention and health promotion, based on scientific evidence, to intervene in the areas of health and disease, using disciplinary and interdisciplinary relationships, with the aim of maintaining and improving the health-wellness relationship of the population studied, thus increasing scientific productivity in this area of health sciences.

This work is an important reference to promote the formation of scientific human capital in the field of psychology and disciplines involved in health problems related to human behavior. It is the first training program at a national level aimed at supporting the

<sup>a</sup>Department of Psychology of the School of Health Sciences of the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo. Pachuca, Hidalgo, Mexico, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7348-8113>, Email: [rgarcia@uaeh.edu.mx](mailto:rgarcia@uaeh.edu.mx)

Received: 18/11/2024, Accepted: 19/11/2024, Published: 05/01/2025

DOI:



solution of social problems related to the promotion of healthy behavior. In summary, the Doctorate in Behavioral Sciences for Better Health<sup>5</sup> proposes two lines of generation and application of knowledge: Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, to favor health proposals coming from international and national organizations.

## **References**

- [1] Burgos LEM, Álvarez REZ, Bermúdez LSM, Cedeño CIM. Prevención de enfermedades crónicas avanzadas y la salud pública. RECIAMUC 2023;7(2): 55-64.
- [2] Pérez C. Sistemas de Gestión de la promoción de la salud y el bienestar en organizaciones saludables. Gestión Seguridad Salud Trabajo 2022;4(2): 33-38.
- [3] Franco-Giraldo AJ. Modelos de promoción de la salud y determinantes sociales: una revisión narrativa. Hacia Promoc. Salud 2022;27(2): 237-254.
- [4] González JMS. El camino a una nueva etapa en la historia de la salud. Rev. Mex. Patol. Clin. Med. Lab. 2022;69(1): 4-5.
- [5] Doctorado en Ciencias del Comportamiento Saludable. [Internet]. Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo. Pachuca Hidalgo, México. [cited 2024 Nov 15]. Available from: <https://www.uaeh.edu.mx/campus/icsa/oferta/doctorados/ciencias-comportamiento-saludable/>
- [6] De La Guardia Gutiérrez MA, Ruvalcaba Ledezma JC. La salud y sus determinantes, promoción de la salud y educación sanitaria. JONNPR 2020;5(1): 81-90.
- [7] Franco-Giraldo AJ. Configuraciones, modelos de salud y enfoques basados en la Atención Primaria en Latinoamérica, siglo XXI. Una revisión narrativa. Rev. Gerenc. Polít. Salud 2020; 19.