

# Scientific excellence for the consolidation of the national health systems

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In the past few years, we have witnessed a growing interest and awareness surrounding mental health because of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is becoming evident that mental health publications play a critical role in promoting a more informed and empathetic society. In this regard, it is important to recognize the direct impact that these publications have on public health.

Mental health affects people of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds. However, it has long been stigmatized<sup>1</sup> and relegated to the background compared to other areas of medicine. Fortunately, this is changing thanks to the tireless work of dedicated professionals and committed organizations within El Salvador's National Integrated Health System.

Mental health publications that you are about to read in Volume 6, Nº. 2 of *Alerta* journal play an influential role in providing accurate and up-to-date information on a diverse array of topics. This issue includes five case reports, two original articles on mental health during the pandemic, one from Uruguay and one from Spain, a brief communication on lidocaine management in palliative care patients, five narrative reviews and three correspondences, including one from Peru on occupational stress in frontline staff in the care of COVID-19.

The objective of this publication is not only to educate health personnel and the general public about the challenges faced by people with mental health disorders but also to provide an invaluable tool for professionals in this field about the need to generate new, rigorous, and exhaustive research, relevant clinical studies and

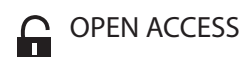
innovative therapeutic advances that will continuously improve the quality of care in this area of health.

These scientific papers also foster the exchange of knowledge among experts, which in turn promotes research and development in mental health. Increasing awareness and understanding of the issues in this critical area of health contributes to reducing stigma and promoting a more inclusive environment for those with mental illness.

In addition, by providing accurate, evidence-based information, publications contribute to better decision-making by health professionals, which translates into more effective and personalized care. It is important to emphasize that all these publications should be available in different formats and languages, in journals that, like this one, are open access.

It is everyone's responsibility to support and value these kinds of publications, as they represent a fundamental tool to improve our collective understanding of mental health and promote positive change in our society.

Finally, this issue of *Alerta* journal publishes a correspondence on simulation-based education in pediatrics, another transcendental topic to improve the quality of health care through learning and development of clinical skills and abilities in a controlled and safe environment for professionals in the public health care sector. This provides the opportunity to acquire theoretical and practical knowledge more effectively, as they can experience different clinical scenarios without putting people's lives at risk, encourages decision-making and teamwork as an effective tool to face



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complex clinical situations, and improve the quality of pediatric care.

It is with joy that we present today Volume 6, No. 2, whose content reflects our interest in discussing topics that are of great concern to the National Institute of Health: mental health and the education of health personnel in health issues. The latter has been possible by employing simulation as a learning technique through the National Simulation Center, not to mention the recent publication of the results of the National Mental Health Survey, the first of its kind in El Salvador<sup>2</sup>.

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