

Importance of global health in the training of health professionals

Abstract

The burden of global disease has been increasing in recent years. The role of universities in the training of professionals in Health Sciences capable of assuming a role of educators will be essential to raise awareness and reduce costs of or diseases that currently affect the world's health systems.

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Opinion

The term “global health” began to have prominence in recent times and includes all those public health problems in different countries and populations taking into account the reality of each region.¹ This term includes six major axes corresponding to: social justice, human rights, equity, common benefits, respect for the environment and respect for the idiosyncrasy and people's identity.^{1,2} Each component includes research and practice that places the improvement of health and of equity in health³ as a priority.

Global health does not pertain only to health professionals or governments but also to health professionals dedicated to teaching. These educators are responsible for training the future generations who will ensure the health of the populations. The training of future professionals plays a fundamental role on the impact of global health and should include a very strong teaching component, of learning how to transmit knowledge.⁴

Each country in the world has its specific epidemiological, demographic and health characteristics and has directed efforts, for the most part, to accomplish sustainable development objectives. However, there is an access and education gap that limits the universality of health. Like wise, the increase in chronic non-communicable diseases has generated a global burden of disease that directly impacts governments. In addition to this, there is an absence of actions aimed at providing health and preventing disease along with a vision of hyper specialization in the training of professionals.

Sensitizing health professionals through training and incorporating health education into the curriculum are an indispensable part of the management of the professional staff. Education of the patient should be assumed as part of the daily practice, including, among other things, the determinants of health such as healthy eating, physical activity, health in the environment, among others. This approach would be the first step in improving the health of the population. However, it is necessary to raise consciousness among the health professionals in the first place, so they can make the patients aware as well.

Our goal should be training professionals that are capable of conceiving global health as a broad term that directs efforts towards

the determinants of health and that work not only on treatment and rehabilitation but also on strengthening health through lifestyle, environment and risk factor modifications. To effectively contribute to global health, universities must teach and raise awareness among all students of Health Sciences about their role as educators, a role that could be the key to contributing to decreasing the incidence statistics of chronic non-communicable diseases.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the authors consider that one of the key factors that could contribute to the improvement of global health is the training of all professionals in health sciences in their role as educators. It is through this position from which they can contribute to the awareness of prevention of diseases and help to reduce the overall burden of the disease.

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Conflicts of interest

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