



# REVISTA COLOMBIANA DE PSIQUIATRÍA

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## Editorial

# A journal for the regional challenges of psychiatry but with a global voice



## Una revista para los retos regionales de la psiquiatría con voz global

Current psychiatry in Colombia faces multiple challenges, including social disparities, the phenomena of social exclusion, experiences of violence, problems of access to healthcare resources and the cultural ways of experiencing psychological suffering in our environment. Added to these challenges are the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has increased the prevalence of a range of mental problems and disorders and heightened the difficulties described in the field. The catalogue of challenges is shaped by a growing state of global political mobilisation driven by groups demanding a reduction in social disparities, as well as equity in relation to human identities in terms of ethnicity, gender and sexual diversity.

This difficult landscape is a call for us to redouble our academic efforts in studying how to reduce the impact of mental symptoms and disorders in the population, but also to study ways of improving people's mental, cerebral and physical health and well-being. Some of the most important recent academic developments in psychiatry and mental health call for an appreciation of the contexts of individuals, including the social determinants of health, interactions between individuals and nature, and the understanding of the sociopolitical forces and systems that affect people's physical and mental well-being. The chances of enjoying good mental health depend in part on the evidence generated by academic spaces to promote equity in mental health by stimulating a reduction in social inequalities, the quest for equity for groups who suffer exclusion based on identity, and reduction of the stigma surrounding people with mental health problems.

The role of academia in promoting equity in mental health is correlated with the WHO World Mental Health Report of June 2022, which appeals for a radical change in the way in which mental health is valued, protected and cared for. This report

calls for the development of community spaces for providing care for psychiatric conditions that were previously only treated in psychiatric hospitals or hospices. The report also encourages us to consolidate communities for mental health care through the implementation of care service networks with highly complex care programmes and with programmes that promote strategies for prevention, promotion, mental health care and reduction of the associated stigma.

In response to this landscape, the *Revista Colombiana de Psiquiatría* [Colombian Journal of Psychiatry] has an important obligation to promote quality evidence on current initiatives in psychiatry and mental health with an impact at regional level. The journal also plans to launch a critical space for reflection on the role of healthcare professionals and academics working in the field of psychiatry in the region. This is a journal originating from the southern hemisphere whose aim is to remain close to the communities; a journal contextualised, positioned, diverse, inclusive and sensitive to the quest for equity that will enable improvement in mental and brain health.

I am writing this editorial for the first time as the new Director of the *Revista Colombiana de Psiquiatría*. I feel honoured and motivated by the opportunity I have been given to lead this journal's editorial processes. To workers in psychiatry and mental health, to our readers, please accept my commitment to help the journal become a place of active pronouncement on issues relevant to national psychiatry and on the dialogues our psychiatry establishes with world psychiatry, biological sciences, social sciences, humanities and the arts. I would like to take this opportunity to send a message of thanks and special appreciation to Dr Carlos Palacio for the dedicated, rigorous and high-quality work he did during his tenure as Editor of the *Revista Colombiana de Psiquiatría*.

Hernando Santamaría-García  
Editor de la Revista Colombiana de Psiquiatría, Universidad  
Javeriana, Bogotá, Colombia  
E-mail address: [hernando.santamaria@javeriana.edu.co](mailto:hernando.santamaria@javeriana.edu.co)

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