



PAHO

Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) Virtual Campus for Public Health (VCPH)

World Health Day 2021 - Establishing a more just and healthy world

Webinar: The future of medical education in the Region of the Americas

Rationale

The COVID-19 pandemic has made it clearer than ever that some people live healthier lives and have better access to health services than others because of the conditions in which they are born, grow up, live, work, and age.

Around the world, some groups struggle to make ends meet with little daily income, have poorer housing and education conditions than others, enjoy fewer employment opportunities, experience greater gender inequality, and have little or no access to safe environments, clean water and air, food security, and health services. This leads to unnecessary suffering, preventable illness and premature death. And it damages our societies and economies.

This is not only unjust, but preventable. That is why leaders have a responsibility to ensure that everyone enjoys living and working conditions conducive to good health, and that all people have access to quality health services when and where they need them.

The presence and competencies of health workers largely determine a community's access to health. Quality medical training that is centered on the community, and appropriate to local realities and needs, is a fundamental element of high-quality health services.

Meanwhile, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has given new impetus to the discussion of medical education, questioning the status quo. The responses of medical schools have varied: some quickly opted to suspend clinical practice, while others invited upper-level medical students to collaborate on various tasks. As was also the case in other educational settings, distance learning was encouraged for medical and health sciences students.

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Although medical training in the 21st century was seen as a something substantively received in clinical practice settings and universities, many medical schools have sought ways to rapidly transition to online formats for the entire curriculum. Thus, priority was given to an innovative academic approach that address theoretical content, clinical simulations, teaching practices, exams, or combinations of these. These new proposals have focused primarily on teaching and evaluating the dimensions of medicine that do not require human contact, such as scientific knowledge and clinical reasoning.

“We need to conduct a futurology exercise with respect to trends in higher education in a post-pandemic world. Tomorrow’s students will learn when, how, and where they deem right for themselves.”
(Dr. Gilliat Falbo)

But what is happening, and what is going to happen, with clinical practices?

The pandemic has also contributed to the dizzying development of telemedicine, which promises to become a new healthcare practice with new educational content. But how far can virtual simulation take us in learning certain clinical and relational competencies? New technology is our ally. But what coming challenges must be met so as not to widen the distance between health professionals and the community that needs their care?

“Practice in the field is irreplaceable; situational competencies are acquired in concrete situations. We must create an educational model that stimulates the new generations to meet the needs of the people who suffer and have suffered most during this pandemic and ensure that the best of our education is compatible with the new technology.”
(Dr. Mario Rovere)

While much of academia’s energy is going into the virtualization effort, examination of the COVID-19 pandemic shows that it will not be possible to limit the spread of this pandemic or others that may occur without identifying cases and contacts at the community level, and without developing early home-based care of infected persons to prevent complications and hospital admissions, and limit mortality.

“Social determinants affect individuals and communities and addressing them should play a growing role in health professions education as our healthcare systems are judged by patient and community health outcomes, not just rewarded by the number of contacts and interventions we perform. Equipping medical school graduates with skills in addressing adverse social determinants will yield a far greater health benefit than will preparing them for the current medical model.”
(Dr. Arthur Kaufman)

This situation gives new life to issues on the unfinished agenda surrounding the training of health professionals, specifically regarding the role of universities in the development of the professional identity of future physicians and their commitment to the social welfare of the population. It is an opportunity to discuss medicine’s social contract once again, which includes not only responsibility for biological and mental health but also a deep understanding of the social, moral, and ethical

determinants of health. How can we promote this contract when the pandemic has focused health systems on critical care units and remote care?

What, then, are the prospects for medical education in the Region of the Americas in a context of training and clinical practice that is increasingly dominated by new technologies?

How can we advance training in highly technological environments without intensifying the already present inequalities between students and the population in different countries?

How can these new approaches be integrated with an unfinished agenda for community-based medical training that takes an interdisciplinary approach and effectively encourages professionals to settle and remain in underserved areas?

World Health Day 2021, as part of the International Year of Health and Care Workers, is an ideal date for stimulating a regional debate that fosters the recognition of ideas, achievements, and difficulties, and that promotes the shared construction of new visions for the design, planning, and organization of medical training.¹

Objectives

- Recognize different visions of medical education in the Region of the Americas in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Share challenges, lessons learned, best practices, and recommendations for the development of a new agenda in medical education that integrates community-based training with the incorporation of new technologies in health care and training.

Date: 7 April 2021

Time: 2 - 3:30 p.m. (EST - Eastern Standard Time, USA)

Target audience

The seminar is aimed at heads of faculties of medicine and health sciences, universities and other educational institutions, human resources managers, and people interested in medical education.

¹ Abreu-Hernández Luis F, León-Bórquez Ricardo, García-Gutiérrez José F. *Pandemia de COVID-19 y educación médica en Latinoamérica. FEM (Ed. impresa) [Internet]. 2020 [cited 2021 Mar 10]; 23(5): 237-242. Available at:*

http://scielo.isciii.es/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2014-98322020000600002&lng=es. Epub23-Nov-2020.

Costa Manuel João, Carvalho-Filho Marco. *Una nueva época para la educación médica después de la COVID-19. FEM (Ed. impresa) [Internet]. 2020 [cited 2021 Mar 10]; 23(2): 55-57. Available at:*

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Herrera-Añazco P, Toro-Huamanchumo CJ. *Educación médica durante la pandemia del COVID-19: iniciativas mundiales para el pregrado, internado y el residentado médico. Acta Med Perú. 2020;37(2):169-75. doi: <https://doi.org/10.35663/amp.2020.372.999>*

Guests Speakers

- Gilliat Falbo
Pediatric surgeon
Former president of the Professor Fernando Figueira Institute of Integral Medicine (IMIP)
Former Secretary of Health of the State of Pernambuco, Brazil
Academic Coordinator, Pernambuco Health School, Brazil
Head of the teacher training development committee
- Arthur Kaufman
Internist and family physician
Worked in the Indian Health Service among the Sioux, Navajo, and Pueblo Indians before becoming
Chair of Family and Community Medicine, former Vice Chancellor for Community Health, University
of New Mexico, USA.
His expertise is in professional health education for service to rural and underserved populations, a
background he brings to the PAHO/WHO Collaborating Center for the Education of Health
Professionals.
- Mario Rovere
Current director of the Floreal Ferrar Government School of Health, Province of Buenos Aires,
Argentina, and Full Professor and Director of the master's in public health at the University of
Rosario, Argentina.
Pediatrician and expert on international public health.
Former PAHO/WHO human resources advisor on health; former Vice-Minister of Health of
Argentina, and former dean of the medical education program at the National University of La
Matanza, Argentina.

Methodology

The event will be held on Zoom with simultaneous interpretation into English, Spanish, and Portuguese.
The link for registering for the Zoom meeting will be available on the VCPH webinar site.

Agenda

Time	Description	Speaker
2:00-2:10 p.m. Opening)	<p>Welcoming remarks.</p> <p>Introduction: The context of World Health Day and the Year of Health and Care Workers.</p>	<p>Foreword</p> <p>Gabriel Listovsky, Coordinator of the Virtual Campus for Public Health/PAHO</p> <p>James Fitzgerald, Director, Department of Health Systems and Services, PAHO</p>
2:10-3:20 p.m. Presentations and dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical education in the current and post-pandemic contexts. • Opportunities for new technologies and the challenges of an unfinished agenda. • Better education for greater inclusion. 	<p>Moderator Fernando Menezes, Unit Chief, Human Resources for Health, PAHO</p> <p>Guests Speakers: Gilliat Falbo Mario Rovere Arthur Kaufman</p> <p>Dynamic of the encounter: Pre-recorded presentations by the speakers will be shared, they will then participate in a dialogue and respond to questions. The audience will participate through the event's interactive resources.</p>
3:20-3:30 p.m. Close	Summary of the event and closing words.	Fernando Menezes James Fitzgerald