



LETTER TO THE DIRECTOR

Community resources an important element of the social network in healthy aging

Los recursos comunitarios un elemento de importancia de la red social en el envejecimiento saludable

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Mr. Director:

To define social support one must first delimit the social network, which is characterized as a set of human relationships that have a lasting impact on the life of any person.⁽¹⁾ From which social capital and social support emanate.⁽²⁾

The concept of social support emerges from the interest in understanding social interactions and the tendency to seek the company of other people, especially in stressful situations in the course of the life cycle.⁽¹⁾

At present, this topic is of utmost importance given the results of studies that show how the Cuban population shows high rates of population aging and its progression in this direction in the coming years, making Cuba the country with the highest proportion of older adults in Latin America, which will bring numerous challenges for the different spheres of society, especially for Public Health.⁽³⁾

Undoubtedly, the role of the family is one of the most important resources of the older adult (MA), it is responsible for providing direct care,⁽³⁾ however, focusing social support to the geriatric population only in the family is wrong since a fundamental component for the development of individual well-being are community resources, which respond to the needs and transition moments within the development process in each subject.⁽⁴⁾

Social participation is considered one of the protective factors for the health and functionality of the elderly, together with lifestyle, family support, educational level, physical and mental function, economic support, state and type of illness, some authors consider recreational activities, reading, cinema and cultural outings.⁽⁵⁾

Multidimensional, intersectoral and multidisciplinary actions are required to provide social support to the elderly:

Community resources: aimed at favoring the social inclusion of the MA, promoting functional capacity to the maximum, in addition to strengthening links between health, recreational, sports and cultural services. Participate in support groups, participatory programs, workshops for caregivers and self-care, local health prevention programs.

Primary health care: identify by the basic health teams and basic work groups in a timely manner through screening and dispensation, the families with older adults, evaluate them in a comprehensive manner from the psychological, biological and social point of view with all professionals in close communication, recognize the autonomy of the MA, provide a person-centered care, increase health promotion and prevention actions with the objective of timely diagnosis and prolong the appearance of geriatric syndromes.

Socioeconomic: the economic independence and solvency of their basic needs should be evaluated, the expenses generated by their food, medicines and care services should be evaluated and unnecessary ones should be avoided, and projects aimed at prolonging the health of the elderly (sports, cultural and recreational spaces) should be encouraged in sustainable economic management models.

To develop new multidimensional possibilities that facilitate the integral potential of the elderly, resize their role in society, for a whole life experience, with the purpose of minimizing risks, promoting personal autonomy and contributing to the improvement of the quality of life of this population group.⁽⁶⁾

Cuba is an example of care for the elderly by continuously strengthening legal, social and health actions in order to achieve greater well-being and functional capacity for healthy aging. Hence the need to continue to address these complex issues in a changing social and economic scenario such as the current one.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

Authors' Contribution

YFS and DLM: were responsible for conceptualization, formal analysis, project management, writing - original draft, writing - revision and editing. All authors approved the final manuscript.

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