



# Mental Health and Addiction: New Times and Challenges

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It is an honor to have been invited to be Editor-in-Chief of the *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction* (IJMHA). A journal of great importance which has made many significant contributions in our field. At the same time, it is a great challenge to continue the important work done by Prof. Masood Zangeneh and the entire Editorial Board over the years. My mission is to maintain the journal's quality by working together with the new members of the Editorial Board and building collaborative work relationships among all those involved in the editorial process. Although the IJMHA is a journal specialized in mental health and addiction, the diversity of its perspectives, themes, and areas of knowledge is noteworthy and relevant to the most important issues of our time.

The twenty-first century has been marked by relevant changes, impacting work relations, commercial and economic negotiations, mainly due to new forms of connection and social interaction worldwide. Along with the advance of technologies, new challenges are presented because such advances are unequally distributed among countries, populations, and groups, generating different consequences and inequities. Public health is one of the sectors most significantly impacted in this new context. Climate and environmental changes, new forms and configurations of work, economic crises, territorial conflicts, migratory crises, and, more recently, the COVID-19 pandemic are some aspects that directly affect the health and quality of life of the world population (Abrams & Szeffler, 2020; Kestens et al., 2017).

Specifically, about mental health, we currently consider it to be a chronic condition directly integrated into general health, overcoming the mind/body dichotomy, and to the social context (Allen et al., 2014). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health is a condition of concern with the growth of some psychiatric disorders worldwide (WHO, 2013). Beyond the prevalence, it is known that the Global Burden of Disease of such conditions brings direct consequences in the daily lives of people and collectivity, generating a direct impact on their productivity and quality of life. For this reason, there is a need for more significant investment in science and technology, public policies, and more effective prevention, promotion, and treatment actions (WHO, 2018).

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In regard to the COVID-19 pandemic, this area becomes even more relevant. Beyond the direct consequences of increased morbidity/mortality, other conditions that have worsened as a consequence of the pandemic include depression, anxiety, stress, and consumption of psychoactive substances (Schmits & Glowacz, 2021; Yildirim et al., 2021). It is even hypothesized that one of the medium-term effects of COVID-19 is the worsening of mental health conditions (United Nations, 2020).

Therefore, due to the complexification of modern society and the consequences of mental health and addictions, new challenges are presented to researchers in advancing knowledge. Thus, understanding and research in the field need to be broadened while integrating diverse expertise and research methods. The multiple determinations related to mental health and addiction, and the new challenges presented, require innovative ways of doing research. In this aspect, the integration of areas of knowledge, previously studied in isolation, has been rethought to achieve more significant advances. International cooperation and transnational studies have been proposed to understand the similarities and specificities between regions and countries. Mixed and comprehensive methods have been advanced around the world. In other words, the complexity in the area of mental health and addictions has led to the need for an increasingly integrated, global, and interdisciplinary knowledge network. At the same time, we must also seek to understand how specific situations are integrated into broader issues.

In this sense, the IJMHA will seek a diversity of knowledge in mental health and addictions. Diversity that values an interdisciplinary approach integrates several areas, such as Epidemiology, Genetics, Public Policies, Social Sciences, Pharmacology, Behavioral Sciences, Neurosciences, and others. The main purpose is to consider the integral and contextualized vision of health in general. This diversity is also desirable by disseminating knowledge stemming from different researchers, research topics, groups studied, and regions of the world. From the integration, diversity, and the global vision of knowledge, we believe we can compile and disseminate research in the broadest possible way that, at the same time, is sensitive to the specificities of each context studied.

So, as we believe that the world is constantly changing and increasingly integrated, with new challenges arising from this dynamism, scientific knowledge is also a result of these changes, bringing new challenges and research questions to be investigated. In this sense, our mission is always to be aware of such challenges and ways to deal with them. To face these new times and challenges, we count on the collaboration of researchers and readers. We are focused on maintaining our commitment to evidence-based scientific dissemination pertaining to the central issues in the field. Therefore, we expect to expand the collaboration of researchers and themes published in the journal, seeking a more significant impact in the scientific environment. We're counting on all of you!

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## Declarations

**Ethics Statement** This submission is the Editorial for the International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction. It does not report on research involving human participants.

**Informed Consent** Informed consent was not required as this submission is an Editorial as per above.

**Conflict of Interest** The author declare that he have no conflict of interest.

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