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## Promotion of healthy lifestyles in Primary Care in Latin America. Bibliographic review

Promoción de estilos de vida saludables en la Atención Primaria en América Latina.  
Revisión bibliográfica

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## Abstract

The promotion of healthy lifestyles in Latin America is presented as a priority issue in relation to social health problems, as it occurs in the provision of primary services. This paper aims to examine the close interrelationship between the practices of health professionals, social interactions and health mediation in terms of its effectors. An analytic-synthetic documentary research approach, an analysis of 19 scientific articles produced between 2014 and 2024 and published in indexed databases such as PubMed, SciELO and ScienceDirect was conducted. The most significant findings suggest that health professionals are key players in teaching for health promotion. Specific strategies, including motivational interviewing and nurse-led initiatives, were effective in clinical practice in reducing risk factors. These gaps also highlight the operational limitations that remain from the systematic evaluation and use of technologies. Final

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recommendations call for improving practitioner skills, modifying strategies to the local context, and strengthening technology convergence in order to scale interventions.

**Keywords:** primary health care, chronic diseases, healthy lifestyles, health promotion, health technologies

### **Resumen**

La promoción de estilos de vida saludable en América Latina se presenta como un asunto prioritario en relación a las problemáticas sociales de salud, tal como se da en la provisión de servicios primarios. Este trabajo se propone examinar la estrecha interrelación entre las prácticas de los profesionales de salud, las interacciones sociales y la mediación en salud en términos de sus efectores. Un enfoque de investigación documental analítico-sintético, se realizó un análisis de 19 artículos científicos producidos entre 2014 y 2024 y publicados en bases de datos indexadas como PubMed, SciELO y ScienceDirect. Los hallazgos más significativos sugieren que los profesionales de la salud son actores clave en la enseñanza para la promoción de la salud. Estrategias específicas, que incluyen la entrevista motivacional y las iniciativas lideradas por enfermeras, fueron efectivas en la práctica clínica para reducir factores de riesgo. Estas brechas también destacan las limitaciones operativas que permanecen de la evaluación sistemática y el uso de tecnologías. Las recomendaciones finales apuntan por la mejora de las habilidades de los profesionales, la modificación de las estrategias al contexto local y el fortalecimiento de la convergencia de tecnologías con el fin de escalar las intervenciones.

**Palabras clave:** atención primaria, enfermedades crónicas, estilos de vida saludables, promoción de la salud, tecnologías en salud

## Introduction

The promotion of healthy lifestyles is a fundamental strategy to address the growing caseload of people with chronic diseases in primary care. Despite the challenges this represents for health systems, with the implementation of evidence-based strategies, coupled with adequate support, it is possible to significantly improve the health of communities and even reduce existing health inequalities. This study offers a comprehensive view of best practices and contributes to future research and implementation of policies aimed at health promotion (Gil-Girbau et al., 2021) .

In recent times, the promotion of healthy lifestyles has gained considerable prominence in the field of public health worldwide. The growing increase in chronic non-communicable diseases, such as type 2 diabetes, arterial hypertension, cardiovascular diseases and obesity, has put significant pressure on health systems, emphasizing the importance of adopting and persisting in healthy lifestyle habits from a preventive point of view. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), chronic diseases are responsible for 71% of deaths worldwide, which highlights the need to implement effective interventions that promote changes in people's lifestyles (Pan American Health Organization, 2022) .

The promotion of healthy lifestyles, including a balanced diet, regular physical activity, abstinence from tobacco and alcohol consumption, and stress management, have been identified as indispensable strategies to reduce the burden of chronic diseases. Worldwide, there are several initiatives and policies that have been implemented to promote these healthy habits in the population (Córdoba García et al., 2022) .

However, the effectiveness of these initiatives may vary considerably among different regions and population groups, related to external factors such as economic inequality, lack of adequate infrastructure for physical activity, and difficulty in obtaining healthy food. On the other hand, the growing demand for urban areas with no space for exercise favors sedentary lifestyles, contributing to the adoption of unhealthy habits. In addition, cultural diversity and socioeconomic

differences directly influence the perception of people to adopt healthy lifestyles, this reality poses a real challenge for the implementation of programs that are effective in promoting health (Romero González, 2020) .

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) cause approximately 41 million deaths annually, accounting for 74% of all deaths worldwide. Each year, an estimated 17 million people under the age of 70 die prematurely from NCDs, 86% of these deaths occurring in low- and middle-income countries, where 77% of all NCD deaths are concentrated. It has been determined that the leading causes of death from NCDs are related to cardiovascular diseases (17.9 million), cancer (9.3 million), chronic respiratory diseases (4.1 million) and diabetes (2 million). These four pathologies are responsible for more than 80% of premature deaths due to NCDs. Studies have shown that the main risk factors are related to tobacco use, physical inactivity, harmful alcohol consumption, unhealthy diet and air pollution. That is why early detection, screening, treatment and palliative care are essential to combat this type of disease (World Health Organization, 2023) .

Promoting healthy lifestyles in the population is not only essential to lower the incidence of NCDs, but has also been shown to have a positive impact on general well-being, mental health and quality of life. A well-balanced diet and regular physical activity not only contribute to maintaining an age- and gender-appropriate body weight, but also improve mood, energy and sleep cycle. In addition, eliminating tobacco use and restricting alcohol reduces the risk of developing a wide range of diseases, including cancer and liver disease.

From an economic perspective, the promotion of healthy lifestyles can significantly minimize the health care costs associated with NCD treatment, which is why investing in health promotion through education and prevention activities can greatly alleviate the financial burden on health systems and thus improve the productivity of the population.

Primary health care is currently in a position that gives it a relevant role in strengthening the promotion of a healthy lifestyle among

citizens. Defined as the first line of care, health personnel at this level contact individuals and groups, which in turn provides a great possibility to educate, encourage and assist in the change or introduction of healthy behaviors through brief and effective interventions. Primary care physicians have the ability to assess for patient risk factors, offer information and provide educational resources, and set personalized health goals.

In parallel, primary care makes it possible to establish active contact and trust in patients, which translates into the possibility of adherence to the suggested behavioral modifications over a longer period of time. Primary care should be complemented by health promotion programs aimed at good nutrition and physical activity and, at the pharmacological level, smoking cessation and the promotion of sport or physical activity in order to control stress.

In the context of primary care, the patient-centered approach of nurses is a valid strategy to reinforce the adoption of healthy habits. Nurses generally have the most and best contact with patients, which allows them to provide health interventions and ongoing support. Nurses can assess what lifestyles patients have, which may be habitual, and what aspects need to be changed and collaborate with them to build viable courses of action (González, 2023; Sánchez-Franco et al., 2023).

They believe that the role of nurses includes educating patients about the importance of a healthy lifestyle and providing instructions to help them overcome restrictions. This also implies that nurses must be able to consistently educate and integrate healthy living into the daily habits of society. Dandu et al. (2022) argue that to these functions they can also add training and promotion of healthy lifestyles.

Despite the benefits of promoting healthy lifestyles, there are currently numerous difficulties hindering all these efforts. One of the main barriers is the lack of time and resources available for primary care, which limits the ability of health professionals to give sufficient attention to lifestyle education. Moreover, the lack of specialized training in health promotion and in the mastery of counseling skills can somewhat hinder the effectiveness of these interventions.

Another important challenge they face is resistance to change on the part of patients, since changing deeply ingrained lifestyle habits requires motivation, ongoing support and changes in the individual's social and family environment. In addition, factors such as poverty, low educational level and difficulty in making healthy choices can limit people's ability to adopt healthy lifestyles.

The absence of effective promotion of healthy lifestyles has been shown to have serious consequences for community health. The high prevalence of chronic noncommunicable diseases not only affects the quality of life of individuals, but also creates an overburden on health systems, increasing health care costs and decreasing labor productivity. At the community level, this situation can lead to an endless cycle of poverty and disease, disproportionately affecting mainly the most vulnerable populations (De La Guardia Gutiérrez et al., 2020) .

Latin America faces significant challenges in promoting healthy lifestyles due to the social and economic inequalities that characterize the region. These inequalities affect not only the ability to access health services, but also the conditions necessary to maintain healthy habits, such as the availability of safe spaces for physical activity and access to nutritious food (Pan American Health Organization, 2022). In addition, accelerated urbanization and the increase in sedentary lifestyles have contributed to the rise in the incidence of chronic noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), exacerbating the burden on health systems (Romero González, 2020).

In this context, primary care systems play a crucial role as the first line of contact with the population, offering unique opportunities to educate, prevent, and promote healthy behaviors (Córdoba García et al., 2022). The promotion of healthy lifestyles, which includes a balanced diet, regular practice of physical activity, abstinence from tobacco and alcohol, and stress management, is fundamental to mitigate the impact of NCDs. However, efforts to implement these strategies often face significant barriers, such as lack of resources, resistance to habit change, and adverse socioeconomic factors (De La Guardia Gutiérrez et al., 2020).

NCDs are responsible for approximately 74% of all deaths worldwide, with a particularly high impact in low- and middle-income countries, where 86% of premature deaths related to these diseases are concentrated (World Health Organization, 2023). In Latin America, the prevalence of NCDs such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and obesity is closely linked to risk factors such as tobacco use, physical inactivity and unhealthy diets, which are in turn influenced by structural and cultural inequalities (González, 2023).

Considering the significant impact of lifestyles on public health and the current challenges associated with their promotion, it is important to conduct a comprehensive literature review to identify effective strategies and areas for improvement. This study aims to "Analyze the existing literature in the period (2014-2024) on the promotion of healthy lifestyles in the primary care setting in Latin America."

## Methodology

This study adopts a documentary design with an analytical-synthetic approach, focused on analyzing the role of health professionals, the effectiveness of communication practices and strategies, and the use of technology in the promotion of healthy lifestyles in Latin America. The research is based on the collection, analysis and synthesis of information from 19 academic papers and scientific papers selected from recognized databases such as PubMed, SciELO and ScienceDirect.

The databases were selected for their relevance and prestige in the publication of peer-reviewed scientific research. The search was carried out using Boolean operators (AND, OR) to combine keywords such as "health promotion," "lifestyle," "Latin America," "healthcare professionals," and "technology in health promotion." These search strategies allowed optimizing the retrieval of relevant information, ensuring accurate and focused results in the regional context.

To ensure the quality and relevance of the documents, inclusion criteria were established, such as relevance of the topic, focus on Latin America, publication in indexed journals and timeliness of the studies

(2014-2023). Articles that did not specifically address health promotion, lacked analysis on social determinants or were limited exclusively to clinical interventions without considering preventive or community strategies were excluded.

The analysis of the documents was structured through a matrix designed to record key information, including aspects such as the location of the study, main findings and authors' recommendations. This tool facilitated the identification of patterns, comparisons between studies and the grouping of information into three main categories: the role of health professionals, the evaluation of the effectiveness of practices, and the use of communication strategies and technology.

The analysis process was carried out in several stages. First, an initial review of the documents was carried out to identify recurrent themes and relevant keywords. Subsequently, the data were organized into the defined categories, which allowed for a critical and structured synthesis of the information. Finally, the findings were integrated to highlight best practices, challenges and opportunities in the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

This methodological approach ensures that the results of the study are rigorous, evidence-based and oriented to improve the health promotion strategies in Latin America. The combination of different sources and the thematic analysis allows a comprehensive view to be obtained, providing a solid basis for formulating recommendations applicable to health systems in the region.

## Results

The following tables present the results of the analysis of the selected articles.

**Table 1:** *Analysis of analysis category 1*

Title	Location	Role of health professionals
Evaluation of a distance education program in Health	Chile	It highlights that health professionals are



<p>Promotion for Primary Care in Chile (Salinas et al., 2014).</p>		<p>fundamental in implementing health promotion programs in primary care. They improved their skills through distance education, contributing to the prevention of chronic diseases and promotion of healthy habits.</p>
<p>Health promotion in the General Comprehensive Medicine specialty program in Cuba (Pupo Ávila et al., 2015).</p>	<p>Cuba</p>	<p>Physicians and nurses in the specialty of General Comprehensive Medicine are fundamental in the promotion of health in primary care. They implement preventive actions and promote healthy lifestyles within the communities.</p>
<p>Promotion of healthy lifestyles in intercultural family health research and intervention in the elderly in Manta and Jaramijó (Sabando Mera et al., 2016).</p>	<p>Ecuador</p>	<p>Health professionals, including students, promote active lifestyles in older adults through recreational and physical activities, seeking self-management, autonomy and disease prevention to improve physical, mental and social health.</p>
<p>Primary health care and active aging (González Rodríguez, 2016).</p>	<p>Cuba</p>	<p>Emphasizes the central role of human resources in health in promoting active aging, promoting physical, recreational and educational activities for the elderly from primary care.</p>

Communication at the first level of health care (Naípe Delgado et al., 2016).	Cuba	He stresses that effective communication between physicians and nurses in primary care is key to educate and inform about healthy behaviors, contributing to the promotion of healthy lifestyles.
Promotion of behavioral changes towards healthy lifestyles in outpatient consultation (Quillas Benites et al., 2017).	Peru	He stresses that physicians should evaluate the phases of change and use motivational strategies to promote healthy habits, such as good nutrition and physical activity.
Medical training in Health Promotion from the social determinants approach (Pupo Ávila et al., 2017).	Cuba	It highlights medical training focused on social determinants, considering physicians as key actors to influence the community through education and the creation of healthy environments.
Health promotion: evolution and challenges in Latin America (Coronel & Marzo, 2017).	Ecuador	It emphasizes the active participation of professionals to improve the quality of life of the population and reduce inequalities through health education and the implementation of public health policies.
Social prescription, a dimension of health promotion in general integrative medicine (Bonafant Ruiz, 2019).	Cuba	It highlights that family physicians can recommend non-medical services and activities in the community to improve patients' overall wellness by linking them to

		community resources such as exercise classes and recreational activities.
<b>Lifestyle Medicine. An alternative to the advance of non-communicable diseases (Bentivegna &amp; Márquez, 2020).</b>	Venezuela	It highlights that physicians and nurses play a key role in encouraging healthy habits such as proper diet, exercise and stress management to prevent and manage chronic noncommunicable diseases.
<b>Health and its determinants, health promotion and health education (De La Guardia Gutiérrez et al., 2020).</b>	Mexico	He points out that professionals should intervene in health determinants and promote healthy habits, stressing that health promotion requires active participation to improve quality of life.
<b>Primary Care Strategies in five Latin American countries (Rojas Torres &amp; Gil Herrera, 2021).</b>	Venezuela	It highlights the crucial role of physicians and nurses in primary care in implementing public health programs, promoting healthy lifestyles at the community and family level.
<b>Strategies and limitations of nursing health counseling: an integrative literature review (Quintana Zavala et al., 2021).</b>	Mexico	Nurses use counseling as a tool to empower patients, encouraging self-care and healthy lifestyles.
<b>Medical competencies for the use of ICT in health promotion (Fernández, 2021).</b>	Venezuela	It highlights that professionals are key actors in the intervention on the social determinants of health, using digital tools to promote healthy habits.
<b>Health promotion: a critical look at its background and the</b>	Colombia	He emphasizes that professionals lead

role of health professionals (FI, 2021).		intersectoral teams and promote community participation, transcending the biomedical model to adopt collective and cultural approaches.
The nursing professional in health promotion at the second level of care (Herrera et al., 2022).	Ecuador	Focused on the role of nurses in the second level of care to promote self-motivation, healthy eating and physical activity, educating for self-care and disease prevention.
Education and health promotion from nursing (Izquierdo et al., 2022).	Ecuador	It underlines the relevance of nurses in health promotion through education, self-care and prevention of chronic diseases through specific activities.
Social prescription and community health assets for the promotion of people's health and well-being (Dandicourt et al., 2023).	Cuba	It highlights the implementation of social prescribing by professionals to link people with non-medical community resources, promoting healthy lifestyles and general wellbeing.
Role of nursing professionals in primary prevention of cardiovascular disease: literature review (Moriel-Galarza & Nava-González, 2023).	Mexico	Emphasizes the role of nurses in leading interventions for primary prevention of cardiovascular disease, including risk factor education and self-care.

**Table 2:** *Analysis of analysis category 2*

Title	Location	Evaluation of the effectiveness of the practices
<p><b>Evaluation of a distance education program in Health Promotion for Primary Care in Chile (Salinas et al., 2014).</b></p>	<p>Chile</p>	<p>Ninety percent of the students successfully completed the course, and 82% of the final projects were related to healthy lifestyles, evidencing the effectiveness of the program in implementing knowledge acquired in practice.</p>
<p><b>Health promotion in the General Comprehensive Medicine specialty program in Cuba (Pupo Ávila et al., 2015).</b></p>	<p>Cuba</p>	<p>Evaluates how health promotion is integrated into the MGI specialty curriculum, highlighting inadequacies in implementation due to limited alignment of the curriculum with the needs of the health system.</p>
<p><b>Promotion of healthy lifestyles in intercultural family health research and intervention in the elderly in Manta and Jaramijó (Sabando Mera et al., 2016).</b></p>	<p>Ecuador</p>	<p>The practices implemented through action research improved the quality of life of older adults, promoting active lifestyles through recreational and physical activities.</p>
<p><b>Primary health care and active aging (González Rodríguez, 2016).</b></p>	<p>Cuba</p>	<p>Evaluates how the promotion of active aging has improved the quality of life of older adults. Recreational activities and</p>

		physical exercise are considered beneficial, but no concrete figures detailing such benefits are presented.
<b>Communication at the first level of health care (Naibe Delgado et al., 2016).</b>	Cuba	It highlights the importance of effective communication for the success of promotion and prevention actions in primary care.
<b>Promotion of behavioral changes towards healthy lifestyles in outpatient consultation (Quillas Benites et al., 2017).</b>	Peru	Motivational interviewing and personalized interventions based on the transtheoretical model have been shown to be successful in reducing risk factors such as body mass index, cholesterol and blood pressure.
<b>Social prescription, a dimension of health promotion in general integrative medicine (Bonal Ruiz, 2019).</b>	Cuba	It highlights that social prescribing has been effective in guiding patients to community resources that promote healthy lifestyles, such as exercise classes and recreational activities.
<b>Lifestyle Medicine. An alternative to the advance of non-communicable diseases (Bentivegna &amp; Márquez, 2020).</b>	Venezuela	Examines studies showing the effectiveness of Mdelev in preventing and treating chronic diseases such as diabetes, obesity and cardiovascular disease. Includes success stories in reducing risk factors and reversing arteriosclerosis with

		changes in diet and exercise.
<b>Health and its determinants, health promotion and health education (De La Guardia Gutiérrez et al., 2020).</b>	Mexico	It promotes investment in prevention and promotion as a key strategy for improving long-term health outcomes, although there is no systematic evaluation of specific practices.
<b>Strategies and limitations of nursing health counseling: an integrative literature review (Quintana Zavala et al., 2021).</b>	Mexico	It evaluates that counseling programs, such as tobacco cessation and cardiovascular prevention, produce tangible benefits, including improved self-efficacy and risk factor reduction.
<b>Primary Care Strategies in Five Latin American Countries (Rojas Torres &amp; Gil Herrera, 2021)</b>	Venezuela	It highlights achievements in the promotion of maternal and child health and prevention of noncommunicable diseases, although challenges related to the fragmentation of health systems are still faced. Cuba is an example of effective universal coverage.
<b>Medical competencies for the use of ICT in health promotion (Fernández, 2021).</b>	Venezuela	It identifies successful practices such as the use of the transtheoretical model in motivational interviewing, demonstrating improvements in

		indicators such as blood pressure and cholesterol, and encouraging healthy lifestyle habits.
<b>Health promotion: a critical look at its background and the role of health professionals (Fl, 2021).</b>	Colombia	Evaluates the implementation of approaches such as the Ottawa Charter, pointing out the need to adapt them to local realities in order to maximize their impact.
<b>The nursing professional in health promotion at the second level of care (Herrera et al., 2022).</b>	Ecuador	It highlights the effectiveness of nursing interventions in preventing and managing chronic noncommunicable diseases through the promotion of self-care and standardized care plans.
<b>Education and health promotion from nursing (Izquierdo et al., 2022)</b>	Ecuador	Educational interventions have been successful in facilitating individual responsibility for health and self-care, reducing the risk of chronic disease.
<b>Social prescription and community health assets for the promotion of people's health and well-being (Dandicourt et al., 2023).</b>	Cuba	It evaluates that social prescribing improves quality of life, health perception and self-esteem, being effective in contexts that promote physical activity and emotional well-being.
<b>Role of nursing professionals in</b>	Mexico	Nurse-led interventions have reduced



primary prevention of cardiovascular disease: literature review (Moriel-Galarza & Nava-González, 2023).	cardiovascular risk factors, improved adherence to medications, and promoted healthy habits such as physical activity and nutrition.
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**Table 3:** *Analysis of analysis category 3*

Title	Location	Communication strategies and use of technologies
Evaluation of a distance education program in Health Promotion for Primary Care in Chile (Salinas et al., 2014).	Chile	The use of ICT in distance education through interactive online platforms that facilitated communication between participants, tutors and teachers, improving the learning and the implementation of health promotion strategies, stands out.
Communication at the first level of health care (Naibe Delgado et al., 2016).	Cuba	Emphasizes the need to employ various forms of communication (interpersonal, group, organizational and mass) in primary care to effectively reach different audiences.
Promotion of behavioral changes towards healthy lifestyles in outpatient consultation (Quillas Benites et al., 2017).	Peru	It mentions the importance of effective communication between healthcare professionals and patients, focusing on motivational interviewing as a personalized tool, although it does not delve into the use of digital technologies

		such as social networks or apps.
<b>Primary Care Strategies in five Latin American countries (Rojas Torres &amp; Gil Herrera, 2021).</b>	Venezuela	It highlights the emerging use of technologies such as teleconsultation and remote monitoring during the COVID-19 pandemic, strategies that have improved access to health care and promoted healthy habits.
<b>Medical competencies for the use of ICT in the promotion of health (Fernandez, 2021)</b>	Venezuela	It identifies barriers such as the lack of ICT training and the limited integration of these technologies in professional practice . It recommends including ICT training in university programs to better prepare health professionals.
<b>Health promotion: a critical look at its background and the role of health professionals (FI, 2021).</b>	Colombia	Encourages the active inclusion of communities in decision-making processes, promoting culturally relevant communication strategies adapted to the reality of the communities to improve the sustainability of interventions.
<b>Health Promotion in Colombia and its scope in the complex national political framework (1990-2019)</b>	Colombia	It highlights the importance of local and decentralized strategies that adapt public policies to the specific needs of each region, improving their effectiveness and sustainability.

<p><b>Strategies and limitations of nursing health counseling: an integrative literature review (Quintana Zavala et al., 2021).</b></p>	<p>Mexico</p>	<p>It emphasizes clear and humanized communication, avoiding technicalities, as the key to strengthening the relationship of trust between nurses and patients, thus improving health outcomes.</p>
<p><b>Role of nursing professionals in primary prevention of cardiovascular diseases : literature review (Moriel-Galarza &amp; Nava-González, 2023).</b></p>	<p>Mexico</p>	<p>He mentions the use of traditional educational strategies together with technologies such as mobile applications and SMS messages for patient follow-up. These tools have been shown to improve self-efficacy in the management of cardiovascular risk factors.</p>

Within societies, health professionals have an important role as advocates and active participants in the promotion of health care. Their responsibilities include actions in the social determinants of health, education of the population and promotion of good practices (De La Guardia Gutiérrez et al., 2020). Because of this, they are trained to build control in the creation of structures that improve the life characteristics of the population, so they are central in the solution of the situational picture of people's health. This approach is consistent with the evidence provided by Moriel-Galarza and Morales-Nava (2023) who highlight that nurses are the key to the implementation of effective interventions that decrease cardiovascular risk factors and improve self-care among patients.

The training, as well as the leadership of these professionals, are pillars in the Latin American region. Pupo Avila et al. (2017) support the need for training oriented towards social determinants, which allows them to intervene directly in the community with the creation of healthy environments. However, a number of challenges are noted, including the lack of training in intersectoral skills and the prevalence of a biomedical model that is inadequate for a holistic approach

(Flórez-López, 2021). At the same time, the role of professionals goes beyond providing care; they are also involved in social mobilization and policy development that is inclusive in character (Coronel & Marzo, 2017).

In community contexts, Sabando Mera et al (2016) also explain how the activities of professionals, as well as students in Ecuador, have been useful for the elderly in terms of their physical, mental and social well-being. This reaffirms the concept of that professional people should not act only as recipients of knowledge, but rather be agents of change whose roles include empowerment and citizen participation (Flórez-López, 2021). However, there is still a wider gap that needs to be filled, to align a professional's education with global and local needs, such as the increasing prevalence of non-communicable diseases (Bentivegna & Márquez, 2020).

Finally, the work of Rojas Torres and Gil Herrera (2021) draws attention to physicians and nurses in the implementation of public health programs in Cuba. The formation of intersectoral teams and the work with the community have facilitated the solution of health problems. However, fragmentation of health systems remains a problem in some countries in the region. This underscores the need for such leaders to develop competencies and communication skills so that the potential impact of interventions is maximized.

It is important to evaluate health promotion practices to design optimal strategies and focus on bottlenecks. Nurse-led interventions have been shown to significantly decrease some cardiovascular risk factors and improve adherence to therapy and healthy choices (Moriel-Galarza & Nava-Gonzalez, 2023). This success emphasizes the need to develop evidence-based interventions that respond to particular health problems.

Quintana Zavala et al. (2021) have emphasized that health counseling programs improve self-efficacy and reduce risk factors. The evaluation of these practices has shown positive results, particularly in the control of chronic diseases. However, as pointed out by Gutiérrez et al. (2020), some strategies are not systematically evaluated, which makes it difficult to assess their long-term effect. In this sense, it is necessary

to integrate clear metrics and sound methodologies into promotion programs.

In the primary care setting, Quillas Benites et al. (2017) praise the success of motivational interviewing, which has resulted in decreases in indicators such as body mass index and blood pressure. However, more research is needed to universalize these findings across different populations. At the same time, Sabando Mera et al. (2016) were able to observe an improvement in the quality of life of the elderly in Ecuador, a fact that, however, lacks detailed statistical evidence in the article, making it difficult to generalize broadly.

On the other hand, Bentivegna and Marquez (2020) reviewed studies indicating that Lifestyle Medicine can prevent chronic diseases. However, they emphasized that the adoption of such practices encounters obstacles related to training and resources. In Cuba, Pupo Avila et al. (2015) found that even if health promotion is part of the training of General Practice physicians, its implementation is not satisfactory due to limitations in practical skills.

Finally, Flórez-López (2021) emphasizes that all promotion strategies should be designed and adapted to specific market structures and their particular characteristics, which could improve the effectiveness of promotion strategies. On the other hand, he argues that the use of such measures in several papers remains weak or totally absent, and this resulted in a misunderstanding of the influence that such intervention can have. Therefore, it is very critical to implement evaluation systems that allow accurate and continuous measurement of the impact achieved.

Health promotion interventions do not achieve their full potential unless they make use of communication strategies consistent with the objectives of the intervention itself. For Naipe Delgado et al (2016), effective communication serves to educate and inform patients and thereby encourage healthy behaviors. Salinas et al (2014) postulate that the use of technology such as mobile apps and online sites, among others, has improved access to information and strengthened patients' self-efficacy. But even so, as Fernández (2021) points out, training in the use of ICT is still deficient, which prevents its use in professional practice.

Quintana Zavala et al. (2021) emphasize the importance of using humanized communication, which improves the bond of trust between patients and professional staff. On the other hand, Quillas Benites et al. (2017) point out that focusing on direct communication, such as motivational interviewing, does not allow the use of technologies that could have an expanded range of beneficial objects of influence. This highlights a possibility of integrating conventional approaches along with digital tools.

In Cuba, Rojas Torres and Gil Herrera (2021) reported on the adoption of emerging technologies during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as teleconsultations and remote monitoring. These strategies not only improved access to care, but also encouraged healthy behaviors. However, in many Latin American countries, unequal distribution of technology remains a serious obstacle.

Flórez-López (2021) emphasizes the importance of designing culturally appropriate strategies that are relevant to the local context. This includes not only language, but also the application of technologies that are appropriate for the communities. These strategies, although they have potential, require substantial investment in technological infrastructure and the training of professionals to operationalize them.

## Conclusions

Both WHO and PAHO stress the importance of promoting healthy lifestyles to reduce the burden of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), which accounted for 71% of deaths worldwide, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. Sedentary lifestyles, unhealthy eating, tobacco, alcohol, and pollution are modifiable. Primary health care is essential to provide context-specific preventive interventions based on educational strategies and technology, however, the literature indicates that there are several problems related to the availability of material and human resources at the primary health care level, which contributes to the fact that activities to promote healthy lifestyles are not carried out in the most effective way.

Health professionals are critical agents in the promotion of healthy lifestyles, occupying positions of importance in health education,

community leadership and social mobilization. However, for their impact to be optimal, it is imperative that their training in intersectoral approaches, intercultural communication and cultural competence be strengthened to facilitate the implementation of promotion strategies that are relevant to local contexts and address the limitations imposed by the prevailing biomedical model.

The impact of health promotion interventions such as interventionist nurse management or motivational interviewing has been quite positive in terms of decreasing risk factors and improving health indicators. However, there is no systematic evaluation and there are no clear metrics for a good number of interventions that are considered to measure their long-term impact. It is important to design monitoring and evaluation systems that ensure that practices change to meet the requirements of local environments and, therefore, are durable.

Mobile applications, teleconsultations and the use of online platforms can be used to promote health in relation to their use in primary care. However, ineffective use of ICTs is due to insufficient training and gaps in the domains of the technological environment. It is essential to implement appropriate technological infrastructures and also to train professionals to assist in a more equitable and culturally appropriate use of such tools in order to maximize their reach and usefulness in the most vulnerable communities.

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