

# Letter to the Editor

## Health system reform in Colombia and the fundamental role of academia: a call to action.

---

Alberth Cristian Herrera Giraldo <sup>a</sup>

---

- a. Physician. Master's in health systems management, Temporary Professor at Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira. Coordinator of the Postgraduate Program in Health Systems Management. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3521-5282>

DOI: [10.22517/25395203.25653](https://doi.org/10.22517/25395203.25653)

### Mr. Editor:

After 30 years of the existence of the General Social Security Health System, there is consensus on the need to implement changes in it, the controversy is centered on the proposed model and its possible repercussions, a discussion that has intensified after the presentation and processing of the current government's proposal.

Although Colombia has made progress in health and quality of life of Colombians, there are many aspects to improve, among them, the deficit and financial unfeasibility of the system and its entities, the sustainability of the capitation payment unit (UPC by its acronym in Spanish), the use and impact of new health technologies, health inequities, the demographic impact on the population, the morbicentric and fragmented model of care, the increase in demand and the supply bottleneck are issues that require solutions at both the regulatory and operational level in our health system.

The proposed reform seeks a preventive and predictive approach focused on primary health care, giving continuity to the guarantee of the right to health established by the statutory law. In this context and in the context of the changes that are on the horizon, the challenge is not only for the actors of the system and state entities, universities as institutions that train professionals and generate knowledge and social impact, play a fundamental role in the implementation and development of these possible changes.

From the academic point of view, the entities that train human talent in health should evaluate and modify curricular plans to meet the demands of the new model or the changes that are implemented in the current one.

This implies designing graduate profiles with skills focused on primary care, health promotion and maintenance, differential perspectives and addressing social determinants in the individual, the family and society, as well as competencies of being that foster a more empathetic, compassionate, and humane care.

Universities, as sources of knowledge, can contribute much to the progress and implementation of the changing Colombian health system from scientific evidence and innovation. Research and innovation are required in fields such as interculturality, equity, differential approach, family and community health, care and transectorality.

In the area of outreach and social action, universities should be linked to communities to develop cross-sectoral and intersectoral programs and actions that contribute to the long-awaited implementation of primary health care. Extension should be a space for the transfer of knowledge and the promotion of health in the territory.

The reform of the Colombian health system is an opportunity for academia and universities, as key actors in society, to assume a leading role in this process and today more than ever they must join forces to contribute to the success of a reform of the health system. The training of human talent, the generation of knowledge and social outreach are fundamental pillars for the construction of a fairer, more equitable and sustainable health system for all Colombians.