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The Neo-liberal Policies and their Impact on the Public Health Development. Comments on the Venezuelan Experience

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**Objectives:** There are two central aims in this study: to describe the impact of neoliberal policies on the training of professionals and technicians in Public Health in Venezuela, and to analyze the new health guidelines and show their challenges.

**Methodology:** Descriptive analytical.

**Results:** The author describes the impact of neoliberal policies on training in Public Health around three themes: neoliberal reforms; the guidelines for training professionals and technicians within the framework of a model for national development, autonomy and sovereignty; and its challenges.

The impact of neoliberal reforms on the Public Health is showed on the declining of state participation and the privatization and decentralization of public services. Such impact is characterized as an imposition of a medical model based on market laws, a model taught in a fragmented manner. Therefore, since 1999, Public Health in Venezuela has been based on the application of new health measures—both general and specific—that challenge those trends: a) the suspension of neoliberal policies; b) the definition of a set of policies based on the concept of health integrity; and c) the implementation of "Misión Barrio Adentro" program.

So, the new guidelines for developing public health, through the application of a model based on the education without exclusion’s premise, are shaped by the following goals: the elimination of fees; appropriate health training to produce reflective practitioners; qualified education under the state responsibility and according community-oriented ethical principles.

Thus, the author shows five public health challenges for the coming years: 1) to reaffirm health as a right; 2) to combat disease and death as well as inequity and social exclusion in health; 3) to consolidate the development of the "Misión Barrio Adentro," 4) to enhance the capacity of resolution of the health care model; and 5) to ensure the provision of financial resources and maintain in good shape the institutional technological equipment.

**Conclusions:** The author concludes that the impact of neoliberal policies on the public health training is showed in the educational dominance of the medical-hegemonic model, and the application of medicalized and fragmented training procedures. For the author, the Venezuelan experience contrasts against the neoliberal policies and proposes education without exclusion and a new educational model that serves the community. The author concludes that the main challenge of public health is to recognize the right of health for all and to combat social inequality.