

**Dr. Martha Villar Lopez** Peru

Physician, specialist in Internal Medicine, Health Specialist and Bioethics. Founder and manager of the complementary medicine program. Past- Manager and first director of the World Health Organization/Pan-American Health Organization – WHO/PAHO Collaborating Center for Traditional and Complementary Medicine at Americas' level. Professor at the Medicine Faculty of the Major National University of San Marcos.

The COVID-19 pandemic has catalyzed the visibility of inequities, deficiencies and difficulties in health systems. However, it has also facilitated the possibility of understanding that the complexity of challenges requires new approaches and strategies to improve global health, and our traditional systems have great potential to provide innovative perspectives.

From Integrative Medicine, we propose four points that can contribute to improve global public health: 1) A change in the model of understanding and focusing on the human being health: approaching it from a holistic or complex vision, as an open and interconnected system, emphasizing on medicine humanization, placing the person at the center of every decision, empowering them to carry out self-management of their health, and intercare with their peers, as well as the responsibility of caring for their environment and social atmosphere, 2) Articulation of Integrative Medicine methods and procedures into health services to obtain more cost-effective systems. This means to include natural resources, energy methods, body-mind methods, manual procedures and spirituality using them rationally and with available evidence. 3) Search for Total Quality of care: improving access and coverage for people, weaving bridges with respect between cultures, seeking quality of life, care in post-COVID19 complications and even dying well, and 4) Adherence to care: integrative medicine's perspectives are culturally relevant and respond to health needs and reality of people. Likewise, it promotes empowerment, assertive communication and people participation by building Care Networks.

How was integrative medicine applied to the care of COVID-19 in Peru? It is necessary to mention that several strategies were applied, which will be briefly described: In the preventive phase, the *Life Reform Program* was being applied in the health system, whose approach is based on integrative medicine. It allowed early detection and timely management of people with pre-morbid metabolic syndrome controlling their risk factors and allowed them to face COVID-19 in a better state of health. In the recovery phase, the Complementary Medicine health professional team provided virtual care, fundamentally using: trophotherapy, phytotherapy, body-mind therapies, music therapy, among others. In addition, healthy lifestyle promoters trained in complementary medicine services played an active role by intervening virtually with educational workshops, emotional and spiritual support, in addition to promoting healthy lifestyles for patients and their families.

The patient and family care were carried out virtually, however, it facilitated several observational investigations development. It was found that more than 70% of patients used traditional and complementary medicine methods as part of their treatment. The most used methods were phytotherapy, trophotherapy, mind-body therapy, among others. Among the most used medicinal plants, *eucalyptus spp*. and piper spp. were reported; among foods, *Allium sativum* and *Zingifer officinale*; many reported performing meditation, prayer and help chains to patients and to the planet; steam baths and inhalations were also used.

The human being, throughout history, has always managed to emerge victorious when holds a common goal which we all support with our minds, hearts and will. The integrative medicine makes easier to articulate all mentioned in practice.