

## Foreword

Community Nutrition is the part of Applied Nutrition targeted on adequate dietary patterns of the population or population subgroups and intervention towards a healthier diet, implemented by means of participatory methods that consider the environment, with the final aim of health promotion.

Based on this framework, different working groups have been established in Spain during the last 10 years in connection with public health authorities, nutrition departments, governmental bodies, universities, private initiatives, food industry, welfare departments and non-government organisations. These groups have encouraged important actions in the field of health promotion by means promoting nutrition-related health (i.e. adequate dietary habits).

More than 100 free papers were presented in the context of the 4th Congress of the Spanish Society of Community Nutrition, either as oral or poster presentations, representing many enthusiastic initiatives carried out in Spain, Latin America and several European countries over past years. Most of these papers deserve the continuing education credits offered during the Congress and will be published in future issues of the *Spanish Journal of Community Nutrition*.

This special issue of the reputed journal *Public Health Nutrition* gathers papers based on selected topics discussed during the Conference sessions and reflects part of the multiple dimensions of Community Nutrition. The papers are grouped into several sections.

The first section describes key findings of The eVe Study, an insight into vitamins in Spanish food patterns. On this basis, suggestions for food fortification are presented.

Experiences in the Basque Country and Catalunya are discussed in the next section on School Health and Community Nutrition. Some of the initiatives started in the last century. Re-orientating services and adapting them to new demands over time is a challenge.

Pregnancy and the first years of life are key stages for health promotion, and are discussed under Food, Pregnancy and Lactation.

Nowadays, addressing health inequalities is one of the priorities for health authorities, particularly providing support for disadvantaged groups of people. Within this area, the programme for the homeless in Spain and social meals is presented as one of the most important initiatives in this field to be consolidated. Dr Aileen Robertson from the World Health Organization adds an excellent overview on food, nutrition and health inequalities.

The section on Nutrition and Ageing includes three

relevant papers dealing with the role of food and nutrition in ageing processes; easy-to-use screening methods for malnutrition in the elderly; and connecting home-based community nutrition and clinical nutrition in hospital practice: nutrition support for the elderly.

The European Master Programme in Public Health Nutrition represents a brilliant initiative to co-ordinate academic efforts to consolidate Public Health Nutrition and Community Nutrition in Europe. Different universities have been involved in the process of developing the programme contents, led by the Unit for Preventive Nutrition at Karolinska Institute. This section includes a reflection by Barrie Margetts and co-workers on the development of an evidence-based approach to public health nutrition. Many countries periodically publish dietary recommendations with the aim of improving the health status of the population by means of a healthy diet. Different SENC working groups have contributed to the development of the new edition of the Nutrition Objectives and food-based Dietary Guidelines for the Spanish population, based on current Spanish food patterns and relevant health indicators.

One of the most memorable sessions during the Conference was the 2nd Ibero-American Congress of Nutrition and Public Health and the new initiative launched to create the Ibero-American Group of Nutrition. Three interesting papers from this section are included. Inés Lezama describes her experience in the prevention of endemic goitre in Togo. Dr Teresa Calderón explains her ideas on training programmes in nutrition for health workers and other field staff in chronically deprived communities. Dr José María Bengoa closes this section by discussing food transitions in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Results from The enKid Study on food habits of the Spanish population aged 2–24 years were presented in the Guggenheim Museum auditorium of Bilbao. In this special issue, two papers describe key results about breakfast consumption and food habits in Spanish children and young people. Interesting papers discuss the influence of breakfast on school performance and the role of the food industry in promoting healthy dietary habits in the population.

We trust that the contents of this special issue will contribute to consolidate Community Nutrition work, both in developed and developing countries.

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