LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Scientific Research in Argentina: The Value of Integrating Clinical Care, Teaching, and Research

La investigación científica en Argentina: el valor de integrar asistencia, docencia e investigación

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Dear Editor,

Basic and clinical research with a translational focus has historically been one of the strengths of Argentine medicine, particularly in the cardiovascular field. Since the seminal work of Dr. Bernardo Houssay and his disciples, Drs. Eduardo Braun Menéndez and Juan Carlos Fasciolo, on the mechanisms of nephrogenic hypertension, Argentina has consolidated a model in which basic research and clinical practice mutually reinforce one another.

This tradition found a privileged setting for its development in public hospitals. At *Hospital Argerich*, the group led by Dr. Carlos Bertolasi made significant contributions to clinical and pathophysiological research on coronary artery disease, while at *Hospital Ramos Mejía*, the work of Drs. Mauricio Rosenbaum and Marcelo Elizari led to landmark contributions in electrophysiology, which achieved international recognition. Likewise, this integration between basic and clinical research has continued through figures such as Dr. Liliana Grinfeld, who, together with the group led by Dr. Ricardo Gelpi, reaffirmed the value of the translational approach to scientific research.

However, this historical trajectory contrasts with the current situation. The progressive decline in funding for science and technology, together with the lack of sustained policies to promote biomedical research, directly affects the ability of hospitals and universities to generate knowledge, train human resources, and sustain competitive research groups.

In this context, the growing notion that the State should not play a central role in funding science and technology is a cause for concern. International experience demonstrates exactly the opposite. Institutions such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in the United States and the research structures of the National Health Service (NHS) in the United Kingdom demonstrate that public funding and coordination among hospitals, universities, and scientific institutions constitute fundamental pillars of biomedical development. Developed countries have not reduced State involvement in science; rather, they have strengthened it as part of their health and development strategies.

The importance of maintaining hospitals with academic and scientific activity is not merely conceptual. A study published in JAMA in 2017 that analyzed more than 21 million hospitalizations in the United States demonstrated lower adjusted 30-day mortality rates in university and teaching hospitals compared to non-teaching institutions. These findings suggest that the integration of care, teaching, and research not only promotes knowledge generation but also directly improves the quality of care and patient outcomes. (*Burke LG et al. Association Between Teaching Status and Mortality in US Hospitals. JAMA. 2017*).

Given this scenario, scientific societies, universities, hospitals, and academic and research institutions must take an active role in promoting and disseminating the strategic value of biomedical science and translational research. Preserving Argentina's scientific tradition and the international prestige achieved by generations of researchers and physicians requires not only adequate funding but also a sustained institutional commitment to uphold and convey the importance of integrating care, teaching, and research as inseparable pillars of a modern health system.

Revitalizing and projecting Argentina's scientific tradition is a strategic necessity. Strengthening research in public and university hospitals, ensuring adequate funding, and promoting coordination with the scientific system do not represent ancillary expenses, but rather an indispensable investment to sustain high-quality medicine and the country's capacity to generate original knowledge with global impact. Weakening the scientific system not only compromises knowledge production but also the future capacity to deliver excellence in cardiovascular medicine.

Sincerely.

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