

## Violence against women in times of pandemic 2020

## Violencia a la mujer en época de pandemia 2020

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## Mr. Editor:

Femicide and violence against women is a social problem that has been increasing and is becoming more frequent in our society. We have witnessed innumerable cases of femicide and violence of its different types, whether psychological, verbal, physical and / or sexual, which has led to important regulatory and policy advances in our country to prevent, punish and / or eradicate femicide and violence against women. (1)

In Peru, 7 out of 10 women have been victims of psychological, physical or sexual violence at some time in their life, by their partner (Demographic and Family Health Survey, Endes). This proportion places us among the countries with the greatest violence against women in the world. (2)

Currently, the rates of detection of domestic violence by health providers in hospitals and emergency services are very low. A study identified: fear of offending the patient, lack of training and lack of time, as barriers to adequate care. (3)

Crises, emergencies and times of unrest have been linked to an increase in interpersonal violence, including violence against women. Pandemics are no exception, and as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic since the end of March, we already have some rates that give an idea of the problem. (4)

The pre-quarantine situation was characterized by an increase in violence against women, which was also reflected in a rise in the number of homicides. In 2019 there was an increase of 4 homicides (7.8%), which went from 51 in 2018 to 55 in 2019. And in the first two months of 2020, the period prior to confinement, homicides in both months were above average. Specifically, in January there were 7, when the average number of homicides due to gender violence in this month was 5.6, and in February it was 6 (average of 4.7, X Annual Report of the Violence against Women Observatory, 2016) (5)

The increase in gender violence and the elements that define its characteristics during this period, especially in terms of continuity and threat, as well as the increase in sexual violence in many cases, will have a profound impact on the health of women. This impact will depend on the time they have been exposed to said violence and on the state of health prior to confinement, both with regard to health problems caused by the violence itself and the existence of any other process or disease that will be aggravated by violence. (5)

The objective is to raise the need for a set of proposals that are aimed at gathering key information that supports the design of strategies, not only to contribute to an effective citizen participation that breaks with indifference, but also to be able to face the problem of violence by decisively attacking the causes that originate and sustain it.

The key is to understand that the knowledge of gender violence and the circumstances that the aggressor uses to carry out new aggressions provides time and a margin to identify the situation and develop preventive and protective measures. Hence the importance of adopting a proactive strategy and defining protocols and strategies to materialize it. (5)

Inaction, indifference and tolerance towards gender violence against women, even when it has its own

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explanations and specificities anchored in the historical subordination of women, is not a behavior exclusive or exclusive to women. If so, the patriarchal variable could become the only source of explanation and interpretation. Unfortunately, it is a generalized phenomenon that affects the vast majority of the problems that exist (corruption, environmental problems, disrespect for the rules of social coexistence, among others). If we intend to find answers that transcend those we already know and that contribute, from a more focused point of view, to understanding this kind of passivity and fairly generalized tolerance regarding violence against women, it will be necessary to examine it within the framework of the one that is It observes many other social and political problems of pressing importance for the life of the country. (6)

### Contribution of the authors

Single authorship.

### Interest conflict

We declare that we have no conflict of interest.

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