

EXPERIENCE OF MEDICINE ACADEMICS IN HEALTH EDUCATION WITH HIGH-RISK PREGNANT WOMEN

Amanda Azevedo Gherasel

General Clinical Physician of the institution:
UBS Sítio Novo de Itabaiana - PB. João
Pessoa/PB
<http://lattes.cnpq.br/3954916611586266>

Herbert Gherasel

Professor of the Integrated Clinical
Discipline: IV – Dentistry – UFPB. João
Pessoa/PB
<http://lattes.cnpq.br/0479607659594698>

Eloisa Lorenzo de Azevedo Gherasel

Professor of the Integrated Clinical
Discipline: IV – Dentistry – UFPB. João
Pessoa/PB
<http://lattes.cnpq.br/0405685264028055>

Noeme Coutinho Fernandes

Resident physician in Pediatrics at the
institution: Hospital Universitário Lauro
Wanderley – João Pessoa – PB
<http://lattes.cnpq.br/1671589873622308>

Wille Guedes Magalhães Neto

Student of the medical course of the
institution: Faculdade de Ciências Médicas
da Paraíba. João Pessoa/PB
<http://lattes.cnpq.br/0669301449857925>

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Abstract: The University, through university extension, aims to contribute to the comprehensive technical-scientific and humanist training of students, and at the same time to the social development of the external community. **Goal:** To report the experience of medical students participating in a university extension project. **Methodology:** This descriptive study reports the experience of medical students in the extension project “Health promotion for pregnant women who undergo prenatal care at the University Hospital Lauro Wanderley (HULW)”, in the city of João Pessoa/PB/Brazil. It is part of an extension program - PROBEX - at the Federal University of Paraíba (UFPB). It is a multidisciplinary project involving professors and university students from different areas of health. The project’s actions consist of promoting horizontal dialogue between extension workers and the target audience, taking place in prenatal clinics while pregnant women wait for medical care. The topics covered aim to collaborate with the prevention of diseases and the reduction of injuries, in a way that improves the quality of life of the public and that the exchange of knowledge takes place. **Results:** This hospital is a reference in the care of pregnant women with high-risk pregnancies, it is a needy and vulnerable population. The student’s proximity to other realities favors his humanist and critical training, leading him to reflect on the other, an important condition for the development of respect, ethics and empathy, fundamental principles for any and all citizen and professional training. As the understanding of pregnant women is worked on, the woman becomes empowered, a multiplier of knowledge, culminating in favoring the quality of life of the future baby, her family and community surroundings. **Conclusion:** The participation in this extension action brought to us, academics of

the medicine course, a technical-scientific and humanistic growth, reinforced the teaching-learning binomial when we were inserted in the heart of the community, experiencing its realities and exercising the art of speaking and listening. We believe that significant benefits were generated in the group of participating women based on their receptivity and acceptance of the project. Health promotion actions must be a constant among educational institutions and health teams.

Keywords: University extension; pregnant; health promotion; experience report.

INTRODUCTION

“It is not enough to teach a man a specialty because he will become a usable machine, but not a personality. It is necessary for him to acquire a feeling, a practical sense of what is worth learning, of what is morally right....” (EINSTEIN, 1953).

The University is based on its primary attributions with teaching, research and extension, at the same time fulfills its role within society, inserting itself in its environment, identifying its needs and contributing to social improvement. Teaching and research are instruments of community promotion: research investigates fundamental questions in search of a solution; teaching enables teachers, students and community groups to diagnose investigations and apply resolutions. The objective of the extension is to integrate the University with the population of its region of influence, work with adverse situations and contribute to the construction of a more just, solidary and egalitarian society (BORDENAVE; PEREIRA, 2002).

Brazil is a country that historically has great social inequalities, this directly reflects on economic, social and cultural issues and much on the health of the population.

It is worth mentioning the importance of universities offering the student body

pedagogical practices aimed at promoting social equality, citizenship and human rights, focusing on actions aimed at disadvantaged social minorities (STAUDT; SILVA, 2017).

Education, civility and citizenship are concepts today closely linked to the health level of a population. There is no way to separate the idea of quality of life – including basic needs such as health and safety – from a broad view of the population's awareness of preventive and curative procedures for the various ills to which it may be subject. Notions of hygiene, antisepsis and knowledge of the causes of the main diseases are, in themselves, factors that minimize their appearance or, in the worst case, their morbidity (GHERSEL et al., 2010).

Health is understood as a fundamental human right, having as determining and conditioning factors food, housing, basic sanitation, the environment, work, income, education, health, transport, leisure and access to essential goods and services.

The Ministry of Health, through the SUS (Unified Health System), has a leading role in Brazilian public health. We, as citizens, observe the constant struggle of health teams to offer the best possible quality of care, within the available resources. As academics of the Medicine course, inserted in the educational context of health, through the university extension project “Health Promotion for pregnant women who undergo prenatal care at the Lauro Wanderley University Hospital (HULW)”, we seek to work together with health professionals to improve the living conditions of pregnant women and, consequently, their fetuses. This project aims to promote the exchange of knowledge between the academy and the target population consisting of pregnant women.

In these efforts with the community, the University does not aim to replace the official and private institutions in charge of solving problems with the population, but rather to

cooperate (BORDENAVE; PEREIRA, 2002).

GOAL

To report the experience of medical students participating in a university extension project.

METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive study, of the experience report type of medical students participating in a university extension project.

The extension project “Health promotion for pregnant women who undergo prenatal care at the Lauro Wanderley University Hospital (HULW)”, in the city of João Pessoa/PB/Brazil, has been developed annually since 2010. It is part of a program of extension - PROBEX - of the Federal University of Paraíba (UFPB), which finances scholarships to students of the institution with its own resources, is open to all academics, including those from other private institutions.

It is a multidisciplinary project, the execution team is formed by professors of the Dentistry course and students from different health areas such as Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Physiotherapy, Nutrition, Speech Therapy and Occupational Therapy.

The Lauro Wanderley University Hospital is a reference in the State of Paraíba in the care of high-risk pregnant women. Receives for prenatal, childbirth and postpartum women referred from Health Units throughout the region. The average annual service flow is 3,500 women, excluding returns. This referred hospital houses and welcomes extension and research projects from the Federal University for the development of actions in partnership.

The project's actions consist of promoting horizontal dialogue between extension workers and the target audience, taking place in prenatal clinics while pregnant women wait for medical care. For this, there is a need for prior organization of the execution team, since the objective is to introduce themes that

involve health promotion in the dialogues in a way that reduces existing diseases, prevents diseases and improves the quality of life of the pregnant women in question.

The activities are developed from Monday to Friday, the students are divided into groups and fulfill their weekly workload according to their availability, according to the public notice.

The contents covered are defined by the execution team, pregnant women are also heard and their suggestions for topics are accepted.

For dialogic support and audio-visual reinforcement, extension workers use serial albums, posters, pamphlets prepared by the team, as well as the macro models and toothbrushes for oral hygiene guidance or any other playful illustrative resource they have or want. The use of multimedia projectors is not a viable option due to the unfavorable physical environment for this type of resource.

RESULTS

This university extension project has two fundamental objectives, the first refers to the didactic-pedagogical process that is to contribute to the integral technical-scientific and humanistic training of students, the other is aimed at the social development of the community involved.

Pregnant women who undergo prenatal care at the HULW have a high-risk pregnancy as a mandatory characteristic, most have poor general health, disadvantaged socioeconomic and cultural conditions, and are lacking in several aspects, especially information. Health promotion work with this group of vulnerable women is extremely timely.

In turn, when the student comes into contact with this population by conducting or participating in a conversation circle, with the group in question, he absorbs their knowledge and, at the same time, transmits the technical-

scientific knowledge acquired throughout his academic trajectory. As it lives with the target audience, listening to and internalizing their needs, doubts and questions arise and serve as a basis for further research. Thus, the relationship between extension and teaching and research is consolidated in a humanized dialogic way. Therefore, this extension action is justified when it brings these two links into confluence with significant benefits for both parties.

The impact of extension on student training promotes the consolidation of extension with teaching and research, generating a new theoretical and methodological foundation. This impact is not restricted to technical issues, direct contact with the community provides the exchange of information, consequently acquiring new reciprocal perceptions. The proximity to other realities, often different from their own, favors a humanist and critical formation of the student, because at this moment they are given the opportunity to reflect on the other, a condition that is so important for the development of respect, ethics and empathy, fundamental principles for all and any citizen and professional training.

The fact that it is a multidisciplinary extension expands knowledge in the most diverse areas and favors conviviality and teamwork. When the student participates or leads a conversation circle, their linguistic and reasoning skills are developed, shyness is overcome. Faced with unusual questions and inquiries, the act of thinking is encouraged, seeking adequate answers and expressing effective and adequate solutions.

The themes are chosen in such a way that simple domestic actions can prevent diseases that further burden the health system. When the public involved is pregnant, especially with high-risk pregnancies, as is the case, it is necessary to seek strategies to contribute to

the reduction of neonatal mortality, obesity, arterial hypertension, gestational diabetes, in addition to the eradication of diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria, the consequences of HIV. Oral diseases, such as the dental caries, afflict a less favored portion of the population and can be transmitted to the baby when the first teeth erupt, by their mother or contaminated people (GUEDES-PINTO; MELLO-MOURA, 2017). In addition, clarifications must be provided and an attempt must be made to make them aware of the use of alcohol and drugs, elucidate disorders related to mental health and highlight the need for leisure, psychological and physical well-being. Guidelines on exclusive breastfeeding have always been emphasized, in collaboration with the HULW prenatal nursing team, since this hospital is part of the strategy of the “Child-Friendly Hospital Initiative” (LAMOUNIER et al., 2019).

Throughout the duration of this project, we observed that education aimed at the community must be continuous so that simple measures contribute to the prevention of diseases and injuries. The issue of continuing education has also been reported by other authors (PORTO et al., 2022).

Continuous health promotion with pregnant women aims to provide relevant information about health, demystify beliefs, myths and legends that are inconsistent with scientific reality arising from distorted information and, at the same time, take advantage and stimulate the foundations of consistent popular culture that brings benefits to the community. As understanding is worked on, the woman becomes empowered, a multiplier of knowledge, culminating in favoring the quality of life of the future baby, her family and community surroundings.

CONCLUSION

The participation in this extension action brought to us, academics of the medicine course, a technical-scientific and humanistic growth, reinforced the teaching-learning binomial when we were inserted in the heart of the community, experiencing its realities and exercising the art of speaking and listening. We observed that the project integrates extension with teaching and research, making it possible to work with the needy and vulnerable population in the search for the reduction of social inequalities. We believe that significant benefits were also generated in the group of participating women based on their receptivity and acceptance of the project. Health promotion actions must be a constant among educational institutions and health teams.

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