

DENTAL CARE IN AN EXTENSIVE PROJECT IN THE FORM OF VOLUNTEERING ABROAD: EXPERIENCE REPORT

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Abstract: The consolidation and strengthening of the relationship between dentists and the community brings benefits to both those involved, both for the more humane training of professionals and for society in general, which is so lacking in dental care. It is noted that health care in underdeveloped countries is a reality far from what could be called ideal. However, despite the limitations, quality activities can be carried out that contribute to the quality of life of those involved, considering that the focus is on health promotion and prevention of diseases and injuries. Therefore, the article emphasizes the importance of professional experience in dentistry in extramural activities and voluntary work experiences for the acquisition of important knowledge and skills, showing the benefits generated for both participants. This is a descriptive study of the experience report type, composed of information acquired by the experience in assistance in humanitarian aid to needy children, in Kenya North Africa in the years 2013 to 2014. It is noteworthy that the current job market requires a professional with knowledge of both the technique and the sociocultural characteristics of the community in the development of their dental practice, since the human being needs to be understood in its biopsychosocial aspects to be treated in an integral way.

Keywords: Volunteering; Dental care; Comprehensive Health; needy population; Health Promotion; Africa.

INTRODUCTION

Oral health is closely linked to the general health and quality of life of any human being, considering that the promotion of oral health is extremely important in encouraging the population to practice oral hygiene, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations (UN), recognize the growing burden of oral diseases and the need to address

important factors such as poverty, inequality and systemic diseases. Often the lack of access to such care remains a major barrier for the global population. (LAMBERT et al., 2017).

Thus, the key to health promotion is beyond a health system in the conventional mold, it must use a transversal articulation strategy, in which visibility of its relations with the world, with its sociocultural, socioeconomic environment, with its needs is given, rights and living conditions. Promoting health is, therefore, acting on these determinants that condition the relationship of health. Therefore, the elaboration of an expanded concept and the applicability of what is understood by health promotion, at the present time, recognizes that this, as well as social development, are central burdens and obligations of governments, and must also be shared by all sectors of society. (MORETTI et al., 2010).

Strategies to expand access to health include the expansion of extramural health professionals, which generates hope for better access to the necessary care for the target population. A fundamental point to achieve excellence in the extension of health professionals and to address the factors involved in oral and systemic health is the training and adequate education of those involved in the provision of care, expanding the concept beyond treating diseases, also promoting the health and disease and injury prevention. (LAMBERT et al., 2017).

The inclusion of extensive programs for health professionals favors working with “people” rather than “patients”, changing the focus of the dental service towards a more humanistic and integrated action. The experience produces the knowledge of various areas, bringing social, economic, cultural, political sensitivity, producing trust and familiarity, which are essential aspects for successful intervention. In addition to

the benefits that are achieved by providing valuable information about the health of beneficiaries, free of charge and with quality. (PEREIRA et al., 2011).

Understanding that access to health actions and services are important to achieve well-being and general health, the professional must be sensitive enough to understand the patient's real situation, listen to complaints that will lead to the development of an effective strategy. that will improve your quality of life. The mouth cannot be treated in isolation, given that both the systemic state and the mouth can somehow influence both parties. The oral cavity has a direct connection with our organism, which can lead to systemic changes, and affect other organs of the body, it is worth mentioning that the patient must be seen as a whole, thus being able to achieve a good functioning of the whole organism. (LACERDA, 2005).

In view of the above, the objective of the following work is to report a voluntary experience and show health professionals that they can exercise their functions in social projects abroad, where it will be possible to restore oral health and consequently prevent diseases through health promotion, having extramural volunteering as a tool. With this, it is possible to minimize the social gap, in addition to humanizing the professional/community relationship, bringing benefits to both parties, since the community gains from the expansion of access to health actions and professionals gain from the improvement of their formation.

METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive study of the experience report type, composed of information acquired in a cross-cultural experience, which addresses the experience of volunteers in providing humanitarian assistance to needy children living in Kenya North Africa. The

activities described in this study were carried out between 2013 and 2014, in the reception and mapping of children in risk situations.

EXPERIENCE REPORT

The World Mobilization is an NGO located in Brazil also known as World Mobilization (WM), which offers training for those who want to be a volunteer and work with social projects in various aspects, working in different places in Brazil and in the international segment, carrying out projects transcultural. World Mobilization has been operating for more than 10 years, promoting justice by combating the causes of poverty and exploitation of children and the most vulnerable populations, leading them to reach their full potential, with Dr. Jose Rodrigues.

In one of their activities abroad, two young volunteers were sent to Kenya, a country located in the north of the African continent to act as missionaries in welcoming, mapping children at risk and intervening with the Turkana tribe located to the north of such country, near the city of Lodwar, between 2013 and 2014, with a stay of 11 consecutive months.

The name given to the project developed by the volunteers who worked with the children who lived on the streets was "Street Childrens". Humanitarian aid was provided through food baskets for families and scholarships in several districts, since their children are studying, families have better prospects for life, so they are not so vulnerable to the work of social enslavement that was carried out by the same. Along with the distribution of these grants, awareness-raising work was carried out with families so that they do not leave their children in the hands of child exploiters.

These children were subjected to street work by marginals, or even by their own parents, who forced them to get money at places such as traffic lights, mall doors

and fairs, asking the natives and especially foreigners who frequented places close to where they were, to support themselves. Most of these children suffered sexual abuse from their older brothers or their “bosses”, many of them were also orphans and lived on the streets.

A football-related project was developed, on a field provided by a local religious organization, (Figure 1) with weekly frequency, in which meals were distributed in the morning and after training, (Figure 2) carrying out extra activities like making toys (Figure 3 and 4) and after finishing there was a religious study (Figure 5 and 6). On special dates, kits with food and treats were distributed to children in situations of social vulnerability (Figure 7 and 8).

Considering that one of the goals was also to treat these children psychologically, one of the volunteers is a psychologist and carried out a therapeutic work, treating traumas and abuses that were experienced at that time by some children.

In mid-2013 some volunteers were in the city of lodwar to visit an existing WM project, whose objective was the implementation of artesian wells. During the year, the worldwide mobilization had more than 5 artesian wells already implanted along the lodwar desert, (Figure 9) which served as support for the Turkana tribe, since this tribe was nomadic, and suffered from numerous problems of health because they have to migrate kilometers in search of water.

WM also took the initiative to install more wells to concentrate the Indians in a place closer to them, since in the desert there were more than one million two hundred thousand Indians of the Turkana ethnicity. Monetary support was also given to local volunteers who were already working with this population, (Figure 10) in addition to 400 kilograms of food, such as crushed corn, which was used to make a kind of porridge (Figure 11 and 12). Finally, support was also provided in the health area by a nurse who developed actions to guide hygiene and make dressings (Figure 13).



Figure 1: Soccer school



Figure 2: Snack distribution after training



Figures 3 and 4: Toy Making



Figure 5: After Religious study and extra interactive activities



Figure 6: Interactive extra activities



Figures 7 and 8: Distribution of food kits and snacks



Figure 9: Artesian well already implanted



Figure 10: Delivery of monetary support to native Turkana Tribe volunteers



Figures 11 and 12: Crushed food delivery



Figure 13: Assistance in the health area - making dressings

DISCUSSION

Profuse studies on oral hygiene habits show that it is associated with demographic, social, behavioral and psychological factors, such as sex, age, socioeconomic level, self-perception of health, lifestyle and psychological conditions (FREIRE et al. 2007). With this factor in mind, attention must be paid to oral health care, as Lisboa et al. (2006), good oral hygiene is an integral part of general health practices and a significant link in its reach and establishment. This helps to prevent the onset or progression of diseases related to it, such as tooth decay.

All individuals must have an oral health condition that allows them to develop functions such as speaking, chewing, recognizing the taste of food, smiling, living free from pain and discomfort, and relating to other people without constraints. People understand the importance of oral health for quality of life linked to the various aspects in the physiological, sociological and psychological domains, and the ability to eat and the occurrence of pain and discomfort are usually considered positively and negatively more significant for people. quality of life, respectively.

In a current concept of health, one must consider the social right, inherent to the condition of citizenship, which must be ensured without distinction of race, religion, political ideology or socioeconomic condition, health is thus presented as a collective value, a the good of all, also relating the living and working conditions of its members, such as housing, sanitation, work environment, health and education services, also including the web of social and community networks. Considering this definition, it is of paramount importance that the dental surgeon is engaged in the function of bringing education to people both inside and outside his office.

Due to the lack of basic health care, an imbalance in the general health of African

children has been observed, factors such as nutritional weakness, basic oral and general hygiene care, growth disorder and other problems related to growth that occur when children experience from this malnutrition, an illness and the lack of psychosocial stimulation. According to the WHO (World Health Organization), it typically happens before the child reaches two years of age, and the consequences in the long term are poor school performance, low wages in adulthood, loss of productivity, and increased risk of nutrition-related chronic diseases in adulthood.

In view of this, thus requiring more solid, objective actions that are carried out individually and in groups for health education. That is why it is extremely important to have professionals willing to volunteer and act in humanitarian aid, making themselves available and, in a way, donating their services to people who are deprived of medical and dental assistance, and for that their ability to perform procedures without major resources in places of extreme poverty must be studied and well defined so that the best possible work is done.

However, despite the limitations (inadequate physical structure, scarce human resources and insufficient availability of supplies) qualified activities can be carried out aiming at an effective and comprehensive dental care. This dental care carried out in a humanized and individualized way contributes intensely to improving the quality of life of disadvantaged people, as it is evidenced in health promotion and disease prevention.

The lack of resources is, in fact, a major obstacle for professionals to fulfill their duties, but it is believed not to be a sufficient reason for disqualified assistance. Faced with difficult situations to perform care, it is up to the dentist and the team that follows up on the projects, to develop defense mechanisms that

help them to face daily difficulties, as well as strategies to work with the available material, using their skills. and skills to do so.

Carrying out these activities makes a relevant contribution to the volunteers, considering that these moments are spaces for the exchange of knowledge, experiences and learning, and provide personal and professional maturity that, without a doubt, will be taken for life.

The dentist's performance with a broader view and the provision of dental care based on scientific evidence, in order to understand the vulnerable context to which this population is inserted, contributes to the improvement of their quality of life and the reduction of their vulnerabilities.

In addition, dentistry can act as a facilitator, even in the unfavorable environment of underdeveloped countries, promoting health and encouraging this population to achieve a better quality of life. In addition to the advantages of professional training, the promotion of voluntary social services provides opportunities for the needy population to receive free and quality information that is valuable to their health.

When the dentist or any other member of the professional team is limited to working exclusively in the biological field or within the narrow walls that separate the technical work in dentistry from other fields of knowledge, it drastically reduces their possibilities of providing oral health to their patients and for the society. Therefore, community service has great relevance in motivating and encouraging professionals in their careers. (PEREIRA at al., 2011)

CONCLUSION

The work of professionals in underdeveloped countries contributes both to the academic and professional curriculum of the volunteers, as well as to the improvement

of the assistance provided. It is possible to develop and improve skills and attitudes necessary for the practice of dentists, as it makes it possible to relate theory and practice, and, through this, provide comprehensive care to the general health of families in situations of social vulnerability, based on the principles of the dentist.. In addition, professionals are presented with an unusual performance scenario, which contributes to the professional experience of dentists. Thus, participation in partner projects favors the expansion of scientific knowledge from the perspective of comprehensive care for the families involved.

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