

WORKER HEALTH IN THE DECENTRALIZED HEALTH AREA OF CEARÁ

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SALUD DEL TRABAJADOR EM UM ÁREA DESCENTRALIZADA DE SALUD DE CEARÁ

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ABSTRACT

Objective: to report the experience of a Worker's Health project carried out with the staff of the Decentralized Health Area (ADS) of Crateús, Ceará, Brazil. **Methods:** experience report of a Worker's Health project implemented by professionals from a multidisciplinary residency program. Weekly meetings were held in the institution's auditorium, including physical exercises and health education, lasting 15 to 20 minutes. **Results:** the 24 meetings revealed the need for attention to workers' mental, physical, and social health. The project strengthened the public health perspective of collective health residents toward local Public Policies for Workers' Health. **Conclusion:** continuity of the project by future residency cohorts is essential to sustain this space for health promotion and professional learning.

Keywords: *Occupational Health; Physical Exercises; Health Education.*

RESUMO

Objetivo: relatar a experiência do projeto de Saúde do Trabalhador realizado com os colaboradores da Área Descentralizada de Saúde do Ceará de Crateús. **Métodos:** relato de experiência de um projeto de Saúde do Trabalhador por profissionais da residência multiprofissional. Foram realizados encontros semanais no auditório da Instituição, com exercícios físicos e educação em saúde, durando de 15 a 20 minutos. **Resultados:** os 24 encontros mostraram a necessidade de cuidado em saúde mental, física e social. Voltando o olhar sanitário dos residentes em Saúde Coletiva para as Políticas Públicas de Saúde do Trabalhador no território de atuação do programa de residência. **Conclusão:** a continuidade do projeto pelas próximas turmas é fundamental para manter esse espaço de promoção da saúde e aprendizagem.

Descritores: *Saúde do Trabalhador; Exercício Físico; Educação em Saúde.*


RESUMEN


Este trabajo implica la construcción de un formulario de admisión al servicio de psicología subsidiado por la práctica profesional de la residencia multidisciplinaria. El objetivo de este trabajo fue desarrollar un formulario de atención psicológica de ingreso, construido durante el período de residencia multidisciplinaria en la sala de neurocirugía de un hospital. La construcción se llevó a cabo en las siguientes etapas: 1) encuesta bibliográfica en artículos que abordaron el uso de formularios de admisión utilizados en los servicios de psicología, específicamente en los sectores quirúrgicos; 2) se enumeraron los ejes para la composición del formulario incautado de la lectura, el estudio de estos instrumentos encontrados y los documentos públicos consultados; 3) Se llevó a cabo la construcción del tapón. Se observó la importancia de sistematizar esta primera atención para registrar las demandas primarias que son cruciales en el desarrollo de las acciones del profesional durante el período de seguimiento psicológico.

Descriptores: *Salud Laboral; Ejercicios físicos; Educación en Salud.*

INTRODUCTION

Work is one of the determinants and conditioning factors of health and Workers' Health (WH) becomes important because it tries to make them, for the most part, a promoter of health and not of illness or even death¹. One way to promote a healthy life

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is the practice of physical exercise, which is important at all ages, which can be integrated into various daily scenarios, including at work².

The work environment can stimulate the subject in terms of adopting postures and activities with repetitive movements, excessive daily physical effort, static incorrect postures, in addition to potentiating psychosocial and organizational factors that can lead to illness. Therefore, the importance of health promotion in the workplace is emphasized³.

The project arose through the demand of the workers of the Decentralized Health Area of Ceará (ADS) of Crateús, who see the need to perform exercises in the workplace, due to the long working hours and the fact that many are already over 60 years old, with risks to physical and mental health.

The Multiprofessional Residency in Health has interdisciplinary potential with the union of diverse knowledge. The residents included in the ADS work in the emphasis on Collective Health, which proposes to train sanitarians committed to the principles of the Brazilian health reform⁴.

There are 22 ADS, located in different Health Regions of Ceará, responsible for coordinating, articulating, and organizing the health system in their respective areas, promoting collaboration between institutions. In addition, they help in the management of the regional regulation system, evaluation, and monitoring of municipal actions, among others⁵.

Thus, this study seeks to report the experience of the Occupational Health Project carried out with the employees of a HCD in Ceará, for health promotion through a weekly exercise program.

METHODS

This is an experience report about an Occupational Health Project conceived by a resident physiotherapist and applied in collaboration with the other residents in Collective Health and Family and Community Health at the School of Public Health of Ceará (ESP-CE). Held between April and December 2023 with ADS employees in Crateús.

The municipality of Crateús is located in the state of Ceará, Brazil, 354 km via BR-020 from the capital Fortaleza, with a population size of 76,390 inhabitants, according to the last census surveyed by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics. It contains 34 health establishments, among which is the Decentralized Health Area of Crateús⁶.

The ADS of Crateús is linked to the superintendence of Sobral and is composed of 36 workers, 21 men and 15 women aged between 26 and 74 years, most of whom are elderly people who have not yet retired. Most of these people are civil servants and have been working at the site for about 30 years.

The meetings were held weekly, in the ADS auditorium, with employees who wished and were free to participate. Initially, 30 of them joined the project. The moment began at 8 am, lasting 15 to 20 minutes. Therapeutic exercises were applied aimed at stretching muscle groups, joint mobility, postural corrections, breathing, relaxation,

moments of relaxation and integration of the team with the realization of dynamics, and health education with themes relevant to the target audience.

In addition, at the end, there was a collective breakfast, with the proposal of serving only healthy food. The participants were divided into five groups of six people, and each week one group was responsible for bringing a snack.

The day before the meetings took place, a virtual invitation was produced through the *Canva* application and sent in a Whatsapp *group* with ADS employees to remind them of the meetings.

The data were recorded through signed frequency, weekly record in a field diary, photos, videos and posts on social networks. The analysis of these data occurred through this material.

Regarding the ethical aspects of the work, it was understood that there would be no need to submit to the Research Ethics Committee. It is noteworthy that the ethical-legal aspects were adopted throughout the process of living and making the descriptive manuscript. The institution involved allowed the activities developed to be carried out.

The research follows the ethical principles of Resolution 466/2012 of the National Health Council, guaranteeing participants the right to autonomy of voluntary participation, privacy, and confidentiality of personal data.

RESULTS

The project was written and taken to the coordinator of the establishment. After authorization, the proposal was presented to the workers and the time and place were defined; however, the day could not be fixed because of the dynamics of the service.

In all, 24 meetings were held, with the number of participants varying throughout the project and lasting from 15 to 20 minutes. The first moment had 30 people and served to introduce the project. From the second on, there was the initiative of the professionals themselves to organize healthy snacks at the end of the meetings, strengthening integration and skills such as management and leadership.

In order to make the moments more dynamic, the physical exercises were given by the collective health physiotherapist or by the Family Health Physical Education professionals and stretches were done with balloons, rhythms, a human board with physical exercises, strength and mobility exercises with the body itself, and even the celebration of “Labor Day” and “Challenge Day”.

In the moments of Health Education, the themes “Importance of the workers struggle for their rights”, “Self-care bingo”, “Healthy Eating and Emotions”, “Alzheimer's awareness”, “Mental Health at work” and “Pink October” were addressed. Presented in partnership with a nurse, social worker and physiotherapist from Collective Health, and nutritionist, psychologist, and Physical Education professionals from Family Health.

Two moments stood out when representing the appreciation of culture and the strengthening of bonds, both were demands of the participants. First, the ADS Arraiá, which featured a mature wedding, decoration, and typical foods with the active participation of workers and a lot of relaxation. Secondly, Father's Day, where there

were tributes through videos, poems, songs and, finally, a relaxing massage room for the benefit of workers.

Another highlight was the meeting in which the resident social worker organized the “Pink October” and invited the women of the Association of Beloved Women Assisted Women (MAMA) of Crateús, who spoke about the association and gave testimonies about their experiences with breast cancer, bringing the female audience of the group to this reality. The moment was valued by the women in the group who reported the differential of the approach to the theme.

Even with the initial adherence, there was a decrease in participation during the course of the project, especially among men. Barriers such as stairs to the auditorium, inadequate clothing and lack of availability influenced adherence. Even so, the active participants showed enthusiasm and reported improved pain and motivation to practice activities outside the work environment.

The actions aimed at mental health allowed relevant observations, such as reports of exhaustion, anxiety, and difficulty in self-care even on the part of the workers. At the meeting alluding to Alzheimer's Awareness Day, for example, cognitive difficulties were noted in some participants, evidencing the importance of educational and preventive actions.

The project proved to be an important tool in the promotion of Workers' Health, contributing to the physical, mental, and social well-being of the participants. For the residents, it provided the development of skills such as project organization, leadership, creativity, and people management.

After the conclusion of the report, the group remained active, and the intention is to continue with the next residency class at the site. Thus, this space for Health Promotion and learning will not be discontinued.

DISCUSSION

The Occupational Health project, developed through therapeutic exercises and Health Education, proved to be challenging due to the need for adaptation due to the unavailability of space or workers. The literature corroborates by showing a study in which there are difficulties in reconciling work activities with a Workplace Gymnastics program, although it points to improvement in low back pain in the participants⁷.

Even with a frequency lower than that recommended in the literature, with only one weekly meeting, the regular participants reported physical, mental and quality of life improvement. As the literature points out, female adherence is greater and male dropout is common, a factor that needs further investigations^{7,8}.

Eating habits are another variable in the life changes that make the worker healthier, thus showing the importance of including a healthy breakfast in the weekly meetings. A balanced diet avoids the lack of certain nutrients that maintain the balance of mental health, helping to avoid diseases such as anxiety and depression⁹.

As for mental health, exercise programs help reduce stress, fatigue, mood disorders, anxiety, *Burnout* syndrome, favor routine change and reinforce self-esteem and improve quality of life. These moments of collective coexistence and snacks also

awaken the emergence of new leaders, the strengthening of the team's bond and the feeling of belonging¹⁰.

Among the challenges encountered in the project were: maintaining the interest of the participants, the restricted and sometimes unavailable geographical space, and the lack of complementary material for the activities, requiring improvisation.

Despite this, it was a great learning space and enriched skills such as organizational management capacity, creativity, people management, digital skills, health promotion for health professionals, working with few resources, among others. It provided a powerful space for interprofessional learning and allowed us to experience, in practice, the promotion of health aimed at SUS professionals themselves, recognized as pillars of the system.

The lack of articulation between the Ministry of Health, Social Security and the Unified Health System compromises the continuity and effectiveness of actions in Workers' Health. The fragmentation of care, the absence of a solid institutional organization, and the distance between surveillance and direct health care aggravate these challenges and weaken labor policies^{9,10}.

In view of this, it is necessary to continue the project with the next group of residents, ensuring the strengthening of the National Policy on Workers' Health through simple but effective actions.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the present study showed the potential and challenges of the implementation of an Occupational Health Project by residents of a multiprofessional team in a HCD in Ceará, highlighting the positive impacts on the physical, mental, and social aspects of the workers, as well as on those of the residents.

Despite the benefits, it is necessary to investigate the cause of low adherence, especially from the male public, and seek engagement strategies. The continuity of the project for the next residency classes is essential to maintain this space for health promotion and learning.

In addition, the alignment and strengthening of public policies and the articulation between the responsible bodies are urgent, in order to ensure the integrality of Occupational Health care.

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