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Dental primary care in Brazilian public health system: What do users describe about their treatment?

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Statement of the Problem: The Unified Health System (Acronym in Portuguese is SUS) is the Brazilian public health system. It offers to all Brazilian citizens, by means of its principles and assumptions, treatment to all diseases and health promotion actions. This happens per offering health services in all level of complexity to health care and treatment. The system is organized by means of Primary Health Care (PHC) as its coordinating axis. Among all Health Care Models in SUS, the primary dental treatment and oral health promotion are available within the Family Health Strategy (FHS) which is an achievement of the National Oral Health Policy (NOHP) and the National Primary Care Policy (NPCP). The framework that underpins the provision of quality services in SUS emerges from a concept that is structured in certain aspects as the primary health treatment, health promotion and a specialized health care.

Objective: The research subject is the users' perception regarding oral health care received at the PHC in SUS in Brazil. This can be studied by means of a nationwide survey with SUS users' perception about received treatments. The aim of this study was to describe and characterize SUS users' perception regarding some primary dental treatment in the five macro-Brazilian-regions.

Methodology: This is a national study developed in primary healthcare public services. The sample consisted of 37262 users of primary dental treatment. Data were collected by means of the Ministry of Health assessment survey. The survey was conducted between 2012-2014 in all the five geographical and political regions of Brazil (North, Northeast, Central, South and Southeast). All users were interviewed at the period they were waiting for treatment at the waiting room inside the health centre facility. Variables used in the present study are associated with users of Primary Health Centre perspective about satisfaction, access and use of services. The studied variables are present in questions of the questionnaire applied to the users. The questions are 'Do the oral health care guidelines given to you in the centre fulfil your needs?' (Yes or no). 'At this health care facility, the same dentist assists you?' (Always, Most of the time, Almost never, Never). 'When you stop treatment or do not come to the dental office, for any reason, do the professionals ask you to know what happened to resume the treatment?' (Yes or No). 'In your opinion, how was the care you received from the oral health team?' (Very good, Good, Fair, Bad, Very bad). Some responses were dichotomized for data analysis and there were a non-response and refusal rate of 7%. It was performed bivariate and associative data analysis with the support of the software SPSS 21 version. To analyse the outcome (positive perceptions) variables were transformed in dichotomies following 95% reliability. It was a survey conducted with minimum risk to the human being and was approved by the ethics committee of UFRGS.

Conclusions: The Brazilian Public health system is good, per SUS users' perspective regarding primary dental treatment. The system must invest in the active search for users who interrupt the treatment and enhance the work of the dentist to follow the treatment of the same user in a continuous way.

Biography

Patricia Tavora Bulgarelli her expertise in evaluation and assessment of Primary Health Services in development of Public Health Systems. Currently she is a Public Health Professor at Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul.

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