



Interdisciplinarity in an academic experience internship: recognition of professional performance in the Health System

Interdisciplinaridade em estágio de vivência acadêmica: reconhecimento da atuação profissional no Sistema de Saúde

Interdisciplinaridad en prácticas de experiencia académica: reconocimiento de la actuación profesional en el Sistema de Salud

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To describe the experience of an academic internship completed by university students in the health field in a municipality in Baixo Solimões. **Data synthesis:** This is a descriptive report of an extramural academic internship carried out in Manacapuru, Amazonas, from October 2019 to February 2020. The activity was carried out with the participation of medical, nursing and dentistry students and included the application of health practices aimed at individual and collective action. Having as a target audience the patients assisted by a Primary Health Care (PHC) center, the university students helped in carrying out elective care in their respective fields and conducted health education activities such as conversation circles, educational scavenger hunts, interactive lectures and continuing education for the PHC center team. **Conclusion:** The health practices and actions carried out during the extramural internship enabled a satisfactory interdisciplinary integration among the students and allowed them to have an appropriate experience in primary care in the Unified Health System (Sistema Único de Saúde – SUS).

Descriptors: Training Support; Unified Health System; Students, Health Occupations.

RESUMO

Objetivo: Descrever a experiência de um estágio acadêmico vivenciado por universitários da área da saúde em um município do Baixo Solimões. **Síntese dos dados:** Trata-se do relato descritivo de um estágio acadêmico extramuro realizado em Manacapuru, Amazonas, ocorrido no período de outubro de 2019 a fevereiro de 2020. A realização da atividade teve a participação de acadêmicos de Medicina, Enfermagem e Odontologia e contou com a aplicação de práticas em saúde direcionadas à atuação individual e coletiva. Tendo como público-alvo os pacientes atendidos por uma Unidade Básica de Saúde (UBS), os universitários auxiliaram na realização de atendimentos eletivos em suas respectivas áreas de atuação e conduziram atividades de educação em saúde como rodas de conversa, gincanas educativas, palestras interativas e educação continuada à equipe da UBS. **Conclusão:** As práticas e ações em saúde realizadas no período do estágio extramuro proporcionaram uma integração interdisciplinar satisfatória entre os acadêmicos, possibilitando aos mesmos uma vivência apropriada na atenção básica do Sistema Único de Saúde (SUS).

Descritores: Estágio; Sistema Único de Saúde; Estudantes de Ciências da Saúde.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Describir la experiencia de una pasantía académica vivida por universitarios del área de la salud en un municipio del Baixo Solimões. **Síntesis de los datos:** Se refiere al informe descriptivo de una pasantía académica extramuros realizado en Manacapuru, Amazonas, ocurrido entre octubre de 2019 y febrero de 2020. La realización de la actividad tuvo la participación de académicos de medicina, enfermería y odontología y contó con la aplicación de prácticas en salud direccionadas a la



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actuación individual y colectiva. Teniendo como público meta los pacientes atendidos por una Unidad Básica de Salud (UBS), los universitarios ayudaron en la realización de atendimientos electivos en sus respectivas áreas de actuación y condujeron actividades de educación y en salud como charlas, juegos educativos, conferencias interactivas y educación continuada para el equipo de la UBS. **Conclusión:** Las prácticas y acciones en salud realizadas en el período de la pasantía extramuros proporcionaron una integración interdisciplinaria satisfactoria entre los académicos, posibilitando a los mismos una experiencia apropiada en la atención básica del Sistema Único de Salud (SUS).

Descriptor: Prácticas; Sistema Único de Salud; Estudiantes del Área de la Salud.

INTRODUCTION

University extension is capable of promoting a glimpse of the future professional performance of students in the health field, which is a means of putting into practice the knowledge that is often passively acquired in the classroom⁽¹⁾. And, with regard to the extramural experience in institutionalized internships, the vision of the health-disease process, in line with the subjectivity of its social and biological effects, culminated in the pedagogical reformulation of practices in higher education capable of overcoming the hegemonic model of medical care, thus promoting – above all – the valuation of the care provided^(2,3).

Interprofessional Health Education (IHE) determines the basis for encouraging joint learning among professionals from different areas and emphasizes the proximity of this concept to the basic convictions of the public health system as the primary care of the Unified Health System (*Sistema Único de Saúde – SUS*) is based on principles such as social participation and structured teamwork^(4,5). Much of this can be seen from the plurality of teams incorporated into the Family Health Strategy (*Estratégia Saúde da Família – ESF*), which shares actions performed by doctors, nurses, dentists, physiotherapists, and other professionals⁽⁶⁾.

Under this premise, higher education institutions have valued the incorporation of the so-called “extramural” internships, that is, internships that remove university students from controlled teaching environments and introduce them to the reality of the public system in order to prepare them for the challenges inherent in the comprehensiveness, universality and equity of SUS⁽⁷⁾. This process is centered on the problematization of social contexts and seeks to implement active methodologies into the conformation of a teaching model capable of integrating university technical education and real community needs^(8,9).

Although there are ethical dilemmas in the experience of collective work and the academic is faced with responsibilities, decisions and frustrations inherent to their context, it is crucial to enable means of discernment regarding what is seen and heard in the experiences lived in reality – it is important to consider that the process of autonomy in the consolidation of knowledge cannot be treated in an individualistic way since this appropriation is socially constructed⁽¹⁰⁾. In that regard, the relevance of providing opportunities capable of dialoguing with other professional areas is fundamental for the development of care comprehensiveness, since the patient is rarely affected by a single condition.

Thus, this experience report aims to describe the experience of an academic internship experienced by university students in the health field in a municipality in Baixo Solimões and, thus, present the performance of Medical, Nursing and Dentistry students enrolled in the Extramural Internship in Public Health of a public university in the state of Amazonas, which proposes to enable experiences in the public health system in municipalities of Baixo Solimões in order to provide reflections on the care practice from the scientific perspective of university extension.

DATA SYNTHESIS

This is a descriptive experience report of an extramural internship in Public Health (conducted between October 2019 and February 2020) with six undergraduate students: four Medical students, one Nursing student and one Dentistry student from a public university in Manaus. This module takes place in the last period of these programs with students being assigned a city in the countryside of the state of Amazonas to carry out their experience accompanied by a professor/preceptor of the institution⁽¹¹⁾.

The experience took place in the municipality of Manacapuru, a city located 98 km away from the capital of Amazonas. The experience within SUS took place through the work of students in health education activities and appointments carried out in a Primary Health Care (PHC) center. With the students allocated in housing provided by

the city hall during the five-month period of the experience, all the structural conditions were guaranteed in order to promote adequate conditions for the experience described herein.

The methodological structure of this internship consisted of an action plan designed by the professor/preceptor, which was segmented into categories that covered both individual performance of the students (within their own professional field) and multidisciplinary action (all students performing activities together). Students helped with exams, appointments and other procedures in search of a reliable observation of the real care provision situation in the municipality. The individual and collective experiences carried out by the students are described below:

Description of Individual Experience Activities

The PHC team carried out home visits to families living in assigned territories, and medical students, with the help of the internship preceptor and Community Health Workers (CHW), traveled to certain communities using speedboats or canoes provided by the city hall. These visits took place on different days for different comorbidities, where the team (students and professionals) initially identified the groups most prone to the risk/worsening of certain Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) – diabetes and high blood pressure – in order to optimize priority referral to care at the PHC center.

The Nursing team's activities took place under the supervision of a nurse and the appointments also followed schedules for childcare, prenatal care, the Hiperdia Program, preventive labs, syndromic approach, reproductive planning, home visits and rapid HIV tests. There was use of user embracement strategies recognized by the scientific literature^(12,13) in the office, namely: attentive listening to the patients' complaints, use of images as a way to aid the verbal expression of children, meeting quick demands (dressings, delivery of prescribed medication, measurement of blood pressure and glycemic index) and use of macro models as an illustrative artifice of health education.

The Dentistry student in the internship helped the PHC dentist with elective and urgent care, health education in schools, technical support in return visits, clinical cases and health care for patients with special needs. This assistance took place from the rotation of dentists in the morning and afternoon shifts, and, in the practical matter, the dentistry student was able to perform low and medium complexity procedures (always accompanied by the acting dental surgeon). Among the main procedures carried out during this period, the following can be mentioned: prophylaxis, supragingival scaling, permanent restorations in posterior teeth, simple extractions and provisional restorations.

Description of Interprofessional Activities

At the beginning of October, the Pink October action took place among the Nursing, Dentistry and Medical teams, being organized in the PHC waiting room. This activity aimed to carry out a major mobilization in favor of women's health. In the weeks preceding the activity, the action was publicized on the community radio and at the reception of the PHC center (through the distribution of pamphlets and display of posters). The students – under the preceptorship of the university professor – assisted the professionals in carrying out the following procedures: clinical breast examination, delivery of care to pregnant and postpartum women, and HIV, syphilis and hepatitis testing.

With regard to the perspective of health education, the students held a brief cycle of lectures at the reception of the PHC center aiming to prevent certain aggravating factors already in primary care by raising awareness of the target public about the importance of early diagnosis^(14,15). By using banners, macro models and posters, students gave the following lectures: *How to identify and report violence against women?*, *The importance of breast self-examination and Prevention of cervical cancer*.

As a way of de-characterizing the unidirectional format of absorbing information inherent to the lecture format⁽¹⁶⁾, students included participatory methodologies^(17,18) as a way of integrating participants, namely: a Q&A session (the target audience was encouraged to answer questions about subjects addressed in the lectures. The women who answered the questions correctly won a gift) and "Brainstorming" (each person from the target audience raffled a word related to the theme of the lectures and pasted them on a large mural displayed at the reception – the grouped set of words exposed ideas for improvements to comprehensive women's health care).

In November, attention was focused on men's health – in reference to Blue November. A day was chosen to address the two comorbidities that most affected the aforementioned target audience of the PHC center: arterial hypertension and diabetes mellitus. The chosen dynamic dealt mostly with issues related to self-care and was carried out in the form of a conversation circle⁽¹⁹⁾ at the reception of the PHC center. In a moment prior to the formation of the conversation circle, the students asked the men present to write on a paper (anonymously) any questions/curiosities related to subjects or taboos related to men's health. At the time of the conversation circle, the students read the questions aloud and clarified such issues, always complementing the answers with concepts and explanations based on the scientific literature.

Delivery of health education also happened with the *Consultório na Rua* program – a street Medicine strategy that aims to offer health services to people who are socially vulnerable and who are often prone to marginalization in social and economic contexts^(20,21). Some of the actions carried out were workshops on oral hygiene (where the Dentistry student demonstrated brushing techniques on macro models and shortly afterwards carried out supervised brushing with the participants) and lectures on the prevention of cervical cancer and breast cancer. In clinical services, rapid tests were performed to detect sexually transmitted infections.

Integrative permanent education was delivered through playful activities conducted by students and the internship preceptor in partnership with the PHC center professionals. In the first activity, there was a prioritization of Community Health Workers (CHW) for integration as part of the medical team suggested a broader discussion of the diagnosis of diseases common to the Amazonian reality, since some of the professionals referred certain patients to the PHC center without the real need for medical care.

With the use of a conversation circle⁽²²⁾, the possibility of promoting listening and dialog based on reflective exercises was perceived, culminating in the understanding of potential communication “noises” existing among team members. After this activity, there was a lecture on the main clinical symptoms of dengue, malaria and chikungunya.

There were also activities such as participation in awareness walks, visits to Psychosocial Care Centers (*Centros de Atenção Psicossocial – CAPS*) and assistance in medical emergency teams – all activities carried out collectively (with Dentistry, Medical and Nursing students).

Finally, as the last activity carried out in the field, the students and the internship preceptor conducted a moment of integration between all professionals working at the PHC center. In view of the importance of stimulating communication not only between professionals and patients⁽²³⁾, but also between the team of doctors, nurses, dentists and community workers⁽²⁴⁾, a motor skills scavenger hunt was held under the name of One Left, where each participant advanced in the game as they memorized (and said aloud) a series of words spoken in the circle of participants – the winner was the one who remembered the largest number of words spoken by the game participants. After this moment of relaxation, the professionals gathered in a conversation circle and exposed their satisfaction, expectations and suggestions regarding the consolidation of effective communication between the members of the health team.

Unanimously, the students reported that the experience surpassed all the expectations created before moving to the municipality, because although several structural, social and geographic barriers are – in fact – a reality to be overcome in the city of Manacapuru, they experienced – in the Extramural Internship in Public Health – all aspects related to effective care in primary care in the municipality.

CONCLUSION

The methodologies applied in the Extramural Internship in Public Health satisfactorily enabled an interprofessional experience for Dentistry, Medical and Nursing students given the use of technical-dialogical devices (conversation circles, humanized user embracement, participatory lectures, interactive activities, etc.) as a form of integration between students, professionals and patients of the Primary Health Care (PHC) center where the activities took place. As a result, university students were able to develop fundamental skills and competencies for their future professional activities since they were able to witness and act (albeit for a limited time) in the care provision reality of the Unified Health System (*Sistema Único de Saúde – SUS*).

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest in the manuscript.

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CONTRIBUTIONS

Jeffer Haad Ruiz da Silva contributed to the study conception and design; the acquisition, analysis and interpretation of data and the writing and/or revision of the manuscript. **Jéssica Lourdes de Aguiar Gonçalves** contributed to

the acquisition, analysis and interpretation of data and the writing and/or revision of the manuscript. **Francisco Ferreira Barcelar Junior** contributed to the acquisition, analysis and interpretation of data. All the authors approved the final version of the manuscript and are responsible for all aspects of the manuscript, including ensuring its accuracy and integrity.

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