

The protection of health in danger, in the midst of a pandemic

Geraldo Lucchese* 

In these times of pandemic, the Unified Health System (SUS) was recognized and praised by that part of society that did not value it as an emancipatory, civilizing, humanist, and social justice public policy. An important part of the work of the SUS, which made it recognized and valued, was carried out by the Health Surveillance (Visa). From reviewing and approving clinical vaccine research; authorization for its emergency use; regulatory flexibility aimed at the accelerated production or import of alcohol gel, diagnostic kits and other supplies, and guidance for the organization of health services; even the orientation to trade in general; acting on sanitary barriers and inspection of services in compliance with the sanitary measures adopted in each municipality or region. Even other instances of SUS have more clearly perceived the role of Visa for the system and for society. However, despite the recognition of its immense importance for Brazilians, SUS faces serious threats. Since 2015, with the beginning of the Temer Government, sectors of the health market, with the old and false argument of greater competence of private services, are proposing the hybridization of SUS. They even want to operate in Primary Care, in the family health teams, one of the essential pillars of the system and the one with greater contact with the local population. This means draining health resources for private companies that, even if they say otherwise, do not have the social commitment necessary to strengthen SUS and the vision of the social determination of health. We know that none of the country's major problems will be solved by the logic of the market, which, unfortunately, is hegemonic and convinces even the humblest that it is the way out. Threats to the public, universal, and free SUS necessarily mean threats to Visa and its health protection work. The neoliberal desire is a fragile state, which has practically no structure and power to intervene in the private market, in any area. Hence the ban on increasing the spending ceiling. The objective is to scrap any public service and justify its extinction or privatization. We haven't had, for example, tenders for work at Visa for some time. And Visa workers are aware that they are part of SUS, which is universal, public, and free. And that they work to realize the social right to health. They know that their work is aimed at protecting the health of other people, with the care of the other. They know that SUS, and Visa within it, is different from the market model, in which those who have money buy protection for their health. The main objective of this Journal is to stimulate the production of studies and research and to disseminate them to all interested parties, in an open and public manner. However, the promotion of research, development, and innovation is another area immensely affected by government policy. Resources for research in public universities, the main source of knowledge production in Brazil, were also immensely reduced. The scientific denialism promoted by the Federal Government condemns Brazil, a country with valuable and strategic resources, to the role of a primary producer, eternal supplier of raw materials. Despite this context, we resisted, and we are here with another issue, which brings articles of great importance to Brazilian public health, such as the relationship between Visa and Primary Care, the quality control of rapid tests for the diagnosis of COVID-19, drug price regulation, quality management, drug registration, evaluation of modified mosquitoes for arbovirus control, contamination in different high consumption foods and healthy school cafeterias, among others. Our fundamental purpose is the protection of the health of Brazilians, the qualification of the services provided by SUS and its strengthening, with a view to realizing the social right to health provided for in the Federal Constitution. Therefore, Brazil needs SUS and SUS needs Visa.

Grupo Temático de Vigilância
Sanitária (GTVISA), Associação
Brasileira de Saúde Coletiva
(Abrasco), Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brasil

* E-mail: visaemdebate@incqs.fiocruz.br