



CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE EXTENSIONIST PRACTICE ON ATTRACTING BLOOD DONORS FOR NURSING GRADUATES

CONTRIBUIÇÕES DA PRÁTICA EXTENSIONISTA SOBRE CAPTAÇÃO DE DOADORES DE SANGUE PARA GRADUANDOS DE ENFERMAGEM

CONTRIBUCIONES DE LA PRÁCTICA EXTENSIONISTA SOBRE LA CAPTACIÓN DE DONADORES DE SANGRE PARA ESTUDIANTES DE ENFERMERÍA

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ABSTRACT

Objective: to identify the contributions from the implementation of the intervention project "This bag has value: donate blood" and the achievement of its objective on attracting blood donors for the training of nursing graduates. **Method:** this was a descriptive study based on the report from an experience from students at the 8th and 9th semesters of Nursing School at the Recôncavo da Bahia Federal University working as nursing interns at a hospital service in the municipality of Santo Antônio de Jesus, Bahia. **Results:** the contributions to the formation of future nursing professionals mainly involved upgrading and acquiring knowledge on the subject of donation and abilities in the process of communication in the educational activities carried out. **Conclusion:** the recognition of the importance of establishing strategies to attract blood donors because this is a practice surrounded by fears and taboos and of extreme significance for hospital services. **Descriptors:** Blood Donors; Health Education; Community Extension.

RESUMO

Objetivo: identificar as contribuições da implementação do projeto de intervenção "Essa bolsa tem valor: doe sangue" e o alcance de seu objetivo na captação de doadores de sangue, para a formação de graduandos de enfermagem. **Método:** estudo descritivo pautado em um relato de experiência vivenciado por discentes do 8^o e 9^o semestres de Enfermagem da Universidade Federal do Recôncavo da Bahia, enquanto enfermeirandos de um serviço hospitalar do município de Santo Antônio de Jesus, Bahia. **Resultados:** as contribuições para a formação dos futuros profissionais de enfermagem envolveram, principalmente, a atualização e aquisição de conhecimentos sobre a temática da doação e habilidades no processo de comunicação nas atividades educativas realizadas. **Conclusão:** o reconhecimento da importância de instituir estratégias para a captação de doadores de sangue, visto que essa é uma prática rodeada de medos e tabus, e é de extrema significância para os serviços hospitalares. **Descritores:** Doadores de Sangue; Educação em Saúde; Extensão Comunitária.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: identificar las contribuciones de la implementación del proyecto de intervención "Esta bolsa tiene valor: done sangre" y el logro de su meta en la captación de donadores de sangre para la formación de estudiantes de enfermería. **Método:** estudio descriptivo basado en un informe de la experiencia de los estudiantes de los 8^o y 9^o semestres de enfermería de la Universidad Federal del Recôncavo da Bahia, mientras aprendices en un servicio del hospital del municipio de Santo Antônio de Jesús, Bahia. **Resultados:** las contribuciones para la formación de futuros profesionales de enfermería han implicado principalmente la actualización y adquisición de conocimientos sobre el tema de donación y habilidades en el proceso de comunicación en las actividades educativas llevadas a cabo. **Conclusion:** el reconocimiento de la importancia de establecer estrategias para atraer a los donadores de sangre, porque esto es una práctica rodeada de miedos y tabúes y de extrema importancia para los servicios del hospital. **Descriptores:** Donadores de Sangre; Educación para la Salud; Extensión de la Comunidad.

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INTRODUCTION

The practice of blood donation and the process of attracting blood donors have a high significance in contemporary times because there is nothing, until today, to completely replace the blood tissue. The shortfall in stocks of blood to ensure transfusion demands in hospital services is a problem of great relevance in the present day and, thus, the concern in health services about voluntary adhesion of blood donors in collection and transfusion units, is justified.

The growing violent contexts, directly linked to changes in the epidemiological profile of the Brazilian population, associated with technological advances that favor the implementation of therapeutic measures, intensify the need for blood and hemotherapeutic products.¹

In Brazil, 1.8% of the population donates blood. However, according to parameters from the World Health Organization (WHO),² this rate is not enough to keep regular stocks, which requires that 3% to 5% of the population regularly donate blood. Most of the donations correspond to replacement donations; the minority is related to spontaneous donations. Countries like Brazil, where there is a policy prohibiting the marketing of blood, have increased difficulty keeping stockpiles in hemocenters.³

Therefore, obstacles to voluntary blood donation emerge. These are numerous and are directly linked to contexts of misinformation about the donation process including fear, taboos, and prejudice such as resistance in adhering to voluntary blood donation. Thus, the dissemination of information about the blood donation process is considered essential for the progression of possibilities for steady donation.⁴

It is also considered that blood donation should be a voluntary and conscious act, bringing the will of help those in need, and therefore, it necessarily involves the feeling of solidarity. In the context of Nursing, obtaining volunteer donors can emerge through the use of educational processes such as a guiding axis in an attempt to sensitize the community to voluntary blood donation. Thus, "the health educational process allows subjects to be partners in the responsibility of the process of living and getting sick, fostering solidarity and human compassion toward their fellow man and the world".^{5:166}

Health education emerges as a donor funding strategy. Moreover, considering that anyone who donates blood can occupy diverse

environments in society, the strategies to increase donation should be extended to various spaces to achieve its goals. Such as this:

Nursing has on the educational action, one of its main guiding axis that come true in several spaces of nursing practices in general and especially in the field of Public Health, whether they are carried out in communities, health services linked to Primary Care, schools, day care centers, and other locations. This involves thinking about the educational action as a fundamental axis for the professional training with regard to Nursing care in Public Health and the need to identify teaching environments able to potentiate this practice.^{3:118}

Nursing is an integral part of the process of building a society that acts and thinks about health concerning the other, i.e., the collective. Furthermore, these health professionals are able, through educational activities, to contribute to new insights and perspectives on a specific health situation. Educational activities, when associated with an extensionist character, become fundamental tools for the process of construction of health and for sure contribute in unique ways to academic and future health professional training in the most diverse environments in search of their ideation.

In the case of the university extension as a contributor to the process of attracting blood donors (associated with educational practices) is that, historically, the university extension in our country began to emerge at the beginning of the 20th century and brought with it the influence of already existing European and North American movements that preached a great approximation of the community and its development through extension courses, respectively.⁵

Considering the historical issue that involves the extensionist practices, universities must have a role in promoting and spreading actions directed to communities because they are part of them and depend on them to achieve its goals, particularly cooperating for the training of professionals who will act in this same community.

Higher education institutions (HEIs) have an eminent community essence and should not spare efforts to achieve a fair civil, political, and moral society.⁵

Returning to the theme that involves the importance of voluntary blood donation, we understand that its comprehension involves

particularities from the solidarity state of the human being to issues related to knowledge or ignorance on the subject, which triggers the emergence of educational strategies to eliminate barriers to blood donation among populations in the context of nursing.

OBJECTIVE

- To identify the contributions from the implementation of the intervention project "This bag has value: donate blood" and the achievement of its goal attracting blood donors for the training of nursing graduates.

METHOD

This was a descriptive study based on the report from an experience from students at the 8th and 9th semesters of Nursing School at the Recôncavo da Bahia Federal University working as nursing interns at a hospital service in the municipality of Santo Antônio de Jesus, Bahia. As a proposal of the curriculum component Supervised Training II (ES-II), related to hospital care, students should develop and implement an intervention project based on the identification of a critical issue, proposing actions to achieve improvements and bring benefits to the environment in which they are executing their practical activities.

The intervention project proposed by the curricular component ES-II, based on the identification of a clearly perceived need, considered the high demand for blood components denoted by the students through their daily hospital practices. This perception was intensified by the occurrence of the supervised internship in various units of the hospital environment namely, medical clinic, surgical clinic, orthopedics, and emergency; it was also noticed that the demands requested by doctors were not always met in a timely manner by the hematology service because they had minimum stocks of blood and derivatives. Moreover, it was also noted that the occurrence of spontaneous donations is minimal, and that of replacement donations are higher mainly due to the hospitalization of friends or relatives who will undergo surgical procedures.

The idealized project was articulated between January and May of 2013. The title was: "This bag has value: donate blood." The educational process as a guiding axis in an attempt to sensitize the community to join the voluntary donation of blood was used to attract volunteer donors in addition to marketing strategies with the creation of a social network page on the subject of

donation. This project had the support of professionals in the service of hematology and hemotherapy in the municipality of Santo Antônio de Jesus, Bahia, and teachers of the discipline ES-II.

The implementation of the project followed these methodological steps: discussion and reflection on one of the main hospital sector's demands where the students were inserted; elaboration of the intervention project with an extensionist character; and project presentation for the evaluation of professors of the discipline and administrators of the hematology and hemotherapy sectors at the hospital. These steps occurred in February of 2013.

From March of 2013 on, the proposal for the project was advertised through the publication of a Facebook page, "This bag has value: donate blood", creation of custom t-shirts used during the supervised internship II, and activities to attract donors through the dissemination of the project and awareness of voluntary contributions that occurred at the university where we are study and work.

The awareness increased in April of 2014 directly from educational activities with different themes within the context of blood donation and attraction of volunteer donors. The topics covered are: myths and truths about voluntary blood donation; criteria for blood donation; step by step of blood donation: and a simple gesture that is worth a life among other topics. A new theme was addressed each week. The proposal of educational action occurred at the hospital with professionals from the sectors and patients' escorts at each inpatient clinic; awareness-raising activities were also carried out at UFRB through visits to students in the various courses in the institution and classrooms explaining the project proposal and objectives to be achieved.

Voluntary donations associated with this intervention project occurred with great intensity in the course of advertising months and reached the month of May in 2013.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

During the implementation of awareness-raising activities, we perceive the public interest with respect to a willingness to donate; many were those who were willing to volunteer blood donation. Although this act is often associated with fear, taboos, and prejudice, most individuals were confident and encouraged to participate in the blood drive. With this awareness, we emphasized the importance of the carried out awareness-

raising activities, particularly in health education and marketing strategies.

Health actions with the theme of blood donation were performed at the hospital with professionals and inpatients' escorts during two consecutive weeks of April of 2013, with two distinct themes covered each week, therefore, covering different professional teams and accompanying persons. The results obtained with this practice included much greater approximation to the theme, professionals in the units, and the community represented by patients' escorts.

We acquired new knowledge and updated outdated information in this process of closely working with the theme, which translates into great relevance to our training because they refer to skills needed and used as nursing professionals. Thus, the functions and duties of nurses in hematology in Brazil are highlighted; their jurisdictions are regulated by Resolution 306/2006 of the Federal Council of Nursing (COFEN), which establishes its responsibility for planning, execution, coordination, supervision, and evaluation of hemotherapy procedures in health units.⁶

Because the hemotherapy service is based on specific functions, obtaining information about the specificities of hematology and hemotherapy are fundamental for the future nursing professionals. Their obtained knowledge and constant update allow great improvement in their work and practice aiming at the well-being of patients and decreased risks, among other benefits that make a qualified professional, based on ethical and moral principles, committed to his profession and the civilian population.

The new knowledge acquired include alterations in the Collegiate Board Resolution (RDC) n° 153 from 2004 to Ordinance n.º 1,353, from June 14, 2011. The Ordinance published in the Union Official Diary establishes the new Technical Regulation of Hemotherapeutic Procedures with new criteria for blood donation in Brazil. These alterations are resumed into: expanding the age range for donating candidates. People from 16 to 17 years old (with permission from parents or guardians) up to 67 years, 11 months and 29 days old will also be able to donate blood in the country. In the previous standard, the donation was authorized for people aged between 18 and 65 years.^{7,8}

The rules related to donors' sexual orientation (heterosexuality, bisexuality, homosexuality) were also changed; it currently should not be used as a criterion for the selection of blood donors because it does

not constitute a risk in itself. That is, the manifestation of prejudice and discrimination on sexual orientation and gender identity, life habits, professional activity, socioeconomic condition, race, color, and ethnicity should not occur in the process of screening people for blood donation.²

We noted that the clientele closeness improved the process benefitting the communication used in the educational approaches. In this perspective, we highlight the use of appropriate language according to the present audience, facilitating their understanding of the issue and contributing to their active participation in the construction of knowledge through questions, clarifications, and contributions.

The creation of the Facebook page allowed us to approach a young audience about the theme of voluntary blood donation. This strategy proved to be singular and faithful to the objective of the intervention project, working on the donation awareness in individuals through constant updating on matters directly related to blood donation, its benefits, existing campaigns, places for donation, and information about this project.

The use of marketing as a strategy for attracting donors also reflected in positive results for us because we realized that the information should be disseminated through various communication media and that its effectiveness depends on how the issues will be addressed.

On the marketing tactics, it should be noted that:

Marketing is important to attracting donors requiring the use of consistent strategies to make blood donation part of the habits and values of the population aiming at the contribution of these experiences in the search for new donors and their loyalty.^{9:385}

Considering those results, the nurse must have updated knowledge about hematology and hemotherapy to act through different strategies to attract blood donors, primarily emphasizing health education and marketing strategies to obtain loyal donors.

Despite the immediate range of positive results with the developed activities reflected by the interest shown in donating blood and attracting donors, and consequently for fulfilled donations, some difficulties were evident during the project implementation process and reflected in the number of individuals who, although aware of the donation process, did not donate blood.

We highlight the structure of the hemotherapy service as insufficient to accommodate high demands of donations. Being welcomed as a donor is the first step to becoming a loyal donor. Thus, the lack of donor embracement by the service can temporarily dismiss the donor from the solidary act of donation. Measures that minimize barriers to donation should be imposed so that all those who seek the service of hematology and hemotherapy have their intentions fulfilled.⁹

The obstacles found in the execution of this intervention project, mainly of bureaucratic order, momentarily triggered a disbelief and discouragement in the face of the continued implementation of work, however, those feelings were soon deconstructed based on the magnitude and importance of attracting blood donors, therefore, we moved forward with this practice getting valuable contributions for the service and, no doubt, for our training in health that is reported here.

CONCLUSION

The experience of bringing awareness to individuals in order to make them loyal blood donors through the use of health education activities and marketing strategies brought great significance to our training because it allowed us to initially, update the knowledge on the subject of donation and integrate these during the implementation of educational proposals.

The obtained results clearly denotes the importance of the nursing practice in executing strategies that enhance attracting voluntary blood donors; the nurse should act with other professionals in the hemotherapy and hematology services within an integrated approach, initially by embracing individuals who are potential donors in order to make them loyal donors.

The development of the project and its implementation has allowed us to expand the knowledge of the subject, and has contributed significantly to the recognition of the importance of establishing strategies to attract blood donors because this is a practice surrounded by fears and taboos and of extreme significance for hospital services. We emphasize the value in contributing to an increase in the number of volunteer blood donors for the service, qualifying the assistance provided to the individual in need.

Despite the challenges faced, we emphasize the real need to increase blood donations as the driving reason for continuing

the project and consequently achieving its objectives. Therefore, we realized that the professionals working directly with hemotherapy and hematology services must interact and act in line with academic projects that aim at attracting blood donors because these certainly seek improvement in the quality of care that is provided to those in need.

We emphasize the importance undertaken by all professionals involved in attracting blood donors by encouraging the development of projects aimed at educating the population toward blood drives. This will also meet the requirements of the Blood and Blood products' Policies, contributing to the formation of citizens who are aware of their role in society, and the training of all professionals involved.

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Submission: 2014/05/25

Accepted: 2015/08/20

Publishing: 2015/09/15

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