

COMBATING DENGUE: EXPERIENCE OF THE PATIENT SAFETY LEAGUE (LASPAC)

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Dengue is an infectious disease transmitted by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, with no specific treatment available to date, making vaccination a crucial measure for its prevention. In Anápolis-Goiás, the Project UniEVANGÉLICA Itinerant Citizen -- ImmunizACTION Health Education was developed to increase vaccination coverage and raise population awareness about the importance of vaccination. **Objective:** To raise children's awareness about dengue prevention and the importance of vaccination, while providing nursing students with an opportunity to apply practical knowledge and develop communication skills. **Methodology:** The activity was carried out at an elementary school in Anápolis, involving approximately 90 children aged 3 to 10 years. Interactive lectures and playful activities, such as games and simulations, were organized and adapted to facilitate understanding for the child audience. **Results:** The activities proved to be effective, with children actively participating and demonstrating good assimilation of the content. The playful and interactive methodology contributed to engagement and learning, and the experience was enriching for both the children and the students, who improved their communication skills. **Conclusion:** The educational activity provided students with a significant practical experience, contributing to their personal and professional growth. Socially, it is expected that the awareness generated among children will expand to their families, promoting greater adherence to dengue prevention and control practices in the community.

Keywords: Experience report; Dengue; Vaccination; Health promotion.

INTRODUCTION

Dengue is an arbovirus transmitted through the bite of an infected female *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. It is characterized as an acute febrile illness that can progress to severe cases. Its treatment is primarily focused on symptomatic management, as there is still no specific medication for the disease. In this context, the incorporation of dengue vaccination becomes an important strategy for disease prevention (Brasil, 2024).

In view of this, stemming from the need to increase vaccination coverage in the municipality of Anápolis, the Institutional Project UniEVANGÉLICA Itinerant Citizen -- ImmunizACTION Health Education emerged in 2023, carried out in partnership with the Municipal Health Department, through the Municipal School of Health and Epidemiological Surveillance - Immunization Sector, with the main objectives of raising awareness about the importance of adherence to vaccination, its benefits, and expanding access to information and immunizers for the population.

In the interim, the Project was realized through the action of academic leagues, which, through proposals previously evaluated and approved by a committee of professors, were able to carry out health education actions in the community. Thus, LASPAC proposed to work on the themes: dengue and vaccination, with children from an elementary school in the municipality of Anápolis, state of Goiás. Furthermore, the involvement of nursing students in practical health education activities not only enriches their academic training but also contributes to the development of essential skills, such as effective communication and the adaptation of technical content for different audiences. These practical experiences are indispensable for training health professionals prepared to face field challenges. Therefore, the action carried out by LASPAC not only aims to protect community health but also promotes the comprehensive development of future nursing professionals.

Primarily, the action developed by LASPAC aimed to contribute to the improvement of community health simultaneously with the practical exercise of knowledge obtained during undergraduate studies. Since the target audience was children, the challenge was to adapt technical content into language that is easy for children to understand and adhere to, but which is capable of clearly conveying the intended message. Given the above, this report briefly presents the unfolding of nursing students' action in combating dengue and encouraging vaccination within their community.

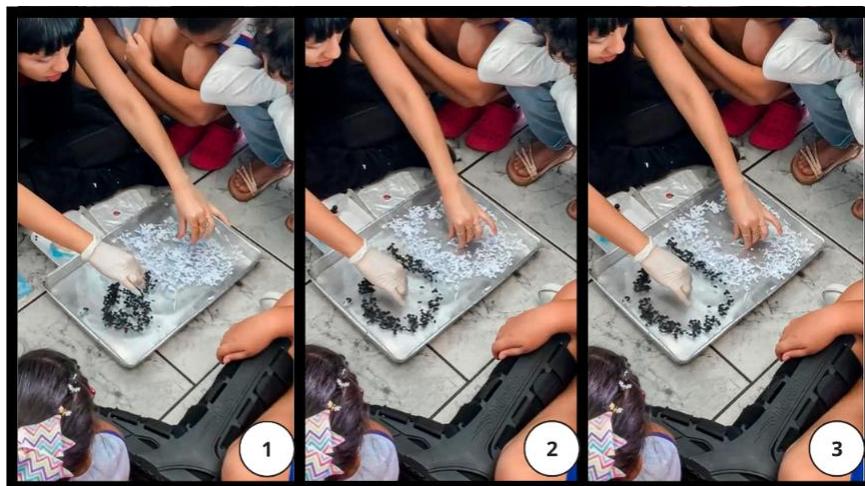
METHODOLOGY

The activity was carried out for approximately 90 children aged between 3 and 10 years at an elementary school in Anápolis. For better execution, the activity took place over 2 days, with the first day directed at children aged 3 to 6 and the second for children aged 7 to 10. On both days, interactive lectures were first conducted, using

illustrated cards containing signs and symptoms of the disease, vector mosquito breeding sites, and ways to combat and prevent dengue, including vaccination.

During the presentation of information, students were encouraged to comment on their knowledge, opinions, and experiences regarding the theme addressed. Immediately afterwards, a pedagogical simulation of the mechanism of action of the repellent and the immunizer was demonstrated. For this, the following materials were used: sulfite paper and E.V.A. to simulate the dengue virus and mosquito respectively, a plastic sphere to simulate the human cell, a container with water simulating the propagation medium, and detergent, which acted analogously to the repellent and vaccine, repelling the sulfite paper and E.V.A. dispersed on the water. Photograph 1 presents the simulation of the mechanism of action performed by a LASPAC member.

Photograph 1. Simulation of the Mechanism of Action of the Repellent and the Immunizer.



Source: produced by authors.

Subsequently, the students participated in educational games to reinforce the content presented, including memory game, hit the mosquito, spot the 7 differences, and find the mosquito breeding sites. In addition, on the second day, a bingo with true or false questions and a question race were held to break a tie in scores between students. Finally, on both activity days, souvenirs with a message related to the theme were distributed to reinforce awareness and encourage the practice of preventive care at home and in the community.

RESULTS

During the execution of the activities, great adherence by the children to receive the students was noticeable, including their active participation, as they shared knowledge and experiences related to dengue. This intense participation of the students was mainly due to the type of activity chosen for development, as they were

simple and attractive dynamics for their age group, configuring the health promotion action as a recreational moment, yet opportune for learning. Furthermore, most students demonstrated excellent performance in carrying out the activities, which reveals the fixation of the presented content and the successful capture of the message.

It is also worth emphasizing that the action in the practical field was the stage for a social intervention through problem-posing education, which, from the observation and analysis of the problems of a certain reality, seeks solutions with the active participation of the individuals who compose it. This type of action was able to aggregate knowledge and learning for both the students and the elementary school pupils.

Moreover, the adaptation of technical-scientific content into a playful and pedagogical language easily understood by the child audience allowed the students to improve their communication, especially in terms of clarity and effectiveness, fundamental aspects for establishing bonds and trust in interpersonal relationships, and indispensable in the field of nursing.

CONCLUSION

The present work enabled the protagonism of the undergraduate student in their training, through critical thinking regarding the reality presented to them. From this perspective, the planning and execution of the activities allowed the students to seek new knowledge beyond the curriculum, develop skills, bring the knowledge acquired in the classroom into the practical field, and also learn from new experiences, which consequently promoted both intellectual and personal growth of these individuals.

From a social point of view, it is expected that the action will generate impacts not only in the school environment but also in the children's circle of relationships, who, by sharing such information, contribute to generating greater population awareness about dengue prevention and control along with increased vaccination coverage against the disease. Thus, it is believed that by forming aware individuals from childhood, they can become adults committed to transforming their reality.

Finally, the execution of the proposed health promotion provided the members of the LASPAC academic league with a brief experience of the role of the nurse professional, who, above all among various functions, provides service to the community. Therefore, the execution of this and other extracurricular projects fosters the formation of a professional as a thinking being, possessing a critical view of reality, who in turn identifies themselves as a fundamental piece for the development and well-being of the society in which they are inserted.

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