

THE SUS AND MIGRATION FLOWS IN ANÁPOLIS: EMERGING CHALLENGES AND THE POTENTIAL OF THE HOST LANGUAGE AS PUBLIC POLICY

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ABSTRACT

The migratory process in Anápolis, as well as in the state of Goiás, is historically marked by national migration, also attracting international immigrants, whose integration into the Unified Health System (SUS) faces significant challenges. The objective of this study is to understand how the SUS and migratory flows in Anápolis relate to each other in terms of emerging challenges and the potential of the host language as a public policy. This is, therefore, a literature review based on databases, information systems, and official reports from the federal, state, and municipal governments, with the construction of an anamnesis instrument in Spanish and French aimed at welcoming immigrants. Although there are no specific data on the predominant nationalities in Anápolis, it is known that Goiás is home to mostly Venezuelans, Haitians, Colombians, and Bolivians. In addition, only 27.5% of municipal managers in Goiás recognize the existence of an immigrant population. Among the challenges, communication is the main obstacle to effective care for immigrants, especially due to the lack of intercultural mediators and public policies aimed at this need. There are 922 active immigrant registrations in the Basic Health Units of Anápolis, predominantly men and people between 20 and 59 years of age. Thus, there is a clear need for inclusive and culturally competent health policies in Goiás to ensure effective access to the SUS for immigrants, addressing language barriers and lack of information. These measures are essential to fully respect and integrate the rights of this population.

Keywords: Migration; Communication; Unified Health System; Host language.

INTRODUCTION

Goiás is a reference state in terms of migration, whether national or international (IMB, 2017). In this context, Anápolis is the second city regarding the destination of international immigrants, with 2,647 foreigners in the state, equivalent to 13.4% (TAVARES, 2024).

In general, the migrant population tends to remain invisible in the locations where it settles, either due to a lack of data or to sociocultural inequality itself. Regarding health, these obstacles hinder their access to the Unified Health System (SUS), which is guaranteed by law in the country (BRAZIL, 1988).

The language spoken by immigrants is one of the biggest obstacles when building bridges of communication with the SUS, since, in the doctor-patient relationship, for example, good communication depends on both parties understanding

the questions and answers (PORTO, 2017). In this context, the host language emerges as a public policy to foster the sociocultural inclusion of immigrants in the receiving country, as exemplified by initiatives in the city of São Paulo in collaboration with the Federal Government (MEC, 2015)

Thus, this study is relevant as it identifies the main barriers encountered by the immigrant population in accessing health care, while also aiming to characterize this population and propose measures to address the issues identified. Thus, the objective of this study is to understand how the SUS and migratory flows in Anápolis relate to each other in terms of emerging challenges and the potential of the host language as a public policy.

METHODOLOGY

This study consists of a literature review constructed from databases, information systems, and official reports from the federal, state, and municipal governments, as well as bibliographies on the Unified Health System (SUS) concerning the process of welcoming the immigrant population. Based on the data obtained, an anamnesis instrument was developed to welcome immigrants to the city through the mother tongues of the main nationalities.

RESULTS

It was identified that the immigrant/refugee population in Goiás comprises approximately 16,000 people (SES-GO, 2023), although only 27.5% (42 of the 146 municipalities in Goiás in the survey) of municipal managers recognized their existence. Among these 42 cities, the most common nationalities were Venezuelans, Haitians, and Cubans, whose most widely spoken languages were Spanish, French, English, and Creole (PEREIRA; ALVES; SOUZA, 2020).

According to the Government of Goiás, the majority of them are Venezuelans, 3,156 people, followed by Haitians, 503, Colombians, 142, and Bolivians, 127. In addition, among these 16,000 foreigners in the state, only 6,384 are registered in the Single Registry, which constitutes 40% of the total. (SES-GO, 2023). No updated data on the predominant nationalities in Anápolis were found in the state and municipal public documents.

According to data from the Health Information System for Primary Care (SISAB) (2024), as of March 2024, there were 922 active registrations in Anápolis, with immigrants registered in 44 of the 50 Health Centers/Basic Units (CNES, 2024). This number corresponds to about 34% of the municipality's registered immigrants (TAVARES, 2024).

Among the active registrations found, there is a preponderance of men (58.0%), non-naturalized foreigners (95.3%), people aged between 20 and 59 (45.9%), literate people without higher education (98.5%), and those with no history of disability (97.5%) (SISAB, 2024).

Among the main demands listed, language proved to be the main problem both for immigrants seeking to "fit in" and for the system that "awaits" them. In addition to language, the foreign population reports that the lack of proper documentation, registration in the SUS (Unified Health System), and cultural differences often hinder access to health care (PEREIRA; ALVES; SOUZA, 2020)(SES-GO, 2023).

In order to properly cover this population, it is essential that it be well characterized. However, important systems such as DATASUS (BRAZIL, 2024) do not have fields with public data containing clarifying information about immigrants. In addition, no clear and objective public policies or documents were found to help immigrants access the SUS and their health rights.

The Government of Goiás developed the State Plan for Assistance to Migrants, Refugees, and Stateless Persons in Goiás, released in 2024, which is beginning to make progress in its implementation and strategies (SES-GO, 2023). However, with regard to language, no specific public policy was found to ensure assistance to immigrants by the Anápolis Health Department.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that there are many gaps in the data and information specific to the immigrant population in Anápolis, which is the main obstacle to ensuring full access to the Unified Health System (SUS) for immigrants. At the same time, it is essential to implement culturally competent public policies to facilitate this access. Therefore, the creation of informational materials in various languages and the training of health teams prepared to deal with the specificities of this population are essential

measures to overcome language barriers and lack of information, promoting their integration and well-being in Brazil.

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