

TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCE: CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNIEVANGÉLICA CIDADÃ ITINERANTE INSTITUTIONAL PROJECT – HEALTH EDUCATION AND IMMUNIZATION

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ABSTRACT

This experience report describes participation in the UniEVANGÉLICA Cidadã Itinerante (UniEVANGÉLICA Traveling Citizen) Institutional Project, which aimed to increase vaccination coverage and raise community awareness about dengue prevention. In partnership with the Anápolis Health Department, the project integrated immunization and educational activities focused on children and university students. The **objective** was to assess the impact of health education activities on community awareness and participant engagement. The **methodology** involved the participation of academic leagues that organized technical lectures for university students and interactive presentations for children, using teaching materials adapted to different age groups. During the three-day event, 70 children and 50 university students actively participated. The results showed significant engagement, with a clear understanding of how to prevent dengue and the crucial role of vaccination. **The final considerations** highlight the effectiveness of integrating education and vaccination, demonstrating the positive impact on public health and the training of future professionals in the field.

Keywords: League; Dengue; Immunization; Health.

INTRODUCTION

With the alarming increase in dengue cases, it is crucial to intensify efforts to raise awareness about this infectious disease, which represents a significant challenge to public health in Brazil (Salmão, 2017). Dengue, caused by the DENV virus and belonging to the *Flavivirus* genus of the *Flaviviridae* family, has four distinct

serotypes: DENV-1, DENV-2, DENV-3, and DENV-4, all circulating in Brazil (Ministry of Health, 2024).

Dengue is mainly transmitted through the bite of female *Aedes* mosquitoes, especially *Aedes aegypti*, which become infected when they bite an infected person during the acute phase of the infection. The virus multiplies in the mosquito and is transmitted to new human hosts during subsequent feedings (Salmão, 2017). This transmission cycle is strongly influenced by environmental factors such as temperature, precipitation, and inadequate urbanization practices, which facilitate the proliferation of mosquito vectors (Ministry of Health, 2024).

Infection with the DENV virus can range from asymptomatic forms to severe symptoms that can lead to death (Ministry of Health, 2024). The disease generally progresses through three clinical phases: febrile, critical, and recovery. In the febrile phase, symptoms include high fever, headache, myalgia, arthralgia, nausea, and vomiting (Ministry of Health, 2024). The critical phase, which occurs between the third and seventh day, may present warning signs such as severe abdominal pain, persistent vomiting, and hypotension, indicating a possible clinical worsening that can progress to shock (Brazil, 2024). Severe forms of dengue include shock and hemorrhagic complications, with a risk of vital organ failure (Ministry of Health, 2024).

The prevention of dengue requires a joint and continuous effort by the population, involving the elimination of mosquito breeding sites, the proper use of repellents, and the implementation of environmental control measures (Ministry of Health, 2024). Therefore, raising awareness among the population about prevention methods and explaining the risks related to the disease is of utmost importance for more effective control (Ministry of Health, 2024).

The objective of this article is to report on the authors' experience participating in the UniEVANGÉLICA Cidadã Itinerante – Imunização Educação em Saúde (UniEVANGÉLICA Citizen Traveling Immunization and Health Education) Institutional Project, highlighting the educational activities carried out with children and university students. Through the application of health education principles and community involvement, the event sought not only to increase vaccination coverage

but also to foster a culture of continuous prevention, which is essential for the effective control of dengue in the municipality (UniEVANGÉLICA, 2024).

METHODOLOGY

The UniEVANGÉLICA Cidadã Itinerante – Imunização Educação em Saúde Institutional Project, in partnership with the Anápolis Health Department, aims to increase vaccination coverage and promote health education. The project involved academic leagues that organized activities in health centers and schools, focusing on vaccination campaigns, including against COVID-19. The activities included organizing and running educational events to improve access to information about immunizations and develop ongoing health education initiatives. Meetings were held for students to prepare them for effective communication with different audiences. The preparation included the development of teaching materials, such as memory games, placards with drawings, PowerPoint presentations, and games, appropriate for the age groups of children and university students. The event lasted three days. On the first day, a lecture was given to university students, addressing more technical and epidemiological aspects of dengue, including the vaccine's effectiveness and the importance of vaccination campaigns as a public health strategy. On the second and third days, there were presentations for children, which were more dynamic and interactive, using games and audiovisual resources to explain the importance of combating the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito and ways to prevent dengue.

Figure 1. Memory Game



Source: Own work, 2024.

Figure 2. Lecture on the symptoms of dengue fever.



Source: Own work, 2024.

RESULTS

The event achieved significant results in terms of participation and impact on the community. Around 70 children participated in the educational activities, demonstrating interest and involvement in the proposed activities. After the lectures, the children showed a clear understanding of how to prevent dengue and the role of each person in eliminating mosquito breeding sites. In addition, they were encouraged to share what they learned with their families, expanding the campaign's reach. Among university students, approximately 50 attended the lectures, which generated enriching discussions about the importance of vaccination and the

challenges faced in controlling dengue. Many of the participants highlighted the importance of becoming multipliers of information in their academic and personal communities.

This experience allowed participants to apply academic knowledge in practice, developing communication skills in health and group management. It offered a broader view of the importance of preventive actions and the challenges in organizing and executing immunization campaigns, especially in areas with low awareness about vaccination, highlighting the positive impact of health education in the community.

CONCLUSION

Participation in the UniEVANGÉLICA Cidadã Itinerante – Imunização Educação em Saúde (UniEVANGÉLICA Citizen Traveling – Immunization Health Education) Institutional Project was enriching. The event not only benefited community health, but also allowed for the practical application of academic knowledge, highlighting the importance of integrating theory and practice in the training of health professionals. It demonstrated the effectiveness of vaccination campaigns combined with educational strategies, especially in combating dengue fever, and involved a diverse audience, from children to university students. This integrated model proved to be effective and can serve as a reference for future public health campaigns, promoting the development of practical and communication skills essential for health professionals.

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