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University and public health services joining forces in the fight against HIV epidemics in Caxias do Sul city, South of Brazil

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Caxias do Sul is located in Rio Grande do Sul State which belongs to the region with the highest HIV prevalence in Brazil. This scenario led the HIV/AIDS Research Laboratory (LPHA) of Caxias do Sul University to contribute to the local health secretariat and its department of infectious diseases in promoting HIV/AIDS prevention and testing campaigns. We evaluated three cooperative campaigns executed between 2012 and 2014. In 2012, we promoted the "AIDS Week" where information about HIV was broadcasted on local media, educational material and condoms were distributed along the city and 2000 undergraduates were oriented on HIV during college classes. In 2013 and 2014, actions were focused on city main square and we additionally made available HIV, syphilis and HBV/HCV rapid tests and counseling services. In 2013, the initiative brought 181 individuals and 164 rapid tests were performed, being 2 tests positive for syphilis and 3 for HCV. In 2014, 700 citizens received counseling and 200 tests were performed, being 19 tests positive for syphilis, 5 for HCV and 1 for HIV. We identified general lack of knowledge about HIV and STDs despite Brazilian government continuous efforts on prevention. LPHA's support permitted approaching and orienting a higher number of individuals, besides expanding testing logistics, what resulted in more people seeking the test and orientation services during and after these initiatives. These facts, summed to the increase of positive tests, highlight the relevance of these actions and their strengthening to promote changes on HIV dissemination pattern in this city.

Biography

A C Vanni is a Clinical Laboratory Scientist at the HIV/AIDS Research Laboratory of Caxias do Sul University. She is graduated in Pharmacy and has a Master's degree in Genetics and Molecular Biology from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul. She is involved in epidemiological, clinical and laboratory diagnostics research related to HIV and other STDs. Currently, she is engaged in prevention initiatives and educational social projects involving adolescents and adults in the field of HIV and STDs.

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