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INTERSECTION BETWEEN PUBLIC POLICIES AND THE UNIFIED HEALTH SYSTEM (SUS): IMPLICATIONS FOR HEALTH MANAGEMENT AND THE PROVISION OF SERVICES TO THE POPULATION

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ABSTRACT
The research aimed to analyze the intersection between public policies and the Unified Health System (SUS), evaluating its implications for health management and the provision of services to the population. The methodology used included a literature review and the analysis of secondary data on the implementation of health policies in the context of the SUS. The results showed that, despite the principles of universality, integrality and equity of the SUS, management faces significant challenges, such as the lack of resources, the need for an integrated approach and the importance of social participation. The analysis revealed that the articulation between public policies and the SUS is essential to promote equity in access to services and efficiency in the use of resources. It is concluded that the strengthening of the SUS and the implementation of public policies are essential to ensure a health system that meets the needs of the population, and that political and social commitment is necessary to overcome the obstacles faced.

Keywords: Public health. SUS. Management.

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INTRODUCTION

The intersection between public policies and the Unified Health System (SUS) in Brazil is a topic of great relevance, especially in a context where public health faces multifaceted challenges. Since its creation in 1990, the SUS has been conceived as a universal, comprehensive, and equitable system, seeking to ensure access to health for the entire population. However, the implementation of its guidelines faces obstacles ranging from lack of resources to inadequate management, reflecting in disparities in access and quality of services provided (Giovanella et al., 2021; Shah; Fernandes, 2020).

Public health policies are fundamental to guide the action of the State in promoting the well-being of the population. They are built on the basis of social and health diagnoses and aim to organize and direct health initiatives at all levels of government. The articulation between these policies and the SUS is crucial, since the system depends on a robust legal and administrative framework to carry out its functions and meet the demands of society (Farias et al., 2018).

Health management, in turn, is a complex field that involves planning, execution, and evaluation of services and programs. In the context of the SUS, this management must be able to deal with regional diversity and the specific needs of each community. This requires an approach that considers not only demographic and epidemiological characteristics, but also social, economic, and cultural factors that influence the health of the population. In addition, the provision of health services must be accompanied by continuous evaluation, allowing for the identification of failures and improvements (Medeiros et al., 2024).

The intersection between public policies and the SUS should be seen as an opportunity to innovate in management and implement practices that effectively respond to the needs of the population. The experience of health management must be transformed into a space for learning and adaptation, where policies can be adjusted according to the reality experienced by citizens. The relationship between public policies and the SUS is also evidenced in the need to integrate different spheres of government and sectors of society (Santos; Gabriel; Mello, 2020).

Health cannot be seen in isolation, but as part of a complex that includes education, sanitation, security, and other social determinants. This expanded vision allows the construction of more effective and sustainable strategies, which contribute to the improvement of the living conditions and health of the population. In this context, research on the intersection between public policies and the SUS becomes essential to understand the dynamics that influence health management and service delivery (Sousa; Fernandes, 2020).

In this context, the objective of this study was to analyze how the articulation between public policies and the SUS can be improved to ensure a more effective and equitable service to the population, identifying challenges and good practices that can serve as a reference.

The importance of conducting this research lies in the need to deepen the understanding of the interactions between health policies and the SUS. Understanding these relationships is essential for the development of solutions that can improve health management and, consequently, the quality of the services provided. Research can contribute to the formulation of more effective policies and to the strengthening of the SUS, promoting public health that truly meets the needs of the Brazilian population.

DEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC HEALTH

Public health is a vast and multifaceted field that involves health promotion, disease prevention, and the protection of the health of the general population. It focuses not only on the treatment of individuals, but on collective health, addressing social, economic, and environmental factors that influence the quality of life of communities. In this context, public health seeks to improve the health of the population through planned and organized actions, ranging from the formulation of policies to the implementation of programs and services (Giovanella et al., 2021).

One of the pillars of public health is epidemiological surveillance, which monitors the occurrence of diseases and determines risk factors in the population. Surveillance allows for the identification of outbreaks and epidemics, helping to target rapid and effective interventions. This role is essential for informed decision-making and the allocation of health resources, ensuring that efforts are directed where they are most needed (Santos; Gabriel; Mello, 2020).

Health promotion is another key function of public health, which involves educating and empowering the population to adopt healthy behaviors. Vaccination campaigns, nutrition programs, and physical activity initiatives are examples of actions aimed at preventing diseases and promoting well-being. Health education is crucial to empowering citizens, enabling them to make informed decisions about their own health care and adopt healthy lifestyles (Farias et al., 2018).

In addition, public health works to reduce social inequalities, recognizing that factors such as income, education, and access to health services have a significant impact on the health of the population. Health policies should consider these disparities and seek to

ensure that everyone has equal access to quality health services, regardless of their socioeconomic background (Geus et al., 2011).

The intersection between public health and the environment is also an important aspect to be considered. Issues such as air and water pollution, access to basic sanitation, and climate change have a direct impact on the health of communities. Public health must therefore act to promote healthy and sustainable environments, creating policies that integrate environmental protection with the health of the population (Silva et al., 2020).

Financing public health is an ongoing challenge, especially in developing countries. Limited resources often result in inadequate health services, affecting the ability to respond to public health emergencies. It is essential that there is adequate investment in infrastructure, human resources, and technology, allowing the health system to function efficiently and effectively (Santos; Gabriel; Mello, 2020).

Another important aspect of public health is health research, which provides data and evidence for policymaking and interventions. Epidemiological studies, clinical trials, and behavioral health research are key to understanding the needs of the population and developing health strategies that are evidence-based. Research should be a priority in public health agendas, allowing innovation and adaptation to new realities (Ferreira, 2016).

Public health also plays a crucial role in responding to health emergencies, such as infectious disease outbreaks or natural disasters. The ability to respond quickly and effectively is essential to minimize the impact of these crises on the health of the population. This requires efficient coordination between different sectors and levels of government, as well as clear communication with the population, ensuring that the necessary information reaches everyone (Santos et al., 2022).

Mental health is a vital component of public health, often neglected in discussions about collective health. Mental health promotion, mental illness prevention, and access to mental health services are critical to the overall well-being of the population. Policies that integrate mental health into physical health services can result in better outcomes for individuals and communities (Santos et al., 2022).

Another significant public health challenge is drug resistance and emerging infectious diseases. The inappropriate use of antibiotics, for example, has led to the emergence of resistant strains that complicate the treatment of infections. Public health should work to raise awareness about the responsible use of medicines, in addition to promoting research into new treatment options and vaccines (Farias et al., 2018).

The importance of intersectoral collaboration cannot be underestimated in public health. Health is influenced by a variety of factors, including education, employment,

housing, and safety. The intersectoral approach promotes collaboration between different sectors, ensuring that health policies are integrated and that efforts to improve population health are comprehensive and coordinated (Giovanella et al., 2021).

In addition, public health must consider the role of technology in improving health services. The use of information and communication technologies can facilitate access to health information, improve the efficiency of services, and allow for more effective monitoring of the population's health conditions (Silva et al., 2020).

Telemedicine, for example, has become a valuable tool, especially in remote areas and during the COVID-19 pandemic. The education and training of health professionals are essential for strengthening public health. Well-trained and informed professionals are key to implementing effective policies and programs. Investing in the continuous training and training of health professionals can result in significant improvements in the quality of services provided to the population (Medeiros et al., 2024).

UNIFIED HEALTH SYSTEM (SUS)

The Unified Health System (SUS) is one of the largest public health systems in the world, created by the Federal Constitution of 1988 in Brazil. Its main objective is to ensure universal, equal and comprehensive access to health for all Brazilian citizens, regardless of their economic or social situation. The SUS is a model that seeks to decommodify health, ensuring that the right to health is a responsibility of the State and a guarantee of the citizen (Ferreira, 2016).

The SUS structure is composed of several spheres of management, including federal, state and municipal. This decentralized organization allows health policies to be adapted to local realities, respecting the particularities and needs of each region. Integrated management between the different levels of government is crucial for the effectiveness of the system, allowing for better coordination of health services and programs (Farias et al., 2018).

One of the main principles of the SUS is universality, which ensures that everyone has the right to access health services, regardless of their socioeconomic status. This means that anyone who needs care must be welcomed and treated, without the requirement of payment or proof of previous contribution. Universality is key to promoting equity in health, seeking to reduce existing inequalities (Santos et al., 2022).

Comprehensiveness is another key principle of the SUS, which refers to the provision of a complete set of services ranging from health promotion to prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation. This includes primary care, urgent and emergency services,

medical specialties, hospitals, among others. The idea is that citizens have access to all stages of care, in a continuous and coordinated way (Kucharski et al., 2022).

Equity is also a central aspect in the functioning of the SUS. The system seeks to ensure that social, economic, and geographic differences are taken into account in the distribution of resources and services. This implies directing more attention and resources to vulnerable groups and regions with greater health needs, promoting social justice in health. Community participation is a striking feature of the SUS (Ferreira, 2016).

The system encourages the creation of health councils and conferences, where citizens can actively participate in the formulation and control of health policies. This social participation is essential for SUS actions to be aligned with the demands and expectations of the population, promoting greater transparency and accountability in public management (Farias et al., 2018).

One of the great challenges of the SUS is financing. Although the system was created with the proposal of being sustainable, the reality is that it faces financial difficulties, which often compromise the quality and continuity of the services provided. Adequate funding is crucial to ensure the maintenance and expansion of health actions, in addition to allowing investments in infrastructure, technology, and training of professionals (Kucharski et al., 2022).

Primary care is considered the gateway to the SUS, playing a fundamental role in health promotion and disease prevention. The Basic Health Units (UBS) are responsible for offering basic care and monitoring the health of the population, acting as a link between the citizen and the other levels of care. This approach strengthens care management and contributes to reducing the demand for more complex and expensive services (Farias et al., 2018).

In addition, the SUS has proven to be resilient in times of crisis, such as during the COVID-19 pandemic. The system was able to quickly adapt to new demands, implementing testing, vaccination and treatment strategies. This experience highlighted the importance of a robust public health system and the need for continuous investment in public health (Menezes et al., 2019).

The SUS also stands out for its emphasis on public health and epidemiological surveillance. The system is responsible for monitoring and controlling diseases, carrying out vaccination campaigns and promoting public health prevention actions. The proactive action of the SUS is crucial for the identification of outbreaks and the implementation of control measures, ensuring the protection of the population's health (Menezes et al., 2019).

Health research and education are important components of the SUS, which constantly seeks to innovate and improve the quality of services. Partnerships with educational and research institutions are essential to develop new practices, evaluate the effectiveness of services, and train health professionals. The SUS invests in continuing education, ensuring that health workers are up-to-date and prepared to face the challenges of daily life (Kirst; Darsie, 2021).

Finally, the experience of the SUS has been a model for other countries, which seek to learn from the Brazilian approach to public health. Despite the difficulties and challenges faced, the SUS is an achievement of Brazilian society and an example that health is a right for all. Continuing the fight to defend and strengthen the SUS is essential to ensure a healthier and fairer future for all Brazilians (Giovanella et al., 2021).

INTERSECTION BETWEEN PUBLIC POLICIES AND THE UNIFIED HEALTH SYSTEM (SUS)

Implications for health management and the provision of services to the population

The intersection between public policies and the Unified Health System (SUS) is a central theme for understanding public health in Brazil. The SUS, created by the 1988 Constitution, has as its principles universality, integrality and equity, seeking to ensure that all citizens have access to quality health services. Public policies, in turn, are the guidelines and actions defined by the State to meet the demands of the population, being fundamental for the implementation and functioning of the SUS (Kirst; Darsie, 2021).

One of the main implications of this intersection is the need for efficient health management. The management of the SUS must be integrated, considering the guidelines of public policies and adapting them to local realities. This involves not only the allocation of resources, but also the formation of trained teams and the creation of mechanisms that ensure the participation of the community in the definition of health priorities (Ferreira, 2016).

Effective management is crucial for SUS actions to be carried out in a cohesive manner and aligned with the needs of the population. The articulation between public policies and the SUS is also essential for health promotion and disease prevention. The implementation of health programs, such as vaccination campaigns, actions to combat chronic diseases, and mental health initiatives, depends on the integration of political guidelines with practical implementation within the scope of the SUS. When this articulation fails, there is a risk of wasting resources and, consequently, of the population's dissatisfaction with the services provided (Farias et al., 2018).

Another important aspect is the evaluation of public health policies. An effective health system must have monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that allow measuring the impact of the actions implemented. The collection and analysis of health data, through indicators, are essential to identify failures and successes. This evaluation should serve not only to justify investments, but also to promote continuous improvements in the services offered to the population (Menezes et al., 2019).

Equity is one of the main concerns in public health policies. The intersection between these policies and the SUS must ensure that vulnerable groups, such as rural populations, ethnic minorities, and low-income people, have adequate access to health services. This implies the need to direct resources and efforts to regions and populations with greater needs, promoting care that respects local specificities. The training of health professionals is another critical factor in this intersection (Giovanella et al., 2021).

Continuous training is necessary for health workers to understand public policies and be able to implement them effectively. Health education programs should be promoted, not only for professionals, but also for the community, aiming to increase awareness of rights and available services. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) also play an important role at the intersection between public policies and the SUS (Farias et al., 2018).

The use of information systems can improve data management and facilitate access to services. Initiatives such as telemedicine and health apps have the potential to expand access and efficiency of services, especially in remote areas (Kirst; Darsie, 2021).

In addition, the financing crisis affecting the SUS has direct implications for public policies. The limitation of resources can compromise the implementation of health actions and the quality of the services provided. It is essential that there is a political and social commitment to adequate financing of the SUS, ensuring that public policies are supported by financial resources that allow their effectiveness (Gomes; Fracolli; Machado, 2015).

The intersection between public policies and the SUS is also a space for innovation and adaptation. The experience accumulated over the years provides subsidies for the formulation of new policies that respond to emerging challenges, such as population aging, the increase in chronic diseases, and health crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Flexibility and rapid responsiveness are essential to ensure the resilience of the system (Ferreira, 2016).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The intersection between public policies and the Unified Health System (SUS) is a vital aspect for building a health system that effectively meets the needs of the Brazilian

population. The research carried out allowed us to deepen the understanding of how this relationship manifests itself in practice and what are the implications for health management and service delivery. The SUS, being based on principles such as universality, integrality and equity, offers a promising model, but also faces significant challenges that need continuous attention.

One of the main findings of the research is the importance of integrated management that articulates the guidelines of public policies with the local reality. The effectiveness of the SUS depends on the ability to adapt policies to regional diversity and the specific needs of each community. The participation of the population in the decision-making process is crucial, as it ensures that health actions are truly representative and meet the expectations and demands of citizens. Therefore, strengthening social participation mechanisms should be a priority for managers and policymakers.

In addition, the survey highlighted the need for a robust monitoring and evaluation system. The ability to measure the impact of health actions and to adjust strategies based on evidence is fundamental for the continuous improvement of the services provided. The use of health indicators and periodic evaluations can help identify failures and promote improvements, ensuring that resources are used effectively and that services remain aligned with the needs of the population.

Health equity is another central aspect addressed in the survey. Access to health services must be guaranteed to all, especially for vulnerable groups and at-risk populations. The analysis of public policies revealed that, although there are guidelines aimed at promoting equity, implementation still faces obstacles that need to be overcome. It is essential to direct efforts and resources to the areas and groups that need it most, promoting care that respects local specificities and seeks to reduce inequalities.

The SUS funding crisis was also a recurring theme. The research showed that insufficient resources compromise not only the continuity of services, but also the system's capacity for innovation and adaptation to new health demands. To ensure the effectiveness of the SUS and the implementation of public policies, a political and social commitment is needed to ensure adequate and sustainable financing. Without this, the risk of setbacks in public health is significant, compromising the advances already achieved.

Another relevant point is the relationship between technology and health. The research showed that information and communication technologies have the potential to improve the management and efficiency of health services, especially in remote areas. Telemedicine and health apps can facilitate access to information and services, contributing to a better user experience and the reduction of bureaucracy in care. Thus, it is vital that

public policies encourage the incorporation of these technologies in the SUS, promoting innovation and modernization of services.

Finally, the research reaffirms the importance of continuous training of health professionals. Adequate training is essential for workers to understand public policies and be able to implement them effectively. Health education programs should be prioritized, not only for professionals but also for the community, in order to promote a culture of health and awareness of the rights and services available.

In short, the intersection between public policies and the SUS is a fertile field for research and innovation. The recommendations and insights generated by this study are crucial for the development of a more efficient, equitable health system capable of responding to the needs of the population. The strengthening of the SUS and the implementation of public health policies are essential to ensure that the right to health, enshrined in the Constitution, becomes an accessible and effective reality for all Brazilians. The continuity of research and the search for innovative solutions are therefore imperative to move towards fairer and more effective public health.

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