

Exploring Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices Regarding Non-Communicable Diseases Among Community Health Workers in São Paulo, Brazil: a Mixed Methods Study (In-Progress)

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Context: Brazil has an expanding primary care system, with more than 60% of the population covered by community health workers (CHWs) and family health teams (FHTs). With the rising burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in Brazil and worldwide, compounded by the shortage of physicians and nurses, CHWs have the potential of bridging the gap in chronic disease management and primary care services delivery.

Objectives: To establish the current knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) regarding NCDs among CHWs in São Paulo; and to explore how CHWs can effectively contribute to the management of NCDs as members of FHTs.

Human Subjects Review: Approval from McGill University Faculty of Medicine Institutional Review Board received on May 24, 2018. Approval from São Paulo Municipal Ethics Committee is pending. **Design:** Participatory sequential explanatory mixed-methods design. Phase 1: Cross-sectional survey using electronic KAP questionnaire based on previously validated questionnaires. Phase 2: Qualitative descriptive study using semi-structured focus groups to discuss specific Phase 1 results, and barriers/facilitators to training and involvement of CHWs in NCD management.

Setting: FHTs managed by the *Atenção Primária à Saúde Santa Marcelina* (Santa Marcelina Primary Health Care Network) in the eastern region of São Paulo.

Participants: Phase 1: All eligible CHWs ($n \approx 1000$). Phase 2: CHWs, nurses and physicians (purposive sample, $n \approx 40$). All participants must be working in FHTs managed by the Network for more than three months.

Analysis/Main outcome measures: Phase 1: Descriptive statistics - frequency distributions of question item responses (%) and total score. Phase 2: Thematic analysis - emergent key themes.

Anticipated results: Identification of 1) knowledge and practice gaps regarding NCDs among CHWs, with sub-group differences; 2) factors explaining these differences; and 3) barriers/facilitators to training and involving CHWs in NCD management.

Conclusions: It is important to understand CHWs' current knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding NCDs in order to optimize their training and clinical activities to better answer the complex health needs of community patients living with non-communicable diseases.