



## **Professional internship and human aging: A report from the family guidance service/UFPA**

### **Estágio profissional e envelhecimento humano: Um relato do serviço de orientação a família/UFPA**

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**Luciano Silva Gomes**

Prof. Dr.

E-mail: kmouro03@gmail.com

**Ari de Souza Loureiro**

Prof. Dr.

E-mail: ariloureiro@gmail.com

**Claudia Renata Sampaio Silva**

A.S.

E-mail: claudiaresilva@hotmail.com

#### **ABSTRACT**

The Family Guidance Service, object of this work, is one of the places where the Professional Internship activity of the Faculty of Social Work is developed, being linked to the University of the Elderly, a University Extension Program of the Federal University of Pará, and has as its objective, the intervention of Social Work in human aging. It should be noted that, during the activities, it was proven that the professional practice developed with the elderly assisted is in accordance with the normative documents of the profession and that together they are the basis of the Ethical-Political Project of Social Work.

**Keywords:** University Extension, Professional Internship and Human Aging.

#### **1 INTRODUCTION**

The work is the result of the presentation of the Family Guidance Service - SOF, its objectives and purposes, to students interested in interning in the area of human aging at the University of the Elderly - UNITERCI, University Extension Program linked to the Faculty of Social Work - FASS of the Federal University of Pará - UFPA, located at Rua Augusto Corrêa, 01 - Guamá, Belém - PA, CEP: 66075-110.

In order to discuss the SOF, it is essential to present the process of implementation and development of UNITERCI, which has been taking place since 1991, due to the growth of the elderly population, more specifically the Pará population, from the second half of the century onwards



This fact was considered one of the greatest triumphs of contemporaneity in terms of human longevity.

According to the 2022 Demographic Census (IBGE), the Brazilian population is 203.1 million inhabitants, that of the State of Pará: 8,116,132, and of this amount, 868 thousand are elderly. It should be noted that the population growth rates were not exclusive to Brazil, but occurred worldwide, and differently among the various countries.

With regard to the internship in Social Work, the SOF is an action developed within the UNITERCI Program, one of the places of practice of the mandatory curricular internship for undergraduates of the Social Work course at the Federal University of Pará who are interested in the area of human aging.

This internship field was implemented in September 2016, aiming to carry out actions and studies related to the reality and interests of the elderly, discussed and mediated by the SOF, in addition to promoting activities and actions through group meetings, aiming to strengthen the family relationships of the elderly participating in UNITERCI activities.

The UNITERCI Program is based on the understanding of human aging as a natural, universal, continuous and irreversible process, inherent to all human beings, with biopsychosocial, cultural and environmental transformations, which intensify and present peculiarities that are typical of the aging of each individual.

Concomitant to this process, the SOF is aware of the growing situations of exclusion and violence experienced by the elderly due to factors such as: ideologies, internalized prejudices and economic factors related to the way the capitalist system materializes in Pará society.

This context generates difficulties in guaranteeing the social rights of the elderly, in addition to developing feelings of impotence and devaluation, which are expressed through irritability, accommodation, depression, apathy, determining attitudes of social isolation and accentuating the natural fragilities of aging.

In view of the above, new demands and dynamics arising from this process are established, generating specific vulnerabilities, which, when they become visible, present themselves as new expressions of the Social Question, forcing the State to extend public policies to this segment of society. It is necessary to ensure the social participation of this age group, in the most diverse areas, giving opportunities to exercise their citizenship, as active subjects, where UNITERCI, more specifically SOF, as an education strategy, intervenes in this process.



## 2 THE FAMILY GUIDANCE SERVICE - SOF

The SOF, as an internship field, was implemented in September 2016, aiming to carry out actions and studies related to the reality and interests of the elderly, having its actions implemented by a professor (Teaching Supervisor), three Social Workers (Field Supervisor) and interns from the Social Work course at UFPA.

The syllabus results from the planning carried out at the beginning of each year and the activities are carried out weekly during two academic periods (semesters), at the Professional Campus, pavilion M – room 03, after a process of dissemination of the UNITERCI Program in the various media, for registration and selection of the elderly, then the reception, presentation and visitation to the UFPA spaces.

In the development of activities, material, didactic and pedagogical resources are used, such as: notebook, Datashow, folders, educational booklets, films, art education, production of academic papers, participation in scientific events, get-togethers, group dynamics and others.

UNITERCI, where the SOF is located, has articulation with institutions in the perspective of integrating knowledge and enabling rights, they are:

- Public Prosecutor's Office of the State of Pará;
- Police Station for the Protection of the Elderly – DPID;
- Brazilian Bar Association – OAB;
- State Council for the Rights of the Elderly – CEDPI;
- Social Assistance Reference Center – CRAS;
- Federation of Associations of Retirees, Pensioners and Seniors of the State of Pará;
- Brazilian Alzheimer's Association – ABRAz.

The activities developed in the UNITERCI Program are educational in nature, aimed at the elderly and their family relationships. SOF's actions are based on UFPA's public extension policy, aiming to enable access to knowledge produced and reproduced in academia in a way that is accessible to the elderly public.

In the UNITERCI Program, three Projects coexist: the Cultural Update for the Elderly, coordinated by a Teacher and a PROEX scholarship holder; the Project: Body Movement and Quality of Life of the Elderly, coordinated by a Social Worker and a PROEX scholarship holder, and the Project: Permanent Education of the Elderly in Undergraduate Areas at UFPA, coordinated by a professor and a PROEX scholarship holder. It should be noted that the internship field in this Program in the area of human aging is carried out at SOF.



The activities of the SOF seek to enable the user population to have access to critical knowledge and subsidies for the family life of the elderly through debates, welcoming and listening to people aged 60 and over living in the Metropolitan Region of Belém. The participants are elderly women and men, and the percentage of women is more expressive, justifying the phenomenon called by Debert as "feminization of old age".

In the 2022/23 fiscal year, the SOF implemented socio-educational actions to assist elderly people with the proposal of linking the professional performance of Social Work with a specific group of participants, to mediate reported family conflicts, as well as to understand family demands, going beyond the apparent, enabling the understanding of the individual in its totality, hence the importance of the social worldview of professionals and subjects in relationships.

### **3 THE PROFESSIONAL INTERNSHIP IN THE FAMILY GUIDANCE SERVICE - SOF**

With regard to the Federal University of Pará, taking into account the Undergraduate Regulations, it defines among the objectives that the curricular internship should "provide students with the development of practical skills and technical, cultural and scientific improvement, through activities related to their area of training".

In this sense, for the Social Work Course of this University, the supervised internship is considered a privileged moment of training, as established in the Political Pedagogical Project of the course, supported by the Curricular Guidelines for Social Work courses in the country approved by Resolution/MEC No. 15 of March 2002, which allows the understanding of the social meaning of the profession in the face of the social issue, in the search for answers to the demands of the user population.

The Supervised Internship is an important means of training in which students have the possibility to analyze, propose, intervene and critically investigate, by concrete means, the way in which social reality is shown. In addition to enabling as an educational and pedagogical space, the strengthening of the collective construction of knowledge, among interns, supervisors, and the user population.

The UNITERCI University Extension Program, as an educational and cultural process, aims to bring the university closer to the external community, and the articulation between teaching and research, and because it is linked to the Faculty of Social Work of UFPA, its intervention proposal is based on the Ethical-Political Project of Social Work. In this sense, UNITERCI contributes to the development and socio-political participation of the elderly, enabling the appropriation of new knowledge and skills, Involving This manner the university



community in an interdisciplinary way on issues related to human aging, consolidating a field for teaching, research and extension.

In the SOF, the Political Ethical Project of the Profession, is explicit to the extent that the actions seek to enable the emancipation and expansion of social individuals, respecting freedom as a central value. In addition, the search for understanding the social phenomena that permeate the family reality of the participants, seeking to go beyond the immediate demand, relating it to the mediations that are present, thus the Ethical and Political Project becomes essential in professional performance.

In this process, the activities of the Supervised Internship in Social Work take place in the academic period of the Federal University of Pará that runs from March to June and from August to December, starting with the joint preparation of the Internship Plan between social worker and interns, where the methodology and processes exposed below are organized, to be carried out in the field.

First:

- Present the SOF to the participants, informing its objectives and proposals, clarifying the purpose of the actions that will be developed, as well as concepts that will be worked on (old age, aging, families and others), methods to be used during the activities/actions;
- Outline the points of view, values, conceptions and analysis of the population included in the SOF;
- Promote actions and activities that enable the approximation and participation of the family members of the elderly in the SOF;
- Hold meetings with family members every semester in order to expand contact among SOF participants and learn about family diversity;
- To encourage the family members of the elderly to discuss changes, improvements, permanence and family life of the subjects participating in a Service carried out within a University Extension Program;
- To outline the profile of the users of the Service, by means of a questionnaire regarding the improvements in family relationships.

Second:

- Articulate dynamics that provide critical knowledge and the strengthening of the potential of the elderly;



- Outline a semester program with relevant themes to generate and raise potentialities for the subjects served;
- Organize the semester schedule and the tasks that will be carried out together with the interns and supervisors;
- Hold meetings to evaluate the Mandatory Curricular Supervised Internship and the guidelines and proposals, and encourage integration as a team;
- Make home visits frequent, reinforcing the understanding of family relationships in a non-invasive way.

The activities carried out in the Internship Field take place at first with the guidance of the academic supervision in the classroom at UFPA, referring to Human Aging through the reading of books and texts produced on the subject, as well as the importance of knowing the legislation that supports the internship and the institution in which you will work together with the field supervisor.

It is also in the academic supervision that the intern appropriates the discussion, referring to the practice of the social worker in the area of aging, the knowledge of the laws, both those of internship and those specific to the elderly person – such as the Statute of the Elderly.

In this process, the postures to be adopted are highlighted and discussed, as well as the professional language and the technical instruments to be used in the field.

Based on the orientations received in the classroom, the insertion in the internship field will take place immediately, since the SOF activities are already taking place. The interest in discussing human aging linked to the capitalist system and the repercussions on the life of the elderly person with several cuts: post-work, gender, homosexuality, violence, education, health and others, are presented in the academic supervision, and practiced with the elderly assisted in the UNITERCI Program through the SOF, also, and it is possible to find the demand of interest for research of the Course Conclusion Work - TCC.

In the SOF, the interns hold meetings according to the themes addressed in their TCC's, such as: the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren, emphasizing intergenerationality, the elderly and consumption and others, placing the elderly person as a centrality in their research, debating the aging process in its multiple and contradictory processes, its experiences and confrontations.



#### 4 CONSIDERATIONS

UNITERCI, as a University Extension Program of the Faculty of Social Work of UFPA, is linked to three Extension Projects and the professional internship field Family Guidance Service - SOF, whose activities are evaluated based on reports and field diaries, by observing the activities developed, and by listening to the participating users.

The SOF is a care space that provides the elderly with activities and services articulated to their family and social context, since, in the process of carrying out the activities, issues such as generational conflicts that need analysis and possible referrals to the service network are evidenced, hence the importance of this Service in meeting the demands presented by the elderly people participating in UNITERCI.

The evaluation of the activities developed in the SOF points to the expansion of its actions with multidisciplinary scope with partner professionals, in addition to the expansion of the service space, organization and articulation in conjunction with the UNITERCI Program.

The critical look of the internship field is endorsed in the Ethical-Political Project of Social Work which, theoretically and methodologically based on the model of a more just and fraternal society, comprises the SOF, in addition to the activities and meetings between interns and the elderly, but a place of multiple determinations, therefore, Facilitator of questions and professional actions in the area of human aging.

The report concludes, acknowledging the importance of the SOF for the understanding of the trainee students, about the demand or service in which they are inserted, enabling them to perceive the professional work of the social worker, and the criticism of the profession through the analysis of the facts, resulting situations, mediations, all duly articulated to the Ethical-political Project of Social Work.



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