

## The role of health professionals in promoting women's knowledge about HPV and its relationship with cervical cancer

Amanda Viana de Araújo e Araújo<sup>1</sup>, Anna Clara Silva Fonseca<sup>2</sup>, Geovanna Resende de Moraes<sup>3</sup>, Ivan Kevin da Silva Garcia<sup>4</sup>, Beatriz Oliveira Amaro<sup>5</sup>, Wallex da Silva Guimarães<sup>6</sup>.

### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Human Papillomavirus (HPV) infections are a significant public health problem, playing a crucial role in the development of cervical cancer (CC). Although 80% to 90% of precursor lesions regress spontaneously, lack of knowledge about the disease, low adherence to immunization, and low adherence to Pap smears contribute to high mortality, with cervical cancer being the third most common neoplasm among women in Brazil in 2023 with 17,010 new estimated cases. There are more than 200 types of HPV, with genotypes 16 and 18 being the most oncogenic and associated with cancer. Despite the importance of vaccination in prevention, adherence is still low, highlighting the urgent need for more effective health awareness and education strategies. : To analyze, through a literature review, the relevance of health professionals in promoting health education about the Human Papillomavirus and its association with the development of cervical cancer among women. **Methodology:** The study was characterized as qualitative and exploratory in the format of a literature review. For the process of systematizing the searches, publications referring to the last five years (2019-2024) were considered, the following databases were used: Scielo, VHL and Google Scholar, using the descriptors: Human papillomavirus, HPV, Cervical Cancer, Health Education, Health professionals, Vaccination. **Results/Discussion:** In the search for evidence on cervical cancer (CC), 200 studies were identified, of which 37 were analyzed in depth and 10 were selected as the main results. The main challenges identified include lack of knowledge and fear of the Pap smear, misinformation about HPV vaccination, and barriers such as religious taboos, absence of preventive screenings, and geographic isolation. In addition, the lack of health education and the exclusion of victims of sexual violence from the HPV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) scheme were highlighted. In response, the update of the vaccination schedule to a single dose, according to Joint Technical Note No. 101 of 2024 - CGICI, includes vaccination for boys and girls aged 9 to 14 years, including those who have suffered sexual violence, and extends the HPV4 vaccine to people aged 15 to 45 years using PrEP Prophylaxis for HIV. Health professionals in Primary Health Care play a crucial role in HPV education, vaccination promotion, preventive screenings, and early identification of precursor lesions, contributing to the reduction of cervical cancer incidence and mortality. **Conclusion:** It is concluded that the performance of health professionals, especially in Primary Health Care, is essential to increase women's knowledge about HPV, combat misinformation and clarify the relationship between this virus and cervical cancer. Through health education, vaccination promotion, and preventive tests such as Pap smears, these professionals play a crucial role in the prevention and control of this neoplasm. In addition, by addressing social and behavioral barriers, they contribute significantly to reducing the incidence and mortality of cervical cancer, highlighting the need to strengthen prevention strategies and integrated health care.

**Keywords:** Human Papilloma Virus, Cervical Cancer, Health Education, Immunization.

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<sup>1</sup> Doctor, UNIFAMAZ

<sup>2</sup> Medical, FAMINAS BH

<sup>3</sup> Undergraduate student in Medicine, Centro universitário FAM

<sup>4</sup> Graduating in Biomedicine – Faculdade Integrada Brasil Amazônia

<sup>5</sup> Biomedical, Master in Epidemiology and Health Surveillance – Instituto Evandro Chagas Pará

<sup>6</sup> Biologist, Master in Epidemiology and Health Surveillance – Instituto Evandro Chagas Pará



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