

Perception of medical students about the extension activity "super powerful vaccines": Experience report



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ABSTRACT

Vaccination should be understood as the most effective measure to prevent diseases, contributing directly to the decrease in morbidity and mortality caused by infectious pathologies preventable by vaccination, including in children. Brazil has been a world reference in vaccination for years, but in the last ten years there has been a sharp drop in the number of users benefiting from immunizations,

demonstrating a greater vulnerability, specifically to children. The present work is an experience report that seeks to describe

the experiences of medical students of the AFYA School of Medical Sciences. The extension action was entitled "Super Powerful Vaccines", held at the Family Health Unit (USF) São Rafael, João Pessoa-PB. Playful, dynamic and human approaches were carried out to welcome users, in order to expand vaccination coverage in the community. The extension action allowed an increase in the number of vaccines applied, revealing positive results in view of the strategies used. The experience provided an enriching moment for the students, expanding the sense of citizenship and represented a tool for achieving humanized medical training, providing a reflection on the importance of teamwork in this scenario and raising awareness about the health needs of the population.

Keywords: Vaccination of the child, Primary care, Community medicine.

1 INTRODUCTION

The National Immunization Program (PNI) is responsible for organizing the entire national vaccination policy of the Brazilian population, with the mission of controlling, eradicating and eliminating vaccine-preventable diseases (BRASIL, 2013).

It is considered one of the main and most relevant public health interventions in the country, due to the impact obtained in the reduction of diseases in recent decades (BRASIL, 2020). Currently, the SUS offers all the vaccines recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) in the National Calendar, which are made available by the public health network. There are approximately 300 million doses of immunobiologics per year, to combat more than 19 diseases, in various age groups.

In this context, the PNI has become a world reference, not least because Brazil was a pioneer in the incorporation of several vaccines in the SUS calendar, and because it offers a comprehensive number of immunobiologics in a universal way. However, the high coverage rate, which has always been its main characteristic, has been falling in recent years (CRUZ, 2017).

In 2007, a substantial reduction in vaccination coverage was identified in the country. As of 2016, the decline was approximately 10 to 20 percentage points (FREITAS, 2022). In a recent publication, the Butantan Institute (2022), revealed a sharp drop in the last ten years, demonstrating a greater vulnerability, specifically to children. In addition, anti-vaccine movements have emerged, and as a consequence, there has been an increase in the number of people who refuse to vaccinate their



children, fostering this dangerous movement that can bring back diseases such as measles and polio (CRUZ, 2017).

According to the Brazilian Society of Pediatrics (SBP) (2019), vaccination is the most effective measure to prevent vaccine-preventable diseases and reduce infant mortality. Failure to update the vaccine can leave children susceptible to preventable diseases, as well as endangering the health of others around them.

When considering the Family Health Unit of the São Rafael Community, located in the city of João Pessoa-PB and the internship field for medical students, it was noticed that the FHU provides all the necessary vaccines to its 1,287 registered users, however, it experiences difficulties in relation to the adherence of vaccines and their constant updating.

Based on this reality, the students, teachers and health team identified the need to carry out educational actions at the USF São Rafael with those responsible for children from 0 to 10 years old and the children themselves, in order to stimulate adherence to vaccination. Then, educational strategies were designed to enlighten the population about the importance of vaccines and the adequate follow-up of the vaccination schedule for the prevention/eradication of diseases, thus contributing to increase vaccination coverage and benefit the community as a whole, as well as the Brazilian population and health services.

2 OBJECTIVE

To describe an experience report on the extension activity "Super Powerful Vaccines" carried out by the medical students of the Medical Science School of Paraíba, AFYA.

3 EXPERIENCE REPORT

The present study is an experience report conducted on April 15, 2023, at the São Rafael Family Health Unit (FHU), located in the São Rafael Community, João Pessoa-PB. Initially, visits were made to the USF São Rafael in order to agree with the health team on the activities to be developed in the extension action on vaccination. After this moment, the students gathered to prepare material to publicize the event on social media and an educational pamphlet on vaccines, in addition to defining the schedule of activities to be held on the day of the action, entitled "Super Powerful Vaccines".

On the day of the event, firstly, a group of students toured the main streets of the community to hold a call to the residents that included the distribution of pamphlets and the dissemination of warnings, about the immunizers available for immediate vaccination in the USF and the recreational activities that would be carried out that morning, as well as the reproduction of children's songs, with the aid of a speaker and microphone.



Given that the target audience of the extension action was defined as children aged between 0 and 10 years, some students dressed up as characters such as Zé Gotinha, the princesses (Belle, Snow White, Fiona, Aurora) and the heroes (Thor and Captain America), in order to attract children and their families to go to the USF, with their vaccination card, to update their immunizers and participate in the action that would be developed in the unit.

Immediately, we noticed the curiosity, enchantment and joy of children and adults, who left their homes to observe the movement made. With the departure of people to the street, one can make a more personal, dynamic and human approach to welcoming children, who surprised, wanted to take pictures and embrace the children's characters. The adults also got involved, taking their children to the backyard and also taking pictures with the characters.

We took advantage of the approach of the local population to pass on information about the relevance of vaccines to avoid diseases, the importance of keeping the children's vaccination booklet updated and to make a direct invitation to go at that time to the Health Unit to get vaccinated.

The presence of the character Zé Gotinha was remarkable and a true rescue of the successful vaccination campaigns in Brazil, for being a historical symbol of the PNI, being able to dialogue with different audiences to motivate and inform about the importance of vaccination and prevention of various diseases (BRASIL, 2013).

Therefore, a prosperous approach was achieved, because, at the same time, in which the technical information of the importance of vaccination arrived, the language of the children and youth audience was also attended to with the presence of the characters.

In this context, it is possible to infer that the call of the community for vaccination in a playful way and the use of educational materials were assertive strategies, since health education is one of the pillars of health promotion, along with the creation of healthy environments and the strengthening of community action (BRASIL, 2018).

Therefore, health professionals should go beyond technical knowledge, developing a more sensitive look at the community in which they are inserted, in order to obtain greater adherence to preventive and health promotion proposals (NASCIMENTO, 2021). At the same time that the community was summoned and informed, another group of students remained at the USF São Rafael welcoming the users who arrived. During the reception, the students and professionals of the health team observed the vaccination booklets, regarding the presence of any vaccine delayed or within the period to be applied. At that time, too, it was explained to the individuals as to the programming to be carried out during the action.

The reception was ornate, becoming a playful space, with toys, face painting, princesses and heroes, to make the environment more cheerful, welcoming and special for children. The whole apparatus used aimed to make the moment of vaccination of children more relaxed and welcoming,



showing that the drill is the best protection against diseases (PROENÇA, 2015). Well, play is one of the most important activities in the life of a child for their motor, emotional, social and intellectual development (TAVARES, 2011).

Thus, one of the ways to inhibit the child from showing fear and insecurity, especially when exposed to an unknown and hospital environment, is to offer a light and pleasant environment, being essential and primordial the use of games, aiming to provide safety, comfort, mental, emotional and social well-being of the child (HOCKENBERRY; WILSON, 2014).

For Schreiber and Dreher (2021), "It is not enough just to request that the population get vaccinated, but rather to provide the necessary knowledge so that it has the security of choosing to perform immunization." In this sense, an educational action was held at the reception of the FHU in the form of a conversation circle about the importance of vaccination in the prevention of diseases, with explanations of how immunization works in the human body, about the main diseases prevented with vaccines and that, still, affect the health of the Brazilian population, and, therefore, deserve greater attention.

This educational initiative aimed to inform users, through the use of an appropriate language and with media support of pamphlets, which also brought the essential information, so that they would stimulate the maintenance of the booklet following the national immunization calendar.

Corroborating with Carvalho (2022), when stating that in addition to the concern with performing the technique of administering the immunizer correctly, it is necessary the common communication between health professionals and people who wanted to get vaccinated and their companions, to explain the information correctly.

In the vaccination room, the medical students were able to collaborate as the completion of the card and proof of vaccination, containing information about the vaccine, the lot, the laboratory and the expiration date.

Immunization was preceded by the registration of the user and presentation of their documents, the data collected such as name, date of birth, gender, address, date of application and signature of the professional, were filled in the respective vaccination mirrors, held by the FHU, for registration purposes by the nurse. After the verification and completion of the vaccination cards, the corresponding vaccination was carried out.

When considering children, immunization is especially crucial, since they may be more vulnerable to complications and infections. WHO (2022) highlights the importance of influenza and COVID-19 vaccination to reduce morbidity and mortality in children and control the spread of these viruses in the community. In this sense, updating the vaccine in children is crucial to ensure continued protection against various infectious diseases.



In the action carried out, all vaccines that were part of the children's vaccination schedule were covered and had good adherence, as reported by the USF management. 87 doses of vaccines were administered, 87% being Influenza and COVID, since the national campaign focused on these immunizers was taking place and covered children, the elderly, pregnant women, adults with comorbidities and health workers, and the remainder, 13% of the doses applied were for the other routine vaccines.

It should be noted that the presence of the children's characters also at the time of vaccination, allowed the children to be more tranquil and collaborative, because the existence of a playful element in the vaccination room brought lightness and relaxation to the moment. The children were encouraged to get vaccinated by the characters themselves, under the argument of becoming as strong and powerful as those.

In fact, Princess Belle, Thor and Captain America welcomed the children inside the room where they were applying the vaccines, hugging them at the time of the "powerful hole" and later rewarding them with a "magical princess hug", with a bravery medal and toys as a prize. Legitimizing the importance of the presence of children's characters in the vaccination room.

For Teles (2019), health care in childhood, demands a humanized and integral care, capable of recognizing feelings, wants and needs, aiming to minimize adversities at the time of the medical procedure and help the child to accept the procedures with more tranquility, because depending on the environment and the way to which the child is exposed, In this situation, the experience can stop being negative and traumatic. In this way, the focus on humanized attention enables a positive reinforcement, through the playful and fun experience, which can reflect on the vision of the child until adulthood.

Bridges et. al. (2015) informs that in child care, the suffering faced by children is not limited to the performance of procedures, but also to health professionals, of whom they are very afraid, especially those responsible for vaccination. Such fear is already an old construction of society, which has always stimulated this feeling regarding the vaccine in children, contributing to a greater rejection of them to health professionals, especially those in the vaccine room.

Since fear and anxiety are very common during this procedure, the use of the playful contributes to a better acceptance and collaboration with the procedure, in addition to contributing to a positive experience of these children during care. However, it is worth mentioning that, still, there is a difficulty for its routine use, due to the high demand of functions and short time that professionals have (SANTOS et al., 2019).

In addition, another strategy was used to increase the adherence of the population of the São Rafael Community to the event, through a bingo with fourteen rounds, which assured the winners of basic baskets. In addition, the characters conducted at the reception, games and circle dances for the children waiting for vaccination.



4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The activities proposed by the medical students were well received, happening effectively and effectively. It is possible to observe the interaction of all participants in a dynamic and participatory way, both children and their families. In addition, the activity was important to sensitize parents and guardians about the importance of vaccination in the prevention of diseases, as well as to show the need to keep vaccination cards up to date.

The event also allowed the student to know the reality and functioning of the SUS. In order to experience important aspects of primary health care, such as: universality and integrality, understanding health as an element of citizenship and right of all people, teamwork, humanization of care, welcoming, promotion, prevention and health education.

Finally, the experience enabled the training of medical students to develop skills to work in Primary Health Care in a critical and reflective way, allowing them to confront theory and practice. The students inserted themselves as agents of social transformation, expanding the sense of citizenship and verifying the importance of the performance of the professional in training within the health services of the SUS.



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