


Nurses' role in compulsory notification of domestic violence in a Basic Health Unit

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ABSTRACT

In Brazil, in July 2022, 31,000 reports of domestic violence were registered, a problem that has serious consequences, such as psychological, physical, financial damage and even the death of the women involved. To address this reality, policies such as the Maria da Penha Law (Law 11,340) were implemented to protect victims. The need for health strategies then arose, resulting in the development of the Notifiable Diseases Information System (SINAN), driven by health professionals through Compulsory Notifications. This article, based on a literature review, used sources such as books, dissertations, scientific articles and online databases (Google Scholar, Scielo, VHL). The analysis covered the last five years (2018-2023), including laws prior to that period (2006-2015). Violence against women ranges from harassment to femicide, and access to health services is often intermediated by basic health units. Nursing care begins with welcoming, where nurses play a crucial role as health educators, contributing to the recovery, empowerment and well-being of patients, in addition to dealing with the alarming statistics of this type of violence. Despite the advances made by the Maria da Penha Law, domestic violence against women in Brazil persists as a serious problem, as shown by statistics from the Ministry of Human Rights and Citizenship. Addressing this phenomenon remains challenging, especially with regard to the proper identification and notification of cases.

Keywords: Types of Domestic Violence, Maria da Penha Law, Compulsory Notification, Primary Care.

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INTRODUCTION

Violence in Brazil is a reality that persists and worsens year after year, as evidenced by statistics from the Ministry of Human Rights and Citizenship July 2022. In this context, domestic violence emerges as one of the most alarming forms of aggression, with alarming numbers of complaints recorded. In the year alone, a total of 31,000 reports of domestic violence were received, with 31,398 of them directed to the call center, highlighting the seriousness and urgency of this problem.

Given the profound psychological, physical, and financial repercussions that domestic violence can entail, it is imperative to understand its magnitude and justify the implementation of effective measures to combat it. The enactment of the Maria da Penha Law represented a crucial legal milestone, offering protection and support to women who are victims of violence, in addition to establishing policies aimed at preventing and punishing aggressors.

However, despite legislative advances, addressing domestic violence still faces significant challenges, especially with regard to identifying and reporting cases. Thus, the research problem that guides this study arises: what is the role of the nurse in the compulsory notification of domestic violence? This question reveals the urgent need to understand the role of health professionals, especially nurses, in combating this social scourge.

In this context, the general objective of this study is to understand the role of nurses in compulsory notification of cases of domestic violence. To achieve this objective, we propose the following specific objectives: to present the types of domestic violence, to discuss the Maria da Penha Law and to analyze the role of nurses in compulsory notification. These objectives delimit the scope of research and direct investigations to specific areas of interest.

DEVELOPMENT

METHODOLOGY

This article was carried out through a literature review, and books, dissertations and scientific articles were searched in database sites: Google Scholar, Societific Electronic Libray Online (SciELO); Virtual Health Library (VHL). The period of the articles researched was the published in the last 5 years (2018-2023) and some laws drafted before this period (2006-2015) were used, however, they reinforce, match and support issues related to the theme. The keywords used in the search were: types of Domestic Violence, Maria da Penha Law, Compulsory Notification, Primary Care. With the descriptors, a total of 22 articles were found, where 12 were selected and articles in Portuguese, freely accessible and in their entirety were included.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Violence is an act of aggression against women and has various types of violence ranging from harassment to femicide. Violence against women is the issue of culture, social and religious that manifests itself in different ways in parts of the world, violence usually starts with those close to them such as partners, the father and his children, for not doing what is asked. This does not only happen in the home environment, but in the work environment, and any conduct that women do is a reason for provocation, which promotes the act of discrimination, aggression, or coercion (INSTITUTO MARIA DA PENHA, 2023).

According to Law 11.340 of August 7, 2006, the definition of the types of violence are:

- I- Physical violence is defined as the act of harming the physical integrity of a person, an example of physical violence: aggression, strangulation or choke killing, injuries caused by bladed weapons or firearms, among others.
- II - Psychological violence is defined as any behavior that causes emotional harm and lowers self-esteem, or harms and disturbs your overall development, or that is intended to threaten, embarrass, humiliate, manipulate, degrade, or control your actions, actions, beliefs, and resolute behavior, isolation, constant surveillance, continued stalking, humiliation, blackmail, invasion of privacy, ridicule, exploitation, and restraint, or any other way that causes harm to the mental health and self-determination.
- III – Sexual violence is defined as any act of non-consensual participation or when force or threat is used, examples of sexual violence, rape, harassment, impeding the use of contraceptive methods among others.
- IV - Property violence is defined as any action that causes retention, subtraction, partial or total destruction of their objects, work instruments, personal documents, assets, values and rights or economic resources, including those intended to satisfy their needs;
- Moral violence is defined as any act leading to slander, defamation or injury (BRASIL, 2003).

Domestic violence is more common than we think or imagine, because it is not only characterized by physical and sexual violence, there is also psychological, patrimonial and moral violence. In this way, many women are unable to identify the violence caused by their partner, and those who do are afraid to report it because they suffer threats and consequently these women end up suffering femicide by their partners (INSTITUTO MARIA DA PENHA, 2023).

There are some laws aimed at protecting against violence against women. The following are the main laws, which are:

"Law No. 11,340/2006. Creates mechanisms to curb domestic and family violence against women, pursuant to Article 226(8) of the Federal Constitution, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women; provides for the creation of Courts for Domestic and Family Violence against Women; amends the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Criminal Code and the Criminal Enforcement Act; and makes other arrangements" (BRASIL, 2006).

"Law No. 13,104/2015. Amends article 121 of Decree-Law No. 2,848, of December 7, 1940 - Penal Code, to provide for femicide as a qualifying circumstance for the crime of homicide, and article 1 of Law No. 8,072, of July 25, 1990, to include femicide in the list of heinous crimes" (BRASIL, 2015).

"Law No. 12,845/2013. It provides for the mandatory and comprehensive care of people in situations of sexual violence" (BRASIL, 2013).



"Law No. 10,778/2003. It establishes the compulsory notification, in the national territory, of the case of violence against women who are treated in public or private health services" (BRASIL, 2003).

"Law No. 12,737/2012. Provides for the criminal classification of computer crimes; amends Decree-Law No. 2,848, of December 7, 1940 - Penal Code; and makes other arrangements" (BRASIL, 2012).

The initial point of access to health services is through basic health units. In cases where there are suspicions or confirmation of violence against women, it is essential that any health professional report it. The Notifiable Diseases Information System (SINAN) is a resource of great value in this regard (SINAN, 2016).

According to Law No. 10,778, approved on November 24, 2003, in Brazil, both public and private health facilities have a legal obligation to report incidents of violence against women. This means that if any healthcare provider comes across a suspicious situation or evidence of violence, they must fill out a notification form and Provide compassionate care and necessary referrals to the affected woman. It is essential to emphasize that the act of notification does not imply consent and is intended exclusively for epidemiological analysis, occasionally as a primary source of data. Primary health facilities play a crucial role as a starting point for access to health services, including in cases where suspicions or threats of violence arise. In case of suspicion, primary health units are the first portal for the provision of health services. In the recognition of violence against women, notification is mandatory and can be made by any health professional.

"With the use of this system, it allows a dynamic diagnosis of the events that happen to the population, being able to offer explanations for the causes of compulsorily notifiable diseases, in addition to indicating the risks to which people are susceptible, contributing to the epidemiological identification of the geographical area" (PORTAL SINAN, 2023).

"On the other hand, the systematic use, in a decentralized way, contributes to the democratization of information, allowing all health professionals to have access to information and make it available to the community. It is, therefore, a relevant instrument to assist health planning, define intervention priorities, in addition to allowing the impact of interventions to be assessed" (PORTAL SINAN, n. p, 2023).

With data from the epidemiological system, they can facilitate decision-making and solutions to reduce the prevalence of diseases and conditions.

In fact, it shows the importance of Compulsory Notification, and how important it is to report suspected and confirmed cases of domestic violence. The Compulsory Notification can be made by any health professional, it is important to emphasize that the Notification is not intended to denounce but to indicate epidemiological data.

Agreeing with SILVA; RIBEIRO (2020), in the basic health unit, listening and bonding trust with women in the area described is developed. With this, reception, guidance, referrals to protection services and notification can be carried out.

Health professionals need to understand the feelings of victims of violence, such as fear and



submission, to help them recover. Reflecting on your own experiences is crucial to encouraging victims to grow stronger. The consumption of alcohol by the aggressor poses a danger to women, and the Healthcare professionals should address this in preventive activities. Submission may be associated with the financial dependence of the victims. Community health workers play a vital role in communicating with nurses, as they are closer to families and can identify situations of violence. Nursing care for women who suffer violence begins with the Embrace, but ends when the victim is referred, going against the conception of health services acting in a network. The nurses, in their practice, emphasize that the victim's silence is something that makes it difficult to identify cases. From this perspective, the importance of Community Agents in the accompaniment, and even in the assumption of violence, is affirmed. (SILVA; RIBEIRO, p. 5, 2020).

Agreeing with the author BOGUCHEWSKI, C *et. al* (2022), health professionals have difficulties in identifying psychological, verbal, or moral violence. Professionals are usually able to identify violence that is physical and/or sexual.

Nurses have an important responsibility in the care and detection of violence against women, preparing the professionals who are under their responsibility to identify cases of violence and assist in the solution of the problem. (SILVA; RIBEIRO, 2020). According to Silva and Ribeiro (2020), it is understood that nurses, as health educators, play an important role in sharing information about the management of women victims of domestic violence and in carrying out compulsory notification. Researchers highlight its relevance in detecting and supporting victims, but some face difficulties in identifying or reporting it for fear of the aggressor. It is essential that nurses and community workers work together and are trained to identify cases of domestic violence.

CONCLUSION

The persistence of domestic violence against women in Brazil is an alarming phenomenon that not only challenges legal and social frameworks, but also reflects issues deeply rooted in culture and gender perception. Despite the advances provided by legislation, such as the Maria da Penha, and the protection policies implemented, the statistics of the Ministry of Human Rights and Citizenship still reveal an alarming incidence of these cases. In this context, this study aimed to examine in detail the crucial role of nurses in the compulsory notification of domestic violence, recognizing their fundamental importance in early detection and support for victims.

The in-depth analysis of the different types of violence and the relevant legislation highlighted the complexity and seriousness of this social problem. Violence against women goes beyond physical aggression, but also encompasses emotional, psychological and financial aspects, reflecting unequal patterns of power and a culture of devaluation of women.

The results emphasized the urgency of close collaboration between health professionals and



community agents to identify and intervene early in cases of violence. The nurse, as an integral part of the healthcare team, plays a crucial role in providing emotional support, guidance, and appropriate referral to victims. In addition, the continuous training of health professionals is essential to ensure a sensitive and effective approach to this delicate and complex issue.

The compulsory notification of domestic violence, combined with the use of the Notifiable Diseases Information System (SINAN), emerges as a valuable tool to collect epidemiological data that are essential for the planning and implementation of prevention policies and programs. However, it is essential that this process is conducted in an ethical and respectful manner, ensuring the privacy and autonomy of victims.

Addressing violence against women requires not only targeted interventions, but also broader cultural and structural change. This entails promoting gender equality, empowering women, and educating them about healthy and respectful relationships. Additionally, it is crucial that victims are adequately resourced and supported so that they can overcome trauma and rebuild their lives with dignity.

Addressing domestic violence against women requires a collective effort from all of society. From the health professionals who are on the front lines of victim care to the legislators responsible for creating effective public policies, everyone has a role to play in this process. Only through a comprehensive and coordinated approach can we hope to create an environment where violence against women is truly intolerable.

This study, by providing valuable insights into the role of nurses in the compulsory reporting of domestic violence, contributes to this collective effort. It highlights the importance of an integrated and sensitive response to this complex and multifaceted issue, reaffirming its commitment to the protection of women's rights and dignity throughout the country. The persistence of domestic violence against women in Brazil is an alarming phenomenon that not only challenges legal and social frameworks, but also reflects issues deeply rooted in culture and gender perception. Despite the advances provided by legislation, such as the Maria da Penha Law, and the protection policies implemented, statistics from the Ministry of Human Rights and Citizenship still reveal an alarming incidence of these cases. In this context, this study aimed to examine in detail the crucial role of nurses in the compulsory notification of domestic violence, recognizing their fundamental importance in early detection and support for victims.



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