

Social Networks and Governance in Health

In the current context, social networks acquire relevance as spaces of mobilization, integration and decision-making, revealing the emergence of new and complex patterns of sociability and governance. However, in addition to the positive aspects associated with social networks, there are also asymmetries, power disputes, conflicts, ambivalences and contradictions¹. Heterogeneity and fluidity mark the networks, whether they are centered on the family, on the neighborhood or on the multiple spheres of formal and informal sociability. In the field of public health this debate has assumed different contours revealing the challenging nature of the most recent patterns of interaction between social actors and public institutions. The mechanisms involved in the circulation and sharing of information and knowledge among professionals and users of health services, the frontiers and points of contact among multiple organizations, groups and individuals, as well as the transformations in the decision dynamics are highlighted in the research and teaching agenda of the area.

Thus, this thematic issue brings together articles that seek to reflect on the changes that have occurred in the last decades in everyday sociability and its repercussions on health practices. It is an initiative of the Graduate Program of the Escola Nacional de Saúde Pública Sérgio Arouca of Fundação Oswaldo Cruz (Ensp/Fiocruz) with the support of the resources of the Academic Excellence Program (PROEX) of the Coordination of Enhancement of Higher Education Personnel (Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior - CAPES). The issue was organized by the area of concentration on Society, Violence and Health, aiming to consolidate the collaboration between teachers and students around the theme of social networks and governance in health.

Using different analytical benchmarks and methodological approaches, the authors present experiences of institutional reorganization, structuring of social networks around health problems and the construction of regional and local governance arrangements. Cyberculture, violence, ethics, social participation, public and private relations and strategies of political regulation in different territories are explored here. The articles present the perspective of understanding models of interaction, care practices and the conformation of social identities in scenarios where so-called digital activism can coexist with traditional flows of mobilization and face-to-face meetings. Old dilemmas such as social control, democratic communication, and equity in health combine today with new issues linked to the rebuilding of social ties and bonds. In this way, they foster the production of knowledge and the evaluative research into the scope of interventions increasingly confronted with complex and heterogeneous relationship environments.

Delaine Martins Costa ¹; Ilara Hämmerli Sozzi de Moraes ¹; Joviana Quintes Avanci ²; Liana Wernersbach Pinto ²; Rosana Magalhães ¹; Vera Lucia Marques da Silva ²

¹ Departamento de Ciências Sociais, Escola Nacional de Saúde Pública Sérgio Arouca (ENSP), Fiocruz. Rio de Janeiro RJ Brasil.

² Departamento de Estudos sobre Violência e Saúde Jorge Careli, ENSP, Fiocruz. Rio de Janeiro RJ Brasil.

References

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