

# Virtualization of the Brazilian Nursing Week in the COVID-19 pandemic: the novelty and the tangible

*Virtualização da Semana Brasileira de Enfermagem na pandemia de COVID-19: o ineditismo e o tangível*

*Virtualización de la Semana Brasileña de Enfermería en la pandemia COVID-19: la novedad y lo tangible*

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## How to cite this article:

Correia LM, Rafael RMR, Neto M, Prata JA, Faria MGA.  
Changes implemented in the work environment  
of nurses in the COVID-19 pandemic.  
Rev Bras Enferm. 2022;75(Suppl 1):e20201203.  
<https://doi.org/10.1590/0034-7167-2020-1203>

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EDITOR IN CHIEF: Dulce Barbosa  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Marcia Magro

**Submission:** 11-17-2020    **Approval:** 09-02-2021

## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** to report the virtualization experience of the 81<sup>st</sup> Brazilian Nursing Week of a public university in the state of Rio de Janeiro. **Methods:** an experience report with descriptive approach on the planning and virtual operationalization of a traditional nursing event, which took place in May 2020. **Results:** the event had 543 entries and 39 activities were offered, 3 panels with the presence of international guests, 1 national conference, 3 thematic roundtable discussions, 9 roundtable discussions involving projects and extension leagues, 5 cultural activities and 17 activities in social networks (lives and videos). **Final considerations:** the virtualization of the 81<sup>st</sup> Brazilian Nursing Week brought the learning and appropriation of new ways of debating nursing in times of physical isolation, which will contribute to an immediate future in social and work relations as well as to the collaborative construction of knowledge.

**Descriptors:** Educational Technology; Online Social Networking; Nursing; Pandemics; Coronavirus Infections.

## RESUMO

**Objetivo:** relatar a experiência de virtualização da 81ª Semana Brasileira de Enfermagem de uma universidade pública do estado do Rio de Janeiro. **Métodos:** relato de experiência com abordagem descritiva sobre o planejamento e a operacionalização virtual de um evento tradicional da enfermagem, que aconteceu em maio de 2020. **Resultados:** o evento contabilizou 543 inscrições e foram oferecidas 39 atividades, sendo 3 painéis com a presença de convidados internacionais, 1 conferência nacional, 3 rodas de conversa temáticas, 9 rodas de conversa envolvendo projetos e ligas de extensão, 5 atividades culturais e 17 atividades em redes sociais (lives e vídeos). **Considerações finais:** a virtualização da 81ª Semana Brasileira de Enfermagem trouxe o aprendizado e a apropriação de novas formas de debater enfermagem em tempos de isolamento físico, que contribuirão em um futuro imediato nas relações sociais e de trabalho, assim como para a construção colaborativa de conhecimentos.

**Descritores:** Tecnologia Educacional; Redes Sociais Online; Enfermagem; Pandemias; Infecções por Coronavirus.

## RESUMEN

**Objetivo:** reportar la experiencia de virtualización de la 81ª Semana Brasileña de Enfermería en una universidad pública del estado de Río de Janeiro. **Métodos:** relato de experiencia con enfoque descriptivo sobre la planificación y operación virtual de un evento de enfermería tradicional, que se llevó a cabo en mayo de 2020. **Resultados:** el evento contó con 543 inscripciones y se ofrecieron 39 actividades, incluyendo 3 paneles con presencia de invitados internacionales, 1 conferencia nacional, 3 círculos de conversación temáticos, 9 círculos de conversación que involucran proyectos de extensión y ligas, 5 actividades culturales, 17 actividades en redes sociales (lives y videos). **Consideraciones finales:** la virtualización de la 81ª Semana Brasileña de Enfermería trajo el aprendizaje y la apropiación de nuevas formas de debatir la enfermería en tiempos de aislamiento físico, que contribuirá en un futuro inmediato en las relaciones sociales y laborales, así como a la construcción colaborativa del conocimiento.

**Descriptor:** Tecnología Educacional; Redes Sociales en Línea; Enfermería; Pandemias; Infecciones por Coronavirus.

## INTRODUCTION

Since the declaration of pandemic by the new coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in March 2020, social physical distancing, universal adoption of hygiene practices and use of personal protective equipment have been configured as the most effective methods to control COVID-19 to date<sup>(1)</sup>. However, these actions require the construction of a new culture of health care, educational practices and interactions in society. At the same time, the number of people who are injured and with severe potential is growing, implying overload of care services and collapse of health systems, with deaths that could be preventable<sup>(2)</sup>.

Given the complexity of this new standard of normality of life, which has provoked social and academic reflections, it was necessary to reinvent the celebrations of Florence Nightingale's bicentenary in 2020, which originally aimed at the visibility of nurses' work, nursing assistants and techniques, obstetricians and midwives worldwide. In addition to the impossibility of one-to-one events, the undeniable performance of nursing teams in COVID-19 prevention and control added new meanings to the identity and valorization of a campaign entitled Nursing Now, which incorporated the essentiality of qualified nursing practice in defense of life in the pandemic context.

The Triple Impact of Nursing and Expanding the role of nurses in Primary Health Care, respectively published in 2016 and 2018, already pointed out the fundamental role of nursing on the global agenda and the need to expand it to the various levels of care of health systems<sup>(3-4)</sup>. In 2020, under the new dynamics imposed by the pandemic, there is a large volume of scientific productions that report the successful experiences of this action<sup>(5)</sup>.

Specifically in Brazil, this context brought an additional challenge, especially due to the tradition of educational, research and health care institutions in the celebrations of the Brazilian Nursing Week (SBEn), which began in the 1940s, with the purpose of promoting the exchange of formal and non-formal knowledge; bringing the category together; discussing problems in nurses' professional daily life in different areas of work; and reflecting on strategies for improving the population's health care<sup>(6)</sup>.

With the suspension of a significant part of academic activities, this annual nursing event became an object of novelty and tangible practices. The questions that were established were: how to celebrate without producing alienation in the face of the health crisis experienced? How to reach the various nursing groups that, at the forefront of health care, need to gather and accumulate knowledge, experiences and affections? In order to consolidate identity characteristics and value nursing, how to overcome a certain academic fencing and break the barriers between academia, professionals and society in general, especially amidst the pandemic context?

Having as its axis the emerging social and professional demands in nursing during the pandemic course of COVID-19, virtualization emerged as an innovative strategy to materialize the SBEn tradition, as everything that exists in various places without being physically present in a specific place is virtual<sup>(7)</sup>. Thus, the open virtual world, i.e., online, is the tangible means of communication and interaction that allows sociability, dissemination and collaborative construction of knowledge among individuals who

do not share the same geographic space<sup>(7)</sup>, as what has been happening at this historical moment of the year 2020.

## OBJECTIVE

To report the virtualization experience of the 81<sup>st</sup> Brazilian Nursing Week of a public university in the state of Rio de Janeiro.

## METHODS

This is an experience report with a descriptive approach on the virtualization of the 81<sup>st</sup> SBEn of a public university in the state of Rio de Janeiro, which took place between May 13 and 15, 2020, with a total duration of 24 hours. The idea of holding a virtual event arose in a meeting of the faculty staff, understanding the importance of maintaining the traditional nursing festivities already planned, potentiating the visibility of the professional category and boosting a solidarity paradigm, especially in the face of the advent of the pandemic.

In order to plan and operationalize a commemorative event through digital means, without any previous experience of this type or specialized technical support, we decided to create two commissions composed of members of management, extension coordination, graduation, *lato sensu* and *stricto sensu* graduate courses, department heads and representatives of technical-administrative employees, students and nursing services university assistance.

The Scientific Committee involved 9 members, being responsible for proposing themes and organizing activities, in line with the emerging theme of COVID-19 and the central object of the Week for the year 2020, *Quality in nursing and health in the defense of SUS*, proposed by the Brazilian Nursing Association (ABEn - *Associação Brasileira de Enfermagem*).

The Technical and Digital Commission included 16 members who were imbued with operationalizing the scientific and cultural program of the event, involving the offer of diversified activities, such as panels, conferences, roundtable discussions, cultural activities and interactions on social networks (lives and videos), disseminated through posts on the college's social networks.

Using federated access in the rooms of National Education and Research Network (RNP) of Web Conference, with streaming transmission to the institutional YouTube channel, the 81<sup>st</sup> SBEn reached a total of 543 subscribers, as researchers, professors and nursing students belonging to public and private schools, colleges, institutes and universities in the state of Rio de Janeiro.

It is noteworthy that this article waived the appreciation by an Institutional Review Board, since this is an experience report, which did not include participants in an investigation or intervention.

## RESULTS

### Planning and operationalization of the 81<sup>st</sup> Brazilian Nursing Week in a virtual environment: the novelty

The novelty of this experience lies in the planning and operation of the 81<sup>st</sup> SBEn totally virtual, without losing sight of the diversity and quality characteristic of this traditional nursing event. In this sense, we resorted to solidarity, sensitivity and creativity

of everyone involved in its design, based on the concept of electronic conference, understood as digital systems that allow the sharing of a virtual space of communication, at the same time, by geographically distant individuals, but connected through objects of common interest, forming virtual meeting places<sup>(7)</sup>.

From this perspective, the Scientific Committee's work permeated the proposition of the event's activities, with the purpose of creating spaces for discussion, reflection and appreciation of nursing in the context of COVID-19, bringing professionals who have experienced and are still experiencing this situation of sanitary calamity.

The panels and the conference had a traditional format, with the presence of speakers and a facilitator for the discussions. Thus, for the first panel, three nurses were invited, one from Portugal and two from Brazil, in order to discuss the different realities of professional practice. The second included the participation of nurses from countries with COVID-19 indicators growing rapidly in their incidence, in order to report the successful experiences of nursing in dealing with the pandemic in Brazil, Italy, Spain and Chile. The third aimed to reflect the meanings and reinterpretations of advanced practices and their interfaces with the Nursing Now Campaign through the speeches of representatives of the Federal Nursing Council and ABEn. For the conference, the proposal was to present the different forms of action of Brazilian nursing in the context of the pandemic, based on public health policies.

The thematic roundtable discussions intended to exchange experiences and share construction of knowledge, with the participation of guests and those enrolled in that activity. The roundtable discussions in *Experiences and connections modality: leagues and projects* invite were moments of integration between extension projects, academic leagues and research groups, which were organized and conducted by the coordinators who registered the activity.

On the other hand, cultural activities were based on the socialization of the artistic potential of our faculty and students, expressed in the reading of poems and strings. Regarding the lives, these online and live transmissions on social media profiles took place at different times, scheduled in advance and, in most cases, with the participation of guests to discuss the proposed theme.

Parallel to the preparation of the scientific program, the Technical and Digital Commission carried out a survey of undergraduate students interested in acting as monitors at the event, which resulted in the selection of 22 students. Then, the group organized training on the RNP platform and on YouTube, addressing the appropriation of available resources and conducting simulations on the dynamics of daily activities and the live broadcast of the event. After these steps, Commission members were divided into two teams, with different responsibilities considering the specifics of the virtual environments in which the event took place.

Thus, the group responsible for the Web Conference rooms formed the following arrangement: a host, represented by faculty members who created their own room with federated access, managed the platform's tools and made their transmission viable; a professor, who received guests and moderators; and two monitors, responsible for accepting the access of those registered in the activities of the referred rooms, organizing the chat and chat comments, as well as ordering the lines for the debates. However, the second team was on institutional YouTube to generate the

streaming, register the chat interactions and the representations of institutions at the event, handle situations of inappropriate posts and prepare the activity file for later availability on the channel.

It is noteworthy that the planning and operationalization process of the 81<sup>st</sup> SBEn took place over a period of three weeks, mainly involving the rapid appropriation of digital communication and information technologies by professors who, until then, had not been closer to the use of these resources in formal and non-formal education<sup>(8)</sup>, especially for online events.

However, this challenge did not outweigh the importance of creating meetings amidst the pandemic's advance, in order to promote the socialization of knowledge and practices, the acceptance of experiences of suffering and the sharing of nursing experiences in the context of education, management and care. Thus, it was glimpsed that the virtualization of SBEn would add symbolic meanings to the role of nursing in coping with COVID-19 and, especially in times of distance, it would be strategic to strengthen the identity referents of the profession.

### **Organization of the 81<sup>st</sup> Brazilian Nursing Week in a virtual environment: the tangible and its reach**

The event had 543 registrations, divided into 322 students (59.30%), 78 professors (14.36%) and 143 nurses (26.34%), distributed in 62 institutions, 48 from the city of Rio de Janeiro (77.42%) and 14 from other locations (22.58%).

In all, 39 activities were offered, namely: 5 cultural activities; 17 activities on social networks (lives and videos); 3 panels, with the presence of international guests; 1 national conference; 3 thematic roundtable discussions; and 9 roundtable discussions involving projects and extension leagues.

Among the activities scheduled without streaming, 17 lives were held on social networks, which were coordinated by the proponents from May 12 to 15, with three on the first day, four on the second, six on the third and four on the last day of the event. Regarding the themes addressed, the dialogue between the scope of the extension projects, the objects of the institution's research groups and the sanitary context of the COVID-19 pandemic was highlighted, in conjunction with knowledge and practices for coping with this new emerging disease.

The cultural activities were previously recorded, in the audio-visual media format, broadcast at the end of each day of the event as a "premier" on institutional YouTube channel, reaching an average of 122 views. As activities with real-time streaming transmission, panels, conference and roundtable discussions, presented in Chart 1, stand out.

As it is public and open access, other participants, besides those enrolled, had the opportunity to follow the event and interact through the institutional YouTube channel's chat. On the days of the event, the average access of activities was 326 views and the panel *Successful nursing experiences in the COVID-19 pandemic* reached the highest number of views (N= 687).

With a view to socializing the debates and reflections of the event, we opted for recording the panels, the conference and the roundtable discussions, available on YouTube. This strategy increased the 81<sup>st</sup> SBEn reach, considering that, after five months of its completion, there was an increase in the views of all activities.

**Chart 1** - Activities of the 81<sup>st</sup> Brazilian Nursing Week with live streaming, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 2020

Date	Themes	Activity type	Views on the institutional YouTube channel	
			06/17/2020	10/17/2020
05/13/2020	Quality in nursing and health in defense of SUS: from Florence Nightingale to the COVID-19 pandemic	Opening panel	676	694
	200 years of Florence Nightingale and the COVID-19 pandemic	Roundtable discussions	549	572
	How to size nursing professionals in times of COVID-19, to work in IU and ICU	Experiences and connections: leagues and projects invite	374	414
	My world is my home		215	223
05/14/2020	Successful nursing experiences in the COVID-19 pandemic	Panel	702	728
	Reflections behind the scenes of health and nursing action in the COVID-19 crisis: acting today to build a new future	Lightning conference	244	251
	Prevention strategies and management of nursing illness in the COVID-19 pandemic	Roundtable discussions	525	542
	LGBTI+ health care in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic	Experiences and connections: leagues and projects invite	212	227
	Discrimination, violence and (lack of) care: the protocol of choice of life in periods of COVID-19		172	178
	Extension contributing to perinatal health		178	181
05/15/2020	Meanings and resignification of advanced practices and the Nursing Now Campaign	Panel	307	335
	Advanced practices and Nursing Now Campaign: possibilities and challenges	Roundtable discussions	306	340
	Severe mental disorder in the primary network: difficulties and powers of Programmatic Area 2.2	Experiences and connections: leagues and projects invite	203	207
	Use of masks: disposable or reprocessed?		129	141
	Talking about the care of children with disabilities in the conjuncture of the COVID-19 pandemic		179	190
	Contributions of university extension in academic, personal and professional education: impacts on nurses' trajectory		156	165

Source: institutional YouTube channel, 2020.

It is worth mentioning that the virtualization strategy adopted at the event presented meets the worldwide phenomenon of socialization of science in the digital environment. The situation of isolation was not enough to paralyze the advance of scientific knowledge sharing, on the contrary, it led to the construction of means that could circumvent the limitations imposed by the pandemic period<sup>(9-10)</sup>.

### Study limitations

The experience of reflecting and aggregating knowledge using digital information and communication technologies poses challenges, due to technological limitations and personal skills, as well as by inequalities in internet access in the country.

### Contributions to nursing, health, and public policies

The virtualization of the 81<sup>st</sup> SBEEn brought the learning and appropriation of new ways of debating nursing in times of physical

isolation that will contribute in an immediate future to social and work relations as well as to the collaborative construction of knowledge.

This new reality promotes the movement of rupture of science in the academies, bringing society closer to its scientific manifestations and productions. Also, in the Year of Nursing promoted by Nursing Now Campaign, this can be a way of (re) building new identities with plural paths of nursing.

### FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The present successful experience is considered, given the wide scope of activities offered, even with all the time and geographical barriers of participants, which translates into the subjective understanding of the positive impact of this scientific and cultural event, especially in the context of social isolation resulting from the pandemic. Moreover, the virtualization of the 81<sup>st</sup> SBEEn provided professors with technological skills and knowledge that have been appropriate to the context of remote teaching.

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