

EDITORIAL

This special edition of the journal *Text & Context Nursing* which deals with the theme, HOSPITAL INFECTION, is a great opportunity to reflect and accompany the development of studies in this area. When hospital infection occurs, it imposes an extremely high personal, economic, and social cost upon the health care institution and especially its clients. Many times the consequences of such costs are irreversible.

According to data from the Brazilian Minister of Health, nearly 15% of interned clients in Brazil contract some type of hospital infection, the majority of which could be avoided with such simple measures as adequately washing one's hands. In agreement with the SENIC Project (Study on the Efficacy of Nosocomial Infection Control) developed by the CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) in Atlanta, GA, United States of America and the experience of Brazilian hospitals, 30% of hospital infections could be prevented through the actions of Hospital Infection Control (HIC).

The prevention and control of hospital infection are considered greatly important for all those who have studied the subject, for they promote the supply of data related to the hospital's current situation, and they might also be used as indicators of the quality of care being given to the hospital's clients. For effective control, it is necessary to comprehend health care from an interdisciplinary perspective, not only from the point of view of the team that works on the Commissions of Hospital Infection Control. It is necessary that all those who work in the hospital assume their responsibility in the practice of diminishing the rates of infection and increasing prevention and control of hospital infection.

This special edition of *Text & Context Nursing* offers to the reader the results of research related to the hospital environment, to bacterial resistance within hospitals, and to the capacity of human resources towards the control and prevention of hospital infection as well as the elimination of certain risks involved with providing health care. It also presents some challenges and perspectives for the Brazilian nurse. These studies will make it possible to point out some of the paths available and to raise questions for researchers and those interested in this timely, relevant, and constantly changing subject.

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