

Health of the Black Population: challenges for building equity in health

The Thematic Dossier on the Health of the Black Population is one of the action fronts of the Racism and Health Work Group (WG) of the *Associação Brasileira de Saúde Coletiva* (ABRASCO). It seeks to increase the visibility of ethnic-racial inequities in health based on the scientific production of black and non-black researchers, and foster collaboration networks at national and international level and, thus, strengthen the National Policy for Comprehensive Health of the Black Population (PNSIPN) and the SUS. The WG takes this opportunity to thank the Ibirapitanga Institute, which financed this project, in addition to several other actions that have contributed to broadening debates on public policies and the health of the black population.

Scientific publications that address ethnic-racial inequities in health are still incipient, a reflection of the “pact of whiteness” and institutional racism. In this way, the publication of a thematic dossier that brings together evidence of the effects of racism on the health of the black Brazilian population represents the day-to-day resilience of researchers, intellectuals and social movements. In effect, structural and structuring racism produces social asymmetries, negatively impacts the living and health conditions of discriminated populations and/or hinders the dissemination of scientific and technological knowledge.

This dossier consists of 18 articles and a review. The first five articles address general epidemiological aspects such as the incompleteness of filling out the race/color question in health systems, factors associated with the murder of women in Brazil according to the race/color question, ethnic-racial disparities in premature births, racial inequity in mortality by cervical cancer, and potential years of life lost by COVID-19 according to race/color and gender in Brazil. Corroborating the topical nature of the issue, some of these aspects were recently presented in two epidemiological bulletins published by the Ministry of Health, which are the first to focus specifically on the health of the black population.

Articles six to nine address the oral health of the black population, a topic that is still scanty covered in academic productions, including: a systematic review on oral health and racial inequities; an article on the anti-racist ethos in public oral health; another on oral health and sickle cell disease; and, lastly, therapeutic itineraries in oral health for *quilombolas*. These are followed by three papers that discuss the impacts of structural racism on the health of *quilombola* groups, which represent the segment with the worst epidemiological indicators of the national black population. These texts address racism and food insecurity, the syndemic of COVID-19, vaccination and fake news. The following three discuss the impacts of COVID-19 on the black population, which was disproportionately affected by the pandemic in Brazil¹. The following four articles take a qualitative approach to various topics related to the consequences of structural racism among people with sickle cell disease, among black female health professionals, in the permanence of university students and in the relationship between public security agents and young people from the suburbs. The last work discusses forms of black resistance and the anti-colonial sanatorium movement as a strategy for decolonizing Psychiatric Reform. The dossier ends with a review of the book *Pacto da Branquitude* by Cida Bento, written by the president of ABRASCO, Rosana Onocko Campos.

If history, speeches, data, narratives and social representations remain in dispute, the Racism and Health WG adopts a political position and is dedicated to the defense of human rights by promoting the visibility of these productions with a view to reducing vulnerabilities, as well as promoting equity and the democratization of the health.

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References

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