

## Social Needs, Support and Protection

The discussion of social support is timely. It relates to proposed supplementary social protection policies that mitigate social inequalities and the discussion of old and new social needs and the health of the population. Examples can be cited such as the social demands of individuals addicted to illicit drugs, including crack cocaine, which require integrated and intersectoral social policies, and humanized care in social and health institutions. Groups of youths, adolescents and adults roam the urban redoubts, like nomads exposed to social neglect

The aging of the population in epidemiological transition, places a burden on the spread of non-transmissible chronic diseases and consequent disabilities accentuating the social vulnerability of the elderly living alone or in impoverished families, who require special care. The Statute of the elderly has granted them formal citizenship status and greater coverage of services from primary healthcare services of the Unified Health System. Similarly, the charitable and philanthropic vision in terms of social rights and citizenship has dissipated after the passing of the Statute of Children and Adolescents in Brazil.

The family is the traditional social nucleus of welfare provision, permeating the obligations and duties among its members. It works as an informal support in poverty. It involves complementary care to that offered by medical institutions for the elderly, children, disabled and handicapped and the transfer of technologies to the home, such as hemodialysis for patients with chronic renal failure. It is argued that more humane care is given within the family than in the hospital. Little investigative research has been conducted on these family responsibilities.

The conditions of social vulnerability and poverty are multifarious. The social support policy seeks to encourage social relations and ties and strengthen the social fabric. These are juxtaposed to their fragility and individualization in the face of structural changes in production, in interpersonal relations and power in modern society. The strategies and the concept of social support must overcome it being seen as a neutral resource, tool and object, removed from social protection policies, from understanding social and power relations, from social inequalities and the dynamics of social processes which society experiences and the significance for different social groups.

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