

## The National Health Surveillance Policy

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The National Health Surveillance Policy (*Política Nacional de Vigilância em Saúde* - PNVS) was instituted on 12 July 2018 by National Health Council (CNS) Resolution No. 588/2018.<sup>1</sup> It is an unprecedented document to guide the planning of health surveillance actions in the three management spheres of the Brazilian National Health System (Sistema Único de Saúde - SUS), and is characterized by the definition of responsibilities, principles, guidelines and strategies for health surveillance.

PNVS has incorporated guidelines and proposals debated and approved during the 1<sup>st</sup> National Conference on Health Surveillance (*Conferência Nacional de Vigilância em Saúde* - CNVS), held in Brasília from 27 February to 2 March 2018, and was the subject of an editorial published in *Epidemiology and Health Services: the Brazilian National Health System Journal (RESS)*.<sup>2</sup> The event was organized by the National Health Council (CNS) with the support of the Health Ministry's Health Surveillance Secretariat (SVS/MS). 1,820 participants from all of Brazil's Federative Units took part. It was the first occasion since the promulgation of the 1988 Federal Constitution that health surveillance has been widely debated by health workers, health service managers, academics and SUS service users. The Final Report on the 1<sup>st</sup> CNVS provides a record, with a wealth of text and images, of the debates held during this magnificent event.<sup>3</sup>

PNVS is defined as a State public policy and an essential function of SUS. It is universal, cross-cutting and guides the health care model at territory level. Its realization depends on its strengthening and linkage with other instances of the health system, while its management is the sole responsibility of the government.

PNVS defines Health Surveillance as a *continuous and systematic process of data collection, data consolidation, data analysis and dissemination of information on health-related events, for the purpose of planning and implementing public health measures, including regulating, intervening and acting on health conditioning factors and determinants, in order to protect and promote the population's health, and to prevent and control risks, health complaints and diseases*.<sup>1</sup>

PNVS focuses on all levels of health care, covers all health care services – both public and private -, as well as establishments dedicated to the production and circulation of consumer goods and related technologies. Aligned with all SUS health policies, PNVS stresses the necessity of articulating knowledge, processes and practices relating to epidemiological surveillance, environmental health surveillance, occupational health surveillance and health surveillance, considering the cross-cutting nature of surveillance actions in the health-disease process.<sup>1</sup>

PNVS sets forth the following shared responsibilities between federal government, states, Federal District and municipalities: ensuring the provision of health surveillance actions and services, establishing and guaranteeing articulation between the sectors responsible for public policies, developing strategies to identify and control situations capable of resulting in risk of harm to health, among others.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, the funding of health surveillance actions must also be guaranteed by the three spheres of government. PNVS determines that such funding be specific, permanent, increasing and sufficient to provide the resources and technologies needed to fulfill the institutional role of the three SUS management spheres, in addition to contributing to the enhancement and improvement of the quality of its actions.<sup>1</sup>

The National Health Council's Intersectoral Commission on Health Surveillance consolidated the final PNVS document. The origin of the Policy, marked by popular participation in SUS implantation and consolidation, is evident in its text when it cites the Health Council as the protagonist of the processes of PNVS assessment and monitoring.<sup>1</sup> The equally extensive and diverse set of people who contributed to building PNVS will be on the alert, involved not only in the realization of this policy but also in the permanent defense of SUS. The success of the National Health Surveillance Policy is linked to the strengthening of the Brazilian National Health System, the world's largest public and universal health care system, an important achievement of the Brazilian population, which has health as one of its fundamental rights.<sup>4</sup>

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