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Scientific production and communication in public health

Editors of the Special Issue

At the end of 2005, as one of the ways of celebrating the forty uninterrupted years of publication of the *Revista de Saúde Pública* that would be completed in the following year, we started to work on planning a special issue that would be launched during the 8th Brazilian Congress of Public Health and 11th World Congress of Public Health, in the city of Rio de Janeiro, in August 2006. It seemed to us that it would be opportune for this special issue of the *Revista* to reflect on the production and publication of scientific knowledge within public health and, at the same time, to weigh up the national production within this field of knowledge.

The result of this work can be appreciated on the pages that follow. We have divided the valuable contributions received into three parts. The articles that make up the part I relate to the general panorama of production within science and questions regarding scientific production. The part II brings together articles that weigh up the national production in the fields of the different subjects and topics within public health. In the part III, we present an article that appraises the *Revista de Saúde Pública* itself from scientometric indicators.

Part I starts with a stimulating article by Reinaldo Guimarães on health research in Brazil, and this is followed by an article by Carlos Gadelha that, with great propriety, deals with the relationships between the health-industrial complex and industrial policy. The other articles in this first part deal with particular aspects of the publication of knowledge that are of interest both to editors and authors of scientific articles. Laragh Gollogly & Hooman Momen deal with the ethical questions faced by the editors of scientific periodicals. Moyses Szklo deals with matters relating to the quality of scientific articles. In a light-hearted article, Cesar Victora & Carmen Moreira discuss the obstacles that authors from countries located south of the equator come up against when they submit their articles for evaluation by editors in the north. Aluísio Barros, the current representative for the field of public health in Capes (the Brazilian university-level advancement office), presents a very interesting analysis on the profiles of periodicals and their classification for the purposes of assessing postgraduate programs. Miquel Porta and contributors, in a very provocative article, highlight the importance of epidemiological textbooks in the scientific production within this field, from an analysis of the citations in the ISI/Thomson Scientific bibliographic database. Finally, Regina Castro focuses on the role of the Internet in the flow of scientific communication and its impact on the production of knowledge.

In part II, the state of the art in Brazilian scientific production in the fields of the different subjects and topics within public health is presented. Even though we have not been able to cover all the topics of interest in a single issue, the wide-ranging panorama furnished by these articles shows the diversification and power of Brazilian scientific production within public health. Everardo Nunes presents the production from social sciences within health, Jairnilson Paim & Carmem Teixeira outline the production relating to health policies, planning and administration, while Maurício Barreto assesses the scientific production within epidemiology, thereby embracing the three core disciplines of the field. The remaining articles deal with thematic areas of great relevance for public health: nutrition (article by Marília Coutinho & Márcio Lucatelli), mental health (Denise Razzouk and contributors), workers' health (Vilma Santana), health in relation to violence (Lília Schraiber and contributors), gender and health (Estela de Aquino), technological evaluation (Maria Novaes) and oral health (Paulo Capel). The final section of this issue is dedicated to an appraisal of the *Revista de Saúde Pública* itself, conducted by Júlio Pereira.

The production of this special issue of the *Revista de Saúde Pública* to commemorate its fortieth anniversary, and its launching at the planned time, has only been possible thanks to the prompt and favorable reception that our invitations obtained from all the authors and the rapidity and excellence in the submission of the manuscripts. Furthermore, the financial support received from the Secretaria de Ciência e Tecnologia e Insumos Estratégicos do Ministério da Saúde and from Secretaria de Estado da Saúde de São Paulo has been fundamental.

Wishing you good reading!