



# Family Health Association: An Overview

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# Objective

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To enhance the public health through a primary health care non-governmental organization by:

- Offering comprehensive services from family care, home visits, disease prevention, health promotion to social and urban environmental development
- Working with multi-discipline teams
- Introducing new processes of care

# History

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1992 – 1997: Family Health International and USAID supported 18 big initiatives and 48 small initiatives related with DST/AIDS prevention in Brazil through the Family Health Association.

1998: The Brazilian Ministry of Health AIDS Program became a centre of excellence for developing countries. Family Health International/ USAID stops participation in Brazil.

2001: The City of Sao Paulo invited the Family Health Association (FHA) and 10 other NGOs to implement the Family Health Program (a federal initiative) in the city.

# Context (1)

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- Sao Paulo city: 10 million people in a metropolitan area of 18 million.
- Country of Brazil: 180 million inhabitants, total population can access public health services, but 40 million use private sector for primary care; up to 70 million are enrolled in the publicly funded Family Health Program.
- The three levels of government (municipal, provincial and federal) share responsibility in delivering publicly funded health care. Primary care is a municipal responsibility with funds coming from the federal level.

## Context (2)

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- Traditional way of delivering primary care is through health centers with a part-time pediatrician, part-time adult clinician, part-time gynecologist, full time public health physician, nurse and nurse practitioners. The focus is on patients/consumers.
- New way: health centers with a full time family physician, nurse, nurse practitioners and community health workers. The focus is on the families in their homes.

## Context (3)

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- Interface with the acute care sector: admissions are done through emergency departments. The program avoids hospitalizations and readmissions through home care delivered by family physicians and nurses as well as post discharge follow-up.
- Interface with specialized care: patients are referred by the family physician to part-time physician specialists working at public clinics for specialized care. Electronic booking is available with information on the patient's identification, but not medical records.

## Context (4)

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- Waiting time for access to specialized care and for elective surgeries are not measured; family health improvements are not assessed.
- Production activities, clean water and sewage access and vaccine coverage are measured.
- Availability of a basket of essential drugs and lab exams.
- All workers in the primary care are paid by salary (including physicians).

# Programs and projects of FHA

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- Family Health
- Mental Health
- STD/AIDS prevention
- Healthy environment
- Training
- Teen activities
- Assisting organizations in writing proposals for funds

# Family Health Program at FHA (1)

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- Objective: To guarantee access to primary care, including health promotion, disease prevention, and diagnosis and treatment of common diseases.
- Started: 2001
- Staffing (2008): 117 family health teams composed by: 1 family physician (n=117), 1 nurse (n=117), 2 nurse practitioners (n=234) and 6 community health workers (n=702) organized in 26 health units + 4 clinics composed by: 18 part-time specialist physicians (n=72), 5 nurses (n=20), 10 nurse practitioners (n=40).

## Family Health Program at FHA (2)

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- Proportion of total FHA budget: 89.7%
- Scope (2007): 117,655 families accounting for a total of 415,165 persons. Each community health worker is responsible for 200 families.
- Activities: consults, home visits, vaccines, first-aid, laboratory specimen collection, drug dispensation, educational group meetings, health promotion.

# Mental Health Program (1)

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- Objective: To prevent mental health hospitalizations
- Started: 2004
- Proportion of total budget : 5.1%
- Staffing: 3 teams with: 1 program manager, 1 psychiatrist, 1 psychologist, 1 nurse, 1 nurse practitioner and varying numbers of community health workers

## **Mental Health Program (2)**

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- Scope (2007): 1,158 outpatients and respective families, 47 patients needing continuous home services and 8 patients discharged from hospitals and living in a community residence.
- Activities: consults, home services, workshops for patients, management of a community residence.

# STD/AIDS Prevention (1)

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- Objective: to train health professionals on STD/AIDS prevention; to conduct activities in the community for safer and health seeking behaviors; condom distribution; referral to health community units.
- Started: 1992
- Proportion of total budget: 1.6%
- Staffing: 1 program manager and 17 facilitators in Sao Paulo; 1 program manager and 6 facilitators in the Fortaleza branch.

## **STD/AIDS Prevention (2)**

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- Scope (2007): a) directly: 1 170 health professionals, and b) indirectly a population of approximately 350,000 persons.
- Activities: education targeted to health professionals, community leaders and community of different background up to university level and condom distribution, referral for HIV/Syphilis testing and Hepatitis B vaccination.

# Healthy Environment (1)

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- Objective: Environmental sustainability and social development
- Started: 2007
- Proportion of total budget: 0.9%
- Staffing: 7 project managers working in their 26 Family Health Program catchment areas.

## Healthy Environment (2)

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- Scope (2007): around 200,000 persons.
- Activities: community development including the recovery of 24 public squares, development of 6 community vegetable gardens, building of 12 units of recycling and composting and 8 units for soap production from domestic cooking oil, implementing of 8 recycling campaigns in public buildings and 2 rabies and castration campaigns for domestic/stray animals.

## Training (1)

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- Objective: Improve Family Health Program workforce knowledge and productivity
- Started: 2001
- Proportion of total budget: 0.2%
- Staffing: 2 project managers

## Training (2)

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- Scope (2007): 1,450 professionals in the Family Health Program, 3,640 clerks in electronic booking, 688 community health workers in ecology, 160 nurses and nurse practitioners in breast and uterine cancer prevention and 35 psychologists in community therapy.
- Activities: educational sessions using problem-based learning.

## **Scutai Project – Teen activities(1)**

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- Objective: development of the assets of children and teenagers; prevention of criminal activities.
- Started: 2006
- Proportion of total budget: financed by FHA from overhead costs of Family Health Program administration.
- Staffing: 1 project director

## **Scutai Project - Teen activities (2)**

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- Scope (2007): around 500 teenagers.
- Activities: community library, after school student tutoring, sexual education, dance classes, paint workshops, music and theatre shows.

# Consultation in fund proposals

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- Objective: Increase participation of the non-profit sector in social and health activities
- Started: 2001
- Proportion of total budget: 0.1%
- Staffing: 1 project manager
- Results: Evaluation of STD/AIDS projects financed by Elton John Foundation in Brazil. Consultation in writing fund proposals.



***Family Health Association:  
a little bit of hope in  
an ocean of needs***

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