Patient care in an intensive care unit (ICU) is associated with an increased risk of developing nosocomial infections. Bacteremia is responsible for a great number of cases, 23% of which have attributable mortality in developed countries and can affect up to 52% of ICU patients. The main cause of mortality is inadequate and inappropriate antimicrobial empirical therapy. The incorrect use of antimicrobials is a major risk for identifying multidrug resistant microorganisms, thereby involving increased morbidity, mortality and costs. Implementing several surveillance systems and becoming acquainted with resistance patterns represent a valuable tool for identifying, preventing and treating this infectious complication. There is paucity of data regarding antimicrobial resistance in bacteremic patients in Latin America, and the available data reveals a worrying scenario.

Keywords
Bacteremia, nosocomial infection, Latin America, intensive care units, antimicrobial drug resistance.