Abstract
This article examines integrality as one of the doctrinal principles of the Brazilian State Health Policy – the Unified Health System (SUS) – whose aim is to offer health care as a right and as a service. Integrality is the foundation around which managerial activity practices are organized and whose main challenge is guaranteeing access to the health care systems' most complex assistance levels. We developed an analytical reference grounded on three dimensions: service organization, knowledge, the practices of health workers and government policy formulation with input from the population. Managerial practices are fertile ground for integrality and are the political arena in which public managers of different government levels, private service providers, health care workers and organized civil society participate. Integrality in health care can only occur through the democratic interaction of subjects involved in the creation of government responses which are capable of contemplating the differences expressed in the health care needs.

Keywords
Integral care, Health services management, SUS, Brazil