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Editorial

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Editorial

Maria Helena Simões
Villas Bôas 

A blank page can be challenging but today we have a lot to talk about. The year 2020 started with so much hope... At that time, the world did not yet know that most of our values were just about to be revised. The news from China at first did not cause much commotion - the first cases of a “new pneumonia” were detected in Wuhan (December 31, 2019). Since then, China first and then the rest of the world began to adopt measures to curtail the spread of the new coronavirus of severe acute respiratory syndrome 2 (SARS-CoV-2).

In Brazil, these measures ranged from simple personal hygiene recommendations (washing hands with soap and water, avoid touching your face with dirty hands etc.) to the progressive decrease in the circulation of people in some cities (wearing masks, social distancing, road blocks, lockdown) and quarantine for patients with symptoms. All of these recommendations were and are necessary to try to prevent the collapse of Brazil’s Unified Health System, which has, over the years, been the target of dismantling initiatives and received scarce financial resources.

These restrictions also bring about profound changes in the country’s economy, since they disrupt part of the financial flow sustained by the sales and profit of several industries, especially services in general. Although these measures have consequences that are purportedly reversible in the medium or long term, it is indisputable that a new social reality has imposed itself across the country.

However, a new perspective for scientific studies has also emerged from amidst this nebulous landscape. Since the first reports on COVID-19, an editorial policy was implemented by the publishers of the main scientific journals in the world to share as much content as possible about the topics of COVID-19 and SARS-CoV-2. In addition to sharing content, scientific journals opened specific sections so that the editorial flow of these studies could be expedited. The scientific community in general has joined this effort in order to provide the world with information that enables the prevention, treatment and fight against the disease based on scientific evidence, since there are still no drugs or vaccines that can act safely and effectively to control the pandemic.

The Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (Fiocruz), which celebrates its 120th anniversary in May, supports the Open Access Policy, which aims to make scientific research accessible to everyone. Initiatives like the Fiocruz Journals Portal represent this alignment by sharing all the scientific journals published by Fiocruz.

The Health Surveillance under Debate: Society, Science & Technology (*Vigilância Sanitária em Debate: Sociedade, Ciência & Tecnologia*) - “Visa em Debate” journal released, at the end of March 2020, a call for the fast-track submission of papers in response to the health emergency caused by COVID-19.

This May 2020 edition includes the contributions published so far, but others can be read ahead of print on the journal’s website (<https://visaemdebate.incqs.fiocruz.br/index.php/visaemdebate> fast). In this edition, readers will also find publications with different content in the area of health surveillance.

Our scientific editorial group and our executive secretary are making efforts to make sure we assess and share as much valuable information as possible, as quickly as possible.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition!

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