

EDITORIAL

This issue once again presents to the nursing community, students, other health care professionals and other interested parties the theme, "Woman, Health, and Nursing", as testimony to the fact the subject has its relevance within the Brazilian and international scenario.

As in immemorial times, women's health currently possesses and intimate relationship with the "place" that it occupies or is taken to occupy in the social scenario. Independent of the focus utilized to illuminate one or another facet referring to the attention to one's health, the tonic of gender is required – not only to create a tangent with the discussion, but so that there is interpretative coherence in the face of the role that women play and the socio-historical demands that are analyzed for analysis.

The studies involving women, in the instance of health, have focused on some subjects that appear in an almost reiterative mode, revealing the current knowledge gaps in Brazilian publication. Such studies focus women under risk and suffering violence of diverse orders; contemporary patterns of aesthetics and the different impacts and representations in their health; upheavals such as the panic syndrome and the various types of depression; pathologies and care linked to elderly women's health; health in the case of abortion; beyond those studies directed towards maternity health continuing to mark their presence. Invariably, publications continue to show that countries like Brazil still need to overcome other difficulties, beyond those specific to our clients' health care, like access to health care services and the inequalities of gender, even with the incontestable advances in the visibilities of the construction of public policies geared to this population.

From the private point of view of Nursing's participation in this area, we have shown that Nursing has received recognition in the legal and institutional place in order to assume the leadership role. In practice, this role referendums itself for innumerable carriers of the Brazilian Ministry of Health, such as: The Humanization Program in Pre-Natal and Birth; the National Program of Obstetric and Neonatal Care; National Pact for the Reduction of Maternal/Neonatal Mortality; National Policy of Basic Care; and more recently, the National Policy for Integral Care to Women's Health. This last, legitimized by diverse sectors of society and by the instances of social control of the Brazilian Federal Health Care Program (*Sistema Único de Saúde*), reflects the commitment to the implementation of health care actions and services that contribute to guarantee the human rights of women and reduce the mortality rates of preventable and avoidable causes. Beyond this, it incorporates with a gender focus the integrity and humanization of health care, such as guiding principles, as well as consolidates the field advances in the areas of sexual and reproductive rights.

We reinforce that in the latest decades, we have accompanied a noticeable contribution from Nursing to the area of women's health, whether in the arena of care, research, teaching, and administration of health care services involved. The different foci within this theme transcend the questions of maternal health and reproductive health, reflecting as much the effort of conceptual development, as the concern for the education of nurses and the implementation of care practices that value the woman in her singularity and integrity.

This issue of Text & Context Nursing Journal toasts its readers, especially those interested in the area of women's health, with 20 original articles – research studies. From

the theoretical approaches and diverse methodologies, the studies seek to evaluate, comprehend, and interpret situations of health/sickness, as well as the diverse aspects which permeate the phases of the woman's life, among which are sexuality; contraceptive practices; gestation; the work of delivery and delivery; the pregnancy; maternal breast-feeding; menstruation and menopause; violence; maternal morbidity; breast cancer; the perspective of being a woman with HIV / AIDS; chronic diseases; the various representative angles of the exercise of the social roles; how to be a woman, mother, care-giver, and nurse; beyond presenting new discussions about the professional exercise of obstetrics nurses.

We hope that this edition, carefully elaborated, may provide a representative slice of the scientific production in nursing in this area, and excite new provocation and challenges.

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