

Experience of Strategic Support in Telessaúde Bahia



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Abstract

Objective: This article aims to report the experience of the Strategic Project Support Team of Telessaúde Bahia, an initiative aimed at qualifying Primary Health Care through teleconsulting, teleducation, teliagnosis, and improving the qualification of records in e-SUS/APS. **Methods:** This experience report is based on the monitoring and evaluation of the actions taken by the Strategic Support Team in supporting professionals and managers of Primary Health Care across the municipalities of Bahia from 2018 to 2023, while using Telessaúde Bahia's offerings. Data indicators were analyzed using Power BI, a tool developed by the technical team for monitoring and evaluation, Telessaúde Bahia. **Results:** The telemonitoring of activities revealed significant progress in the integration of Telehealth into the daily routine of healthcare teams, influenced by the promotion of Telehealth as a tool for Continuing Education in Health and diagnostic and care support. **Discussion:** The growing use of Telessaúde Bahia services shows a shift in the practices of healthcare teams, who now increasingly rely on telehealth resources to strengthen decision-making, professional development, and patient care. **Conclusion:** The efforts of the support team at Telessaúde Bahia have been crucial for the success of the service, demonstrating that continuous and qualified technical support is vital for establishing telehealth as a foundational tool in Primary Health Care.

Key-words: telehealth service; telemonitoring; primary health care; strategic supporter.

Resumen

Experiencia del Apoyo Estratégico en Telessaúde Bahia
Objetivo: El objetivo de este artículo es relatar la experiencia de actuación del equipo de Apoyo de Proyectos Estratégicos de Telessaúde Bahia, una iniciativa para la cualificación de la Atención Primaria a la Salud por medio de teleconsultoría, teleducación, teliagnóstico y auxilio en la calificación de los registros en el e-SUS/APS. **Métodos:** Se trata de un relato de experiencia, fundamentado en el monitoreo y evaluación de las acciones del Equipo de Apoyo Estratégico a los profesionales y gestores de la Atención Primaria a la Salud de los municipios en Bahia, en el período de 2018 a 2023, usando las ofertas de Telessaúde Bahia. Para analizar los datos fueron utilizados indicadores del Power BI, una herramienta desarrollada por el equipo técnico de Monitoreo y Evaluación de Telessaúde Bahia. **Resultados:** El telemonitoreo de las actividades permitió observar un avance en la incorporación de Telesalud a la rutina de trabajo de los equipos, impulsada por el fomento de su uso como herramienta de Educación Continua en Salud y de apoyo diagnóstico y asistencial, así como por el crecimiento y utilización de los servicios. **Discusión:** El incremento en el uso de los servicios de Telessaúde Bahia ha reflejado un cambio significativo en las prácticas de los equipos de salud, quienes han adoptado la Telesalud como parte integral de sus procesos de decisión, formación profesional y atención al paciente. **Conclusión:** Se concluye que la actuación del equipo de soporte en Telessaúde Bahia ha sido decisiva para el éxito del servicio, demostrando que el soporte técnico continuo y calificado es significativo para la consolidación de la telesalud como herramienta estructurante de la Atención Primaria de la Salud.

Palabras clave: servicio de telesalud; telemonitoreo; Atención primaria a la Salud; soporte estratégico

Experiência do Apoio Estratégico no Telessaúde Bahia

Objetivo: Este artigo tem como objetivo relatar a experiência de atuação da equipe de Apoiador de Projetos Estratégicos do Telessaúde Bahia, uma iniciativa voltada à qualificação da Atenção Primária à Saúde por meio de teleconsultoria, teleducação, telediagnóstico e auxiliando na qualificação dos registros no e-SUS/APS. **Métodos:** Trata-se de um relato de experiência, fundamentado no monitoramento e avaliação das ações da Equipe de Apoiadoras Estratégicas no suporte aos profissionais e gestores da Atenção Primária à Saúde dos municípios baianos, no período de 2018 a 2023, contemplando a utilização das ofertas do Telessaúde Bahia. Para análise dos dados, foram utilizados indicadores do Power BI, ferramenta desenvolvida pela equipe técnica de Monitoramento e Avaliação do Telessaúde Bahia. **Resultados:** O telemonitoramento das atividades permitiu observar um avanço na incorporação do Telessaúde à rotina de trabalho das equipes, impulsionado pelo estímulo ao seu uso como ferramenta de Educação Permanente em Saúde e suporte diagnóstico e assistencial, assim como o crescimento e utilização dos serviços. **Discussão:** Os resultados demonstram que, com o uso crescente das ofertas de Telessaúde Bahia, houve uma mudança significativa nas práticas dos profissionais e gestores de saúde. A utilização das ferramentas de teleconsultoria, teleducação e telediagnóstico tem ampliado as possibilidades de formação e apoio diagnóstico, impactando diretamente a melhoria na qualidade da Atenção Primária à Saúde. **Conclusão:** Conclui-se que a atuação da equipe de apoiador no Telessaúde Bahia tem sido decisiva para o sucesso do serviço, demonstrando que o suporte técnico contínuo e qualificado é significativo para a consolidação da telessaúde como ferramenta estruturante da Atenção Primária à Saúde.

Palavras-chave: serviço de telessaúde; telemonitoramento; Atenção primária à Saúde; apoiador estratégico.

INTRODUCTION

Telessaúde Brasil Redes is a program established by Ordinance GM/MS number. 2,546 of 2011¹, aimed at strengthening Primary Health Care (PHC) through telehealth services across the country. In Bahia, the program is implemented by the Technical Scientific Center (NTC-*Núcleo Técnico Científico*) of Telehealth, which is affiliated with the Primary Care Directorate of the State Health Department (DAB-*Diretoria de Atenção Básica*).

Since 2013, Telessaúde Bahia has been providing clinical, diagnostic, and educational support to PHC professionals through teleconsulting, teleducation, and telediagnosis, using information and distance communication technologies². These services are essential for providing care, optimizing workflows, and promoting the ongoing education of health teams.

The main challenges encountered by PHC professionals include difficulties in qualifying records within electronic health systems, gaps in professional training, challenges in accessing specialists in a timely manner, obstacles in using digital tools, and low adherence to continuing education initiatives. To respond to these demands, the NTC relies on the Strategic Support Team (EAE-*Equipe de Apoiadoras Estratégicas*) with nine health professionals who act as technical references for the 417 municipalities in Bahia.

The EAEs play a fundamental role in guiding, training, and assisting PHC managers and professionals in the implementation and use of Telessaúde Bahia and e-SUS/PEC (Strategy for the computerization of the Unified Health System/electronic citizen record-*Estratégia de informatização do Sistema Único de Saúde/prontuário eletrônico cidadão*) services. The team's workflow includes continuous training to develop skills in the use of NTC resources; telemonitoring and monitoring of reports from the Health Information System for Primary Care (SISAB-*Informação em Saúde para Atenção Básica*) to improve data quality. They also provide support to

enhance records in e-SUS/PEC, assisting municipalities in integrating the CadSUS (user registration system of the unified health system) and e-SUS databases. Additionally, the team participates in technical meetings with managers to address challenges and propose solutions aimed at improving work processes within PHC, as well as producing educational and strategic materials to support the ongoing education of teams³.

In 2023, primary healthcare (PHC) professionals faced several challenges, including difficulties in qualifying records, underutilization of Telehealth tools, and inconsistencies in e-SUS/PEC data. In response, the team's activities were broadened. New strategies for telemonitoring and technical support were introduced, with an emphasis on enhancing record qualification, bolstering the use of Telehealth services, and improving information management. These initiatives involve more systematic monitoring of SISAB reports, identifying municipalities in greatest need of support, and providing targeted training to promote more informed decision-making based on qualified data.

OBJECTIVE

This study aims to describe the actions developed by the Strategic Support Team in telemonitoring and evaluate the use of Telessaúde Bahia and e-SUS/PEC services by PHC professionals and managers in the state's municipalities.

METHODOLOGY

This study is a retrospective experience report based on the monitoring and evaluation of EAE's actions in supporting PHC professionals in the municipalities of Bahia. The analysis covers the period from 2018 to 2023, including the use of Telessaúde Bahia offers and, from 2023 onwards, support for the qualification of records in e-SUS PHC.

The study organization included a systematic and periodic assessment of the activities developed by the team, considering the municipalities' adherence and use of the services. To ensure the credibility of the results, data extracted from Power BI (an analysis tool developed by the technical team for the Monitoring and Evaluation of Telessaúde Bahia) were used. This instrument facilitated detailed monitoring of usage indicators, allowing for the identification of patterns, challenges, and progress in the implementation of telehealth strategies.

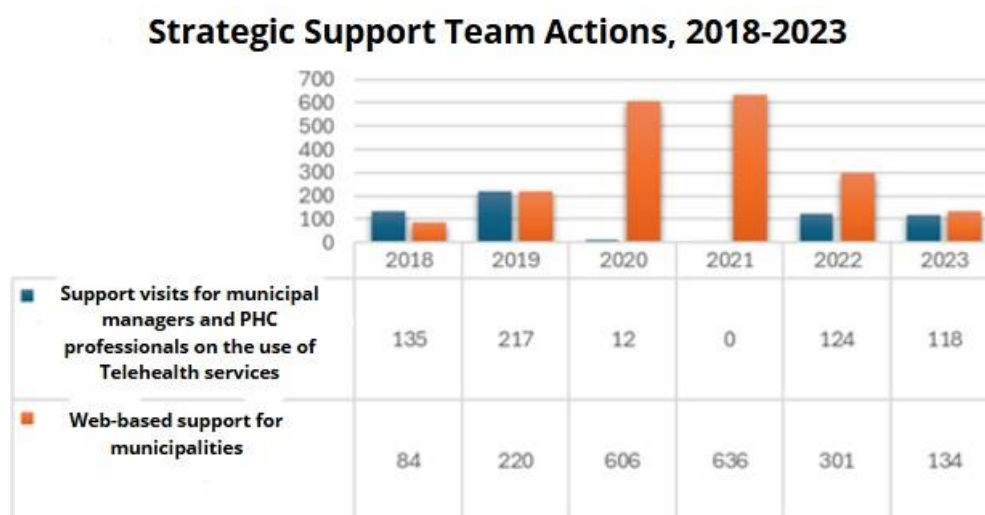
The data were extracted from the Telessaúde BA Platform, initially tabulated in a Microsoft Excel® spreadsheet and, after processing, exported to Microsoft Power BI to perform analyses of the generated data, through graphs, tables, and charts.

RESULTS

The telemonitoring of activities allowed us to observe a significant advance in the incorporation of Telehealth into the teams' work routine, driven by the encouragement of its use as a tool for Continuing Education in Health (EPS-Educação Permanente em Saúde) and diagnostic and care support.

Graph 1 shows a significant growth in the support provided through virtual activities between 2020 and 2021, a period marked by social isolation measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the reduction in in-person actions did not negatively impact the use of Telehealth services, as shown in Graph 2.

Graph 1 - Actions of the strategic support team for APS managers and professionals, from 2018 to 2023.



Graph 2- Telehealth Bahia offers, in the period from 2018 to 2023



The analysis of the historical series (2018-2023) revealed important trends, such as the growth of the teleconsulting service, especially in 2021 and 2023, possibly driven by the implementation of the Telesharing Program; Telediagnosis in Cardiology registered an increase in the issuance of ECG reports, reflecting the expansion of the offer to new municipalities; Synchronous Teleducation, on the other hand, showed a reduction in participation over the years, ending 2022 with lower numbers than previous years.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of the EAPs' work processes revealed that monitoring service utilization indicators facilitates the implementation of collaborative strategies to enhance and promote Telehealth initiatives in municipalities. This involves providing training, technical support, and fostering institutional partnerships. Such support plays a crucial role in effective information management and ensures that services are tailored to meet the needs of Primary Health Care (PHC).

Within the scope of e-SUS/PEC, the team has worked directly with municipal managers to improve the quality of records in SISAB, focusing on correcting invalid records, filling out individual and collective care forms correctly, and registering vaccinations. Data qualification also includes records of care, procedures, immunizations, and collective activities, and is conducted through in-person visits, web training, and collegiate activities. It is worth noting that the instrument for monitoring this information is currently being developed.

To optimize the implementation of actions within the territory, the team carries out a comprehensive mapping of Telehealth indicators and data provided by the DAB/SESAB Assessment and Monitoring Service (COAM). This process helps to prioritize municipalities that require greater support, assess the level of computerization and connectivity of health units, and verify the existence of Telehealth points registered in the National Registry of Health Establishments (CNES-Cadastro Nacional de Estabelecimentos de Saúde). The actions are executed in collaboration with the Support and Development Coordinations (COAD-Coordenações de Apoio e Desenvolvimento) and technicians from the

Regional Health Centers and Bases, strengthening the integration of strategies in the region.

The decrease in participation in synchronous Teleducation activities may be related to several factors, such as priority for healthcare services, which has led to reduced time for Continuing Education. Additionally, the increased availability of EAD courses by other providers during the pandemic may have diluted adherence to Telehealth training. Other contributing issues include a lack of digital literacy among some PHC professionals, and connectivity and technological problems in some Health Units. Given this scenario, the team proposed strategic actions to increase participation in educational activities. These include collaborating with municipal managers to allocate time within the teams' schedules, promoting engagement in web lectures and technical discussions, and fostering integration between Teleducation and Teleconsulting, suggesting that professionals request teleconsulting to deepen the topics covered in the training. Also, the team emphasizes the importance of continuous monitoring of participation and the impact of these activities, enabling strategic adjustments based on the municipalities' demands.

The continuous monitoring and evaluation of Telessaúde Bahia's actions have enabled more strategic and evidence-based planning, strengthening the use of offerings as essential tools for professional qualification and improvement of services in PHC. In addition, the careful data analysis enables the identification of weaknesses and potentialities of municipalities, providing managers with concrete support to improve the implementation of Telehealth and maximize its benefits for professionals and the population served.

CONCLUSION

This experience report on the work processes of the EAEs in Telessaúde Bahia emphasizes the importance of the initiatives implemented to strengthen and expand the use of telehealth services in Bahian municipalities. Through continuous monitoring and careful evaluation of teleconsultations, teleducation activities, and telediagnosis, the team has played a fundamental role in identifying challenges and formulating strategies aimed at professional qualification and continuing education in PHC.

This progress reinforces the impact of awareness-raising and training actions for healthcare professionals, promoting the use of these tools as an essential part of the care routine. Strategic adaptation during the COVID-19 pandemic, with the intensification of virtual activities, ensured the continuity of support and training at a critical time, highlighting the team's flexibility and responsiveness in the face of emerging challenges.

It is concluded that the performance of EAEs in Telessaúde Bahia has been decisive for the success of the service, highlighting that continuous and qualified technical support is essential for establishing telehealth as a structuring tool of PHC. The report reinforces the need for continuous research and strengthening of collaboration among managers, health professionals, and the strategic support team to overcome persistent challenges, such as the lack of knowledge about the services, difficulties in accessing the internet, and the necessity for greater engagement of managers in continuing health education.

Telessaúde Bahia continues to consolidate as an effective support model for public health. It significantly contributes to the professional development of healthcare professionals, the integration of digital health tools, and the expansion of access to specialized services, consequently improving the quality of care provided to the population.

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Ticiania dos Santos Ferreira: concepção, delineamento, discussões contínuas sobre o estudo, contribuições ao texto até a versão final do artigo, aprovação, análise e interpretação dos dados. Revisão geral do conteúdo, formatação e entrega.

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