

Brazil: The profile of COVID-19 deaths among Nurses

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Health-care workers (HCWs) on the frontlines have a high risk of acquiring and dying from covid-19. Nursing professionals (NP) represent over half of HCWs in Brazil, a country with high morbidity and mortality from covid-19, above all in 2021. The absenteeism and death of nursing professionals due to covid-19 have a major impact on the workforce. As part of the research by Fiocruz on working conditions among HCWs, including those considered “invisible,” we have conducted this study of death among graduated nurses. Although they represent 4 out of 5 members of nursing teams in Brazil, the technicians and assistant nurses remains largely unseen and are covered by the “invisible” HCW study. We analyzed data from Federal Council of Nurses, publicized at the website Observatorio da Enfermagem. The sociodemographic profile, professional category and timeline of nursing professional deaths were considered. The time period of the study was from March 2020 to March 2021. A total of 670 professionals of the nursing team died, 200 of these were nurses. Among nurses: 59.5% were female and 81.5% were up to 60 years old. Our study registers a concentration of deaths in the North region. Despite having fewer registered professionals, it had the highest number of deaths (29.5%), and the Southeast had the second highest percentage (26.5%). A slow decline was observed until December, when Brazil experienced a “second wave” of Covid-19. Vaccination of Nurses began in late January 2021; therefore, there was not enough time to assess the impact on morbidity and mortality. The results of a study of almost 50 professional categories are under analysis and will be published shortly.

Key messages:

- This study is about death by COVID-19 among nurses in Brazil.
- This study is part of a large one on professional categories, essentials to supporting health care system, conducted by FIOCRUZ.