

Susilene Maria Tonelli Nardi

LEPROSY: THE CHILD THAT DOES NOT CRY (In the times of Zika, Dengue fever, Chikungunya, A-H1N1 influenza and AIDS)

Living in a large family clearly illustrates the personality of each member. Thus, there are quieter children, those who are more insatiable, others who, in the tranquility of their feelings, survive and those who cry and complain at every small physical, mental or emotional dissatisfaction.

Public health has been behaving as one big family over the years. Diseases that terrorize the population and the public establishment can be compared to the child that laments and cries at anything; the responsible authorities are willing to donate and give it what it pleases, take measures and use all possible strategies to calm its hankering, to mitigate the devastation that it may cause.

Public health has always had times of great urgency, particularly in Brazil where policies focus more on curative measures than prevention. With the lack of prevention and planning, emergencies appear more frequently and 'non-urgent' diseases are labeled 'neglected'. One case in particular is leprosy, which is rarely fatal and so suffers the same fate as all the 'children that do not cry'; it is temporarily or even permanently forgotten. Thus, if there is need to save money, non-urgent conditions will be the first to suffer the lack of funds. If there is need of reallocation of staff, employees who are dedicated to these diseases are recruited to the emergency room. If there is need for materials, they will be taken from non-urgent settings, and if there is need for further research and innovation, financial incentives are awarded for diseases regarded as urgent in public health.

In this gap, leprosy, along with other "children that do not cry", remain at the mercy of professionals passionate for the cause who do everything they can to remain faithful to the field they chose for their life's

Nardi SMT. Hanseníase: Leprosy: the child that does not cry (in the times of Zika, Dengue fever, Chikungunya, A-H1N1 influenza and AIDS). *Hansen Int.* 2014; 39 (2): p. 2.

work. It is in this gap that's in which parents prioritize one child over another, and it is in this gap that the bankruptcy and the scrapping of the public health is seen, with services not accessible to all and thus without universal equality, strongly impacting on the lives of the population and the users of the health system.

This incongruity is obvious while publishing a journal specifically for leprosy and other infectious diseases, but it is impossible to become discouraged when fighting against a disease that even though 'non-urgent' in the eyes of some professionals and politicians, maims people, devastates lives and deserves to be treated with the same love, devotion and affection as the 'other children'. It is in the differences that we find the strength to overcome difficulties.

Susilene Maria Tonelli Nardi
Editora Hansenologia Internationalis: hanseníase e
outras doenças infecciosas