

# The improvement of the health professional in the Aeronautics Command: a requirement

*La mejora del profesional de la salud en el Comando Aeronáutico: un requisito*

*O aprimoramento do profissional de saúde no Comando da Aeronáutica: uma exigência*

Maria Raquel Marques Furtado de Mendonça Louzeiro<sup>I</sup>

Mônica Dal Pian Nobre<sup>II</sup>

## ABSTRACT

The organization of educational processes for health professionals stems from the concern to adapt these individuals to their activities, avoiding technical misfit in relation to the resources of the environment and the lack of motivation of these professionals in their work environment. Thus, the implementation of a Permanent Education Program (PEP) in the Aeronautical Command (COMAER) for the members of the career staff of Doctors, Dentists and Pharmacists is essential, with the purpose of assisting in the integral formation of the individual. The present work is a case study based on a non-systematized review of the literature based on Descriptors in Health Sciences (DeCS) in Portuguese (continuing education, motivation, health professionals and improvement) and publications of COMAER and the Ministry of Defense. For the implementation of PEP, the first steps are to identify the main obstacles for the improvement of health professionals both in the technical-professional area (lack of a more active policy focused on the training and development of human resources, difficulties in obtaining financial resources and lack of scientific information systems), as well as in the technical-administrative area (absence of a teaching program/administrative training in Health Organizations); and develop strategies to work them out. Next, it is imperative to recognize that educational processes aimed at the improvement of these individuals are

a powerful weapon that expand their motivational strength, generating a work of greater interest, deeper and scientific, that reaches all hierarchical levels. Consequently, health professionals will feel that their permanence in the Aeronautics Health System will promote their development within Medicine, Dentistry or Pharmacology. This will lead to a global enhancement of the organization, with improved quality of service provided, greater user satisfaction and better military performance.

**Keywords:** Permanent education. Motivation. Health professionals. Improvement.

## RESUMEN

*La organización de los procesos educativos para los profesionales de la salud surge de la preocupación por adaptar a estas personas a sus actividades, evitando el desajuste técnico en relación con los recursos del entorno y la falta de motivación de estos profesionales en su entorno laboral. Así, la aplicación de un Programa de Educación Permanente (PEP) en el Comando de Aeronáutica (COMAER) para los miembros de los cuadros de carrera de Médicos, de Dentistas y de Farmacéuticos es esencial, con el fin de ayudar a la formación integral del individuo. El presente trabajo es un estudio de caso basado en una revisión no sistemática de la literatura de Descriptores en Ciencias de la Salud (DECS)*

I. Brasília Air Force Hospital – (HFAB) – Brasília/DF – Brazil. Doctor's Degree(2017) in Tocogynecology (Health Sciences) in the area of Pathophysiology Gynecological at the State University of Campinas (UNICAMP). *E-mail:* mariaraquelmfml@gmail.com

II. School of Improvement of Aeronautical Officers – (EAOAR) – Rio de Janeiro/RJ – Brazil. Master's degree in Oral Biopathology from the State of São Paulo Júlio de Mesquita Filho University. *E-mail:* modalpian@gmail.com

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*en portugués (educación continua, motivación, profesionales de la salud y perfeccionamiento) y publicaciones del COMAER y del Ministerio de Defensa. Para la aplicación del PEP, los primeros pasos son identificar los principales obstáculos para el mejoramiento de los profesionales de la salud tanto en el área técnico-profesional (falta de una política más activa centrada en la capacitación y en el desarrollo de los recursos humanos, en las dificultades para obtener recursos financieros y en la falta de sistemas de información científica), como en el área técnico-administrativa (ausencia de un programa de capacitación docente/administrativa en las Organizaciones de Salud) y desarrollar estrategias para remediarlos. A continuación, es imperativa la necesidad de reconocer que los procesos educativos destinados a mejorar estos individuos son un arma poderosa que amplifica su fuerza motivadora, generando un trabajo de mayor interés, más profundo y científico, que alcanza todos los niveles jerárquicos. En consecuencia, los profesionales de la salud sentirán que sus permanencias en el Sistema de Salud Aeronáutico promoverán sus desarrollos dentro de la Medicina, de la Odontología o de la Farmacología. Esto conducirá a un engrandecimiento mundial de la organización, con una mejora de la calidad del servicio prestado, una mayor satisfacción de los usuarios y un mejor rendimiento de los militares.*

**Palabras clave:** Educación continua. Motivación. Profesionales de la salud. Perfeccionamiento.

## RESUMO

*A organização de processos educativos para os profissionais de saúde advém da preocupação em adequar tais indivíduos às suas atividades, evitando o desajustamento técnico em relação aos recursos do meio e a falta de motivação desses profissionais em seu ambiente de trabalho. Dessa forma, a implantação de um Programa de Educação Permanente (PEP) no Comando da Aeronáutica (COMAER) para os integrantes dos quadros de carreira de Médicos, Dentistas e Farmacêuticos é imprescindível, com o propósito de auxiliar na formação integral do indivíduo. O presente trabalho é um estudo de caso baseado em uma revisão não-sistematizada da literatura a partir de Descritores em Ciências da Saúde (DeCS) em língua portuguesa (educação permanente, motivação, profissionais de saúde e aprimoramento) e de publicações do COMAER e do Ministério da Defesa. Para a implantação do PEP, os primeiros passos são identificar os principais óbices para o*

*aprimoramento dos profissionais de saúde tanto na área técnico-profissional (carência de uma política mais atuante voltada para o treinamento e desenvolvimento de recursos humanos, dificuldades na obtenção de recursos financeiros e falta de sistemas de informação científica), quanto na área técnico-administrativa (ausência de um programa de ensino/treinamento administrativo nas Organizações de Saúde); e desenvolver estratégias para saná-los. Em seguida, é imperativa a necessidade de reconhecer que processos educacionais voltados para o aprimoramento desses.*

**Palavras-chave:** Educação permanente. Motivação. Profissionais de saúde. Aprimoramento.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Learning is a revolutionary act. Through education, and collectively, the human being takes conscientiousness of his historical condition, takes control of his trajectory and knows his ability to transform the world. For Paulo Freire (2013), a renowned Brazilian educator, reading the word provides critical reading of the world and allows the understanding of its reality, enabling people to be protagonists of their own history, capable of transforming reality: “No one fights against forces that they do not understand; nobody transforms what he does not know [...]” (FREIRE, 2013, p. 86).

In a world full of interconnected networks, in which information is transmitted quickly, it becomes imperative for the human being to keep up to date, improving his knowledge and developing skills for his growth, both in the personal sphere, improving his skills and techniques, as well as in the professional sphere, having a broad understanding of the social environment in which he works.

In this context, as relevant as the incessant search for knowledge is the need for an organization to perceive the level of motivation of its professionals. It is essential to create a favorable working environment that contributes to increased productivity and generates a better quality of life for its employees within the institution, transforming them from mere service providers to directors and innovators of their goals.

In the area of health, the panorama is no different. The lack of systematized educational policies, including in the context of the Aeronautics Command (COMAER), creates numerous obstacles for the improvement of the professionals of this area. Thus, it is essential, currently, that in any health

institution there is a permanent education project for its employees, aiming at their improvement and bringing these professionals closer to the reality and collective needs.

Due to the lack of such a project in the Aeronautics Health Organizations (OSA), the implementation of a Permanent Education Program (PEP) for the members of the career staff of Doctors, Dentists and Pharmacists is essential, with the purpose of assisting in the integral formation of the individual.

This paper is a case study focused on the Health area of COMAER, based on a non-systematized literature review based from the Descriptors in Health Sciences (DeCS) in Portuguese (continuing education, motivation, health professionals and improvement) and publications of COMAER and the Ministry of Defense.

## 2 EDUCATIONAL PROCESSES AND HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

The organization of educational processes for health professionals has been evolving in recent decades, and comes from the concern to adapt these individuals to their activities, avoiding technical misfit in relation to the resources of the environment and the lack of motivation of these professionals in their work environment. As a result of this evolution, several concepts with different conceptions emerged: in-service education, continuing education and permanent education (FARAH, 2003).

The first concept to be operationalized, in the 1960s and 1970s, was in-service education, and was still widely used to train health professionals. In this type of education, the main purpose is the interests of the institution, to the detriment of the interests of professionals, and training is more used, because there is a greater focus on techniques (skills) than on the acquisition of theoretical knowledge (SILVA et al, 1989).

In turn, continuing education peaked in the 1980s as one of the strategies to train health personnel already in the service. According to the Pan American Health Organization (OPAS), mentioned by Rodrigues (1984), continuing education is a process initiated after basic formation, with the purpose of updating and developing the capacity of an individual or group, in view of the social needs and technical-scientific evolutions. In this approach,

the benefit is destined to the individual who participates in the educational process, depending on his own needs and of the of institution in which he works. (RODRIGUES, 1984, p. 130).

On the other hand, continuing education emerged, in a more concrete way, in the developed countries of Western Europe, in the 1990s, being a proposal to reach acting health professionals, who were active, creative and transforming. For Haddad, this concept:

seeks alternatives and solutions to the real and concrete problems of the usual work, favoring the work process as the central axis of learning and emphasizing the human capacity to create new knowledge, from the joint and participatory discussion and analysis of real problems, their causes and the implications that solution alternatives have in the search for the transformation of health practice, an essential objective of the educational act. In this sense, permanent education aims to improve the quality of human life in all personal and social dimensions, assisting in the integral formation of the individual and in the transformation of the environment to a future society. (HADDAD, 1990, p. 136).

Therefore, education is a permanent process and should be understood as a factor in the mechanisms of reflection and transformation of the practices in force in health organizations, with the purpose that the professionals can face reality, complementing and/or acquiring new knowledge. According to Farah (2003, p. 5), "every educational process does not have an end in itself. It is an unfinished process, and it is necessary to constantly feed it, due to the dynamics of the health sector".

### 2.1 Main obstacles for the improvement of health professionals

On the theme of health education, the literature review within the COMAER showed only two publications, still in the 1990s. Although this is a limitation of the study, it covered the entire universe found.

In the technical-professional area, Mendonça's (1993) work considers as a first obstacle the lack of a policy focused on training and development of human resources in the health area at COMAER. This, which is a factor of fundamental relevance for achieving the objectives of any organization, has not been receiving the the needed attention. After recruited and selected, the professionals in the health area no longer receive motivating stimuli over the years to improve performance, unless in very special situations. There would not be a program that would reach all levels broadly, unrestrictedly, and permanently. Without it, this professional would be dependent on fortuitous situations, without proper planning, depending on the free initiative and authorization of superiors so that he could participate in some training proposed by him, or, rarely, by COMAER. Therefore, it would always be the

discretion of the interpretation of the Head, Director, or Commander of the Unit the authorization for any type of professional improvement activity. Some interpret that this training would be in the individual interest of the officer and not of the Air Force, completely inverting the values, failing to see it as a development in its area of activity, and denigrating it, considering it as of allegedly shady interest.

However, it is from the professional development of the doctor, dentist or military pharmacist that comes the development of the Air Force Health Service. (MENDONÇA, 1993, p. 20).

The second difficulty, still according to Mendonça, would be to obtain financial resources, because the registration of the officer for participation in any scientific event, his displacement and stay add up to large amounts that few can spend. Thus, this health military often does not participate in updating events for professional training/development with the frequency with which it should do (MENDONÇA, 1993).

Em terceiro lugar, a ausência de bibliotecas médicas adequadas nas OSA, com livros-texto e periódicos atualizados, bem como a falta de um sistema informatizado que fornecesse acesso a outros sistemas de informação científica, como base de dados no Brasil e no exterior, dificultariam o aprimoramento do profissional de saúde, constituindo óbices em seu ambiente de trabalho (MENDONÇA, 1993).

Third, the absence of adequate medical libraries in the OSA, with updated textbooks and journals, as well as the lack of a computerized system that would provide access to other scientific information systems, such as a database in Brazil and abroad, would hinder the improvement of the health professional, constituting obstacles in their work environment (MENDONÇA, 1993).

In the technical-administrative sphere, Ramos points out the lack of application of a teaching program and administrative training in the OSAs as the main obstacle, which could lead to ignorance and unpreparedness in the field of administration and a great lack of interest in the subject, on the part of the health professionals. So far, there would be no guidelines for the mastery of the administrative area by the subordinate and intermediary active officers, because the CAP<sup>1</sup> and CCEM<sup>2</sup> courses occur later in their careers, so that often these military have had to assume positions and active administrative functions

with total inability. From this, according to the author, the only mechanism that would still stimulate the health professional to perform well in such functions, often without the necessary knowledge, would be the satisfaction of the fulfilled duty (RAMOS, 1999).

Faced with so many difficulties, the motivation of the military would decline, as well as his productivity. Then there is a lack of interest in learning, for the continued study, which generates a pernicious process of accommodation with the fruition of high degrees of self-sufficiency. Over the years, the professional may come to believe that his improvement was almost nil, and may fail to yield in efficiency, effectiveness and efficacy to the population assisted by the health system. As a result of this process, the health professional would begin to limit himself to an administrative activity, less compromising, but without so much beneficial influence on the assistance to users.

## 2.2 The influence of educational processes in professional motivation

Currently the professionals of an organization are no longer seen as machines or means of production, but as individuals with skills, capabilities and knowledge indispensable to manage their own tasks (CHIAVENATO, 2014).

According to Tejada (2013), motivation can be clarified through two definitions: “motive+action”, being the motive, what people seek to achieve, through a goal; now, action is the attitude to achieve this goal. Vergara also reports that:

as we are different from each other, so are our motivations. Someone may feel predominantly motivated by economic and financial factors and all their possibilities in terms of acquiring goods and services. If work gives you benefits of this order, it is possible that he/she finds meaning in it. Another person may feel predominantly motivated by the desire to be healthy, to be loved, to feel competent, to be recognized, to participate in decisions, to perform intrinsically challenging and instigating tasks [...]. (VERGARA, 2000, p. 66).

In fact, motivation is something very complex within each human being, because one can only judge it from the observation of an individual's behavior, depending on their priorities, personality traits and distinct motivational stimuli. Motivation seeks to explain the “inner strength or impulse that initiates, maintains, and directs a person's conduct in order to achieve a specific objective, desire or goal” (GIL, 2017, p. 124).

<sup>1</sup> Course of Improvement of Aeronautics Officers.

<sup>2</sup> Command and General Staff Course of the Aeronautics.



The motivational strength is another concept defined by multiplying three factors: expectations, instrumentalities and valences. To achieve a high degree of motivation, the institution needs to guarantee its professionals a good technical improvement / training to increase the self-confidence (expectation), future bonuses (instrumentality) and rewards (valences) (DUBRIN, 1998). This is how employees wish to be recognized by the companies in which they perform one hundred of their functions: by the knowledge and abilities they possess.

According to the Doctrine of Military Logistics of the Ministry of Defense (2016b), one of the activities that transforms the human resources in the health area into personnel ready for service is the preparation, carried out through forming and training of personnel. During the training are developed the technical-professional, moral, and ethical profiles appropriate to the desired job. On the other hand, the training stage develops, in the element already formed, skills aimed at the exercise of specific activities (BRASIL, 2016b). After recruited, one of the responsibilities of the Health Logistics Function is the Medical Selection,

activity consisting of the evaluation of human resources initially assigned to a Force, in order to fit them into pre-established standards for certain operations. (BRASIL, 2016b, p. 24).

Thus, it is clear that, although there is a thought directed at the incoming health within the Ministry of Defense, the educational process used to train such professionals remains that of in-service education, whose main finality is the interests of the institution, to the detriment of the interests of the professionals.

Under COMAER, human resource management is a very current concern. According to the document "Concepção Estratégica Força Aérea 100":

[...] learning of other languages, constant post-academic improvement, curricular interaction at the highest career levels of the Armed Forces, and updating through exchanges become fundamental requirements. [...] it is necessary to consider a periodic update of the professional in all areas. Increasingly, it will be necessary to identify the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to perform tasks [...]. The organization must be prepared for the Air Force's military and civilians to acquire and maintain the necessary skills for this new reality. (BRASIL, 2016c, p. 32).

In the context of the Aeronautics Health System (SISAU), the Command Guideline N°. 01/2016 of the Health Directory (DIRSA), it states that it is responsible for:

planning, coordinating, supervising, and controlling technical courses of specialization or improvement of Health personnel, aiming at improving professional qualification in SISAU. (BRASIL, 2016a, p. 3).

However, even though COMAER and DIRSA present convergent visions, one can verify that the improvement of health professionals in military organizations is, still, a challenge to be overcome.

### 3 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The implementation of a PEP for the members of the career staff of Doctors, Dentists and Pharmacists in the Brazilian Air Force is essential, with the purpose of assisting in the integral formation of the individual.

With this objective, the first step is to identify the main obstacles for the improvement of health professionals both in the technical-professional area, as well as in the technical-administrative area, and develop strategies to support them. In relation to the studies researched, several factors were observed. In the professional field, the lack of a policy focused on the training and development of human resources, the difficulties in obtaining financial resources and the lack of computerized systems with access to scientific databases were the main factors pointed out as barriers to be transposed. Now, in the administrative field, the absence of a teaching and training program in the administration area in the OSA would be the primary factor to be overcome.

Secondly, it is imperative to recognize that educational processes aimed at the improvement of these individuals are a powerful weapon to expand their motivational strength or inner impulse, which would contribute to increased productivity, transforming them into their goal makers.

Such measures will raise the technical level of the FAB Health Service and motivate its staff to perform work of greater interest, deeper and more scientific, reaching all hierarchical levels. Health professionals will feel that their stay in SISAU will promote their development and growth within Medicine, Dentistry or Pharmacology, in order to build a new culture between them, ensuring a more solid and lasting career plan in their OSA. This will lead to a global enhancement of the organization with improved quality of service provided, greater satisfaction and better military performance.

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