

## BRAZILIAN NURSING IN THE AGE OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE

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**W**e are going through great changes in information valuation and technology use. The so-called Age of Information or Knowledge Society is characterized by the virtualization of human beings: by the vectors of flexibility, deterritorialization and speed of the information process<sup>(1)</sup>.

The Internet is responsible for transmitting virtual information of mixed – commercial and academic – usage and is experiencing an exponential growth in the number of networks and users, now exceeding 200 million<sup>(2)</sup>.

With respect to scientific research, the Internet has represented an essential environment, not only for information dissemination, but also for institutional cooperation. It allows researchers to think globally and create valuable products for the community in a more efficient and rapid way. On the one hand, scientific knowledge is disseminated at an accelerated speed and, on the other, dominant paradigms are strengthened<sup>(3)</sup>.

Internet is a vital tool for collaboration in the research community. In combination with its international range, advances in network speed and size also provide greater opportunities for discoveries that join nations and scientific areas. Using advanced visualization technologies and collaborative environments, scientific colleagues can control and interact with one and the same experience from countless locations<sup>(4)</sup>.

In this context of using the Internet to disseminate health information, the Scientific Electronic Library Online – SCIELO stands out. It is the result of a partnership between the State of São Paulo Research Foundation - FAPESP<sup>(5)</sup>. The project was elaborated to increase the national and international visibility and accessibility of Brazilian scientific journals and was later extended to Chile, Cuba, Spain and Venezuela. Nowadays, initiatives are being developed in Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Peru, Portugal and Uruguay.

The positive impact of this project in the scientific community admits the need to minimize inequalities, including the publication of scientific research results primarily in English, independently of the country where the research was carried out. SCIELO allows for the dissemination of scientific knowledge in English, Portuguese and Spanish and offers various resources, particularly bibliometrics, which produces the publications' impact factor. This information is highly valued by research assessment and funding bodies<sup>(5)</sup>.

Only five journals are currently representing the Nursing area in the SCIELO Collection (Revista Latinoamericana de Enfermagem, Revista Cubana de Enfermería, Ciencia y Enfermería, Revista Index de Enfermería e Revista de la Sociedad Española de Enfermería Nefrológica). This figure is considered incipient in view of the considerable quantity of qualified nursing journals published in Portuguese and Spanish and the amount of scientific studies produced by graduate programs and professionals active in teaching and care<sup>(6)</sup>.

The leaderships responsible for the publication of these journals in Latin America are making every possible effort to have most of them share the same quality standards, increase their representativeness in the SciELO Collection and contribute to the development of research in health.

The dimensions of the demand for scientific publication in Latin-American Nursing is illustrated by the Open Directory of Latin-American Journals in Nursing, published by the Program for Technical Cooperation in Nursing of the Pan American Health Organization – Strategic Health Development Area – Human Resources Development Unit<sup>(7)</sup>.

This joint effort is guided by the permanent search for excellence, by high quality standards and by new scientific communication demands in the age of knowledge<sup>(8)</sup>.

In this context, the SCIELO methodology also structures the Virtual Health Library – VHL, produced by BIREME/OPAS/OMS. This is a strategic product for the cooperative development of an electronic information network on the Internet, offering universal access to health information.

As a library, the VHL is a decentralized and dynamic collection of information sources, aimed at providing equitable access to scientific knowledge in health. This collection operates as a network of products and services on the Internet, so as to progressively attend to health information needs by authorities, managers, researchers, faculty, students, professionals, the media and the public in general. What distinguishes it from the set of information sources available on the Internet is its compliance with selection and quality control criteria<sup>(9)</sup>.

During the 4th Regional VHL Coordination Meeting, held in Salvador-BA-Brazil last September, Brazilian Nursing officially presented the Nursing VHL project to Dr. Abel Packer, Director of BIREME/OPAS/OMS. This project is led by Dr. Francisco Carlos Felix Lana, coordinator of the Nursing Database – BDEFN, and was elaborated jointly by representatives from BIREME/OPAS/OMS, different Brazilian universities, Nursing journal editors, the Brazilian Nursing Association and libraries.

The Nursing VHL project will insert Nursing into the Age of Information in a pioneering way in Latin America.

Among the subprojects that make up Nursing VHL, we highlight "Full Text", aimed at making available full articles published in the 17 Brazilian nursing journals indexed in the LILACS database, with a view to these journals' visibility, accessibility and relation with other databases and sites that will certainly be of help in new indexations, thus contributing to an equitable access to the knowledge produced by Brazilian Nursing.

The Nursing VHL project will be launched during the 57<sup>th</sup> Brazilian Nursing Congress, to be held on November 3-7 in Goiânia-GO. The development of this project can be accessed on the VHL site through this URL: <http://enfermagem.bvs.br>. However, the actual development of the project will depend on funding. Applications are being submitted to the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Science and Technology.

As one of its missions, the WHO Collaborating Centre for Nursing Research Development - EERP/USP aims to contribute to the integration of nurses in Latin America through scientific dissemination<sup>(10)</sup>, which is why it is permanently involved in movements and action strategies that allow for convergence towards the approximation of professionals in the region, with a view to the synchronicity of relevant measures needed for health care delivery.

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