OCTOBER 2025 VOL. 3

# KNOWLEDGE AND ACTION

## ConeCta-SP Project Newsletter

## Get to know ConeCta-SP

This is the third newsletter of the ConeCta-SP project - "Cancer Control in the State of São Paulo: from knowledge to action," created to transform scientific knowledge into practical and effective public health actions across São Paulo State. Headquartered at the Oncocentro Foundation of São Paulo (FOSP) and funded by the São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP) and the São Paulo State Department of Health (SES-SP), ConeCta-SP works in collaboration with partners institutions across two main axis: 1) Early diagnosis and prevention of cervical and breast cancer and 2) Cancer control based on data from hospital-based cancer registries.

To learn more about these fronts, the project itself, the team behind it, publications, communication channels, and more, we invite you to click here to visit the ConeCta-SP Website.

## What's happening at ConeCta-SP

### The third bulletin is released!

ConeCta-SP has launched its third bulletin, presenting the progress in two key focus areas: (1) Early diagnosis and prevention of cervical and breast cancer, and (2) Data analysis for cancer control. Among the highlights of this edition are: the use of follow-up forms for organized screening strategies, developed through regional workshops and aimed at municipal health coordinators; an overview of the communication campaign for the target audience of the screening programs; the 'Voices from the Field' section, featuring Marlene Damacena, Director of the Regional Health Department (DRS) of Presidente Prudente, who shares reflections on the impact of the workshops; and in the 'ConeCta Interview' section, Dr. Rossana López discusses the main challenges and advances in analyzing the survival outcomes among gastric cancer patients in São Paulo.

Click here to access the full bulletin.

### Regional workshops promoted by ConeCta-SP demonstrate mobilization capacity and positive impact

In our previous newsletter - available in full here - we reported on the regional workshops conducted by ConeCta-SP researchers in collaboration with the technical team from FOSP, involving the DRS of Barretos, Presidente Prudente, Registro, São João da Boa Vista, and part of the Metropolitan area of São Paulo.

Based on the workshops conducted between 2024 and 2025, a qualitative evaluation using metrics such as – feasibility, acceptability, impact on health services, and barriers/facilitators for expansion – indicated that the workshops demonstrated mobilization capacity and a positive impact. The results provide a promising, albeit partial, insight into their effects as a key strategy to support the transition from an opportunistic screening model to an organized structure. The evaluation also revealed that expanding workshop coverage will require stronger coordination across different levels of health system management, as well as overcoming inherent operational challenges.

Click here to access the infographic with detailed evaluation and visual records of the strategy.





## Strategic communication in population-based screening: an unexpected invitation to health

Unlike traditional clinical care, screening programs target individuals without symptoms who are not actively seeking medical attention. Grounded in a proactive approach, these programs challenge the conventional logic of health-care delivery, requiring clear and balanced communication strategies regarding potential risks, benefits, and limitations to promote informed decision-making, autonomy, and trust in health institutions, engaging individuals who may not perceive themselves as at risk.

In this context, ConeCta-SP is implementing actions to expand access to cervical and breast cancer screening and strengthen the credibility of the programs, guide by the principles of effective public health communication. The adopted strategies are integrated, scaled, and contex-sensitive, based on the evidence generated during phase 1 of the project, which included a population-based survey on knowledge, barriers, practices, and attitudes towards screening.



This approach also contributes to strengthening primary care through educational support for health professionals, including informative materials aligned with national screening guidelines, and communication initiatives targeted at the screening programs' intended audience.

These efforts include local interventions – such as posters and banners, brochures distributed by community health agents, digital content, and press releases for local media – enhancing message reach and promoting greater public engagement.

# ConeCta-SP in Action

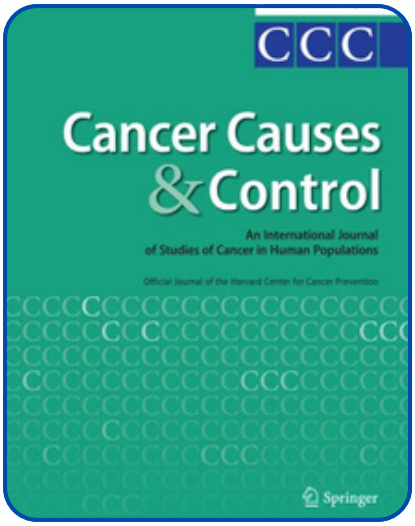
## A new study conducted by ConeCta-SP reveals persistent barriers to cervical cancer screening in São Paulo

Recently published in Cancer Causes & Control, the study "Barriers and attitudes toward cervical cancer screening among eligible women" presents findings from the population-based survey conducted in axis 1 of the project. The research investigated the barriers and attitudes influencing screening adherence among eligible women across the state.

Although 87% of respondents had undergone a Pap smear in the past five years, barriers such as fear of diagnosis, delays in receiving results, long waiting times, and shame continue to significantly affect women with lower income and education levels. On the other hand, among those with a better understanding of the benefits brought by the test, over 95% exhibited positive attitudes, highlighting the central role of health education.

The authors advocate for patient-centered approaches as strategies to strengthen primary care, reduce inequalities, and enhance the effectiveness of screening programs.

Click here to access the full article.




O PROJETO CONECTA-SP É REALIZADO COM O APOIO DA FUNDAÇÃO DE AMPARO À PESQUISA DO ESTADO DE SÃO PAULO (FAPESP), PROCESSO NÚMERO 2021/11794-4, E DA SECRETARIA DE ESTADO DA SAÚDE DE SÃO PAULO. AS OPINIÕES, HIPÓTESES E CONCLUSÕES OU RECOMENDAÇÕES EXPRESSAS NESTE MATERIAL SÃO DE RESPONSABILIDADE DOS AUTORES E NÃO NECESSARIAMENTE REFLETEM A VISÃO DA FAPESP.

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