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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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POPULATION IN STREET SITUATION IN TIMES OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC: PUBLIC HEALTH POLICIES IN A CAPITAL OF THE AMAZON REGION

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ABSTRACT

It is estimated that 221,869 people are unassisted by public authorities and homeless in Brazil. Discriminated, invisible and in increased exposure to risks of accidents and diseases. The emergence of Covid-19 impacted on increased unemployment, forcing entire families to live on the streets, explaining the need for the government to act through emergency policies and measures to ensure protection. This study guides the support provided for the homeless population, in the field of public health, the importance of developing studies aimed at reducing risks, humanized assistance to vulnerable populations and reaffirmation of safe strategies for prevention of Covid-19. Public actions were analyzed to support homeless people during the Covid-19 pandemic in a capital of the Amazon region, presenting measures that can contribute to the strategies already carried out with the homeless population. This is a documentary, exploratory research of qualitative nature, whose data, from city hall sites and local and national newspapers, were processed through Bardin Content Analysis. The analyses confirm that the city acted to minimize the vulnerable of the homeless population.

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INTRODUCTION

Poverty is not exclusive to the modern era, it has existed since ancient times as well as homeless people. In the period classified as premodern, the homeless were considered people with mental

disorders, walkers, travelers or exiles. In Europe, it was the process of industrialization that favored the increase in the number of people living on the streets, making the situation an urban issue, distinct from poverty in the countryside (Resende, Mendonça; 2019). The growth

of poverty in cities can be pointed out as a consequence of the rural exodus, when many peasants came to the cities, expelled from land and common lands by violent methods and, arriving in the cities, were unable to pay the prices of rents and work, taking refuge in the streets and thus being converted into homeless people (HP) (Resende, Mendonça; 2019). According to the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC/UN), it is estimated that, worldwide, approximately 800 million people live on the streets today (Mattos; 2020). In a survey conducted by the Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA) in 2020, with data from the Unified Register for Social Programs (CadÚnico) and census of the Unified Social Assistance System (SUAS), it was estimated that there were in Brazil about 221,869 people living on the streets, with the maintenance of high rates in the Southeast and highlighting the North region, with an increase of 1,327 people homeless in the biennium 2019/2020, totaling 9,626 people by the first quarter of 2020 (Natalino; 2020). In Amapá, there is no official record regarding the number of people in street situations, a fact aggravated by the constant displacement of this population in the various places in the city (De Souza; 2017). The precariousness that surrounds the homeless population reflects the duality generated by the unequal distribution of income evidenced by the marginalization of this population, which influences subsistence conditions (Faria, Siqueira-Batista; 2020), with precarious access to basic living conditions, such as adequate food, access to the health system and lack of conventional housing.

HP also faces other aggravating factors to its situation, such as lack of assistance by public authorities, discrimination, invisibility, lack of job opportunities due to homelessness and increased exposure to risks of accidents and development of diseases, especially those transmissible (Valle, Farah; 2020) such as Covid-19, in vogue in Brazil since 2020, causing a pandemic, with a high mortality rate, especially among people from population groups affected by comorbidities (Honorato, Oliveira; 2020), such as diabetes, hypertension and respiratory diseases (De Souza, 2017). The rapid spread of Coronavirus 2, from Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV-2), which caused Covid-19, from Asia to other continents culminated in the enactment of a pandemic state by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2020. Without the existence of a strategic plan to control the circulation of the "new coronavirus", and due to the similarity of the symptoms of this new disease with the influenza virus, it was proposed to use the Pandemic Influenza Plan based on the rate of transmissibility and clinical severity to anticipate actions according to the projection of the severity of the disease (Freitas, Napimoga, Donalisio; 2020). The WHO (World Health Organization; 2020) also suggested the use of masks, social distancing, hand hygiene and social isolation as essential care to reduce the spread of Covid-19. In Brazil, the United Nations International Emergency Fund (UNICEF) points out that among the greatest difficulties encountered to combat the spread of Covid-19 is the precariousness of the sanitation system, making it impossible to prevent this disease (Stockholm International Water Institute; 2020), to mention hand hygiene, contributing to the increase of morbidity and mortality, especially in regions of large population cluster and high poverty rate, evidencing the HP's scarce access to water itself for consumption and hygiene. The dissemination of Covid-19 has brought, in addition to many uncertainties, an important marker that highlights the need to ensure minimum sources of subsistence for the HP. With scarce access to adequate food, extreme poverty and without reach piped water and drinking water, besides not achieving countless of their rights, it drives the health risks of this population (Valle, Farah, Carneiro; 2020).

Thus, coping with this situation requires efforts by public policies for health and regarding the impact that the pandemic has had on the daily life of the HP. Moreover, the Brazilian Federal Constitution of 1988 (CF/88) guarantees access to the public health system as a primary factor for ensuring the quality of life of the population (Brazil; 1988). In addition to the right to universal access to health, the HP have the right to social protection policy, the National Policy for the Homeless Population (PNHP) (Brazil; 2009). The recognition of the vulnerability of the HP in several areas was paramount for the

institution of the PNPR from decree n. 7053 of 2009, with the articulation of intersectoral efforts to extinguish fragmented assistance to the HP. The intersectorality and interinstitutionality of care by the PNHP would enable integrated work between the three governmental spheres, however, the difficulties encountered to implement the PNPR, given the utopian character of resolution in which policies are thought, stigmatize and make HP care unfeasible (Freitas, Napimoga, Donalisio; 2020). Another aggravating factor is the absence of an official national count of this population (Oliveira, Guizardi; 2020). In small states in the Northern region of Brazil with a large population flow, such as Amapá, few studies are conducted on the HP. However, it is recognized that the invisibility of this population during the pandemic process, especially in the state capital, has exposed the vulnerability to which it is exposed to HP, bringing to light the negligence that has occurred for years by the government (Faria, Siqueira-Batista; 2020). According to information from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), the most populous municipality and state capital, Macapá, does not have a Steering Committee of the Policy for Homeless Population (IBGE; 2021), fundamental to get to know the local HP better. The situation in question makes us reflect on the exposure of these subjects to vulneration processes, because they are inserted in implications that involve social issues of vulnerability, which should have communication with health services. Thus, it is important to understand the synonymy of the terms Vulnerability and Vulneration. Vulnerability is related to the condition of those who may be injured, in contrast to the vulneration to those who are already injured. In the first case consists of the potentiality of being wounded, being shared by all living beings. For the second, it is present in certain living beings, being specific, because only some are affected and vulnerable. In order to reflect on the issues that involve the fragility of the HP, this article proposed to analyze publications on official websites and newspapers, national and local, that address themes on public policies for the homeless population in the municipality of Macapá during the Covid-19 pandemic, in addition to presenting measures that can contribute to the strategies already carried out.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This is an exploratory documentary research of qualitative nature with analysis of first and second hand documents (Gil; 2020). Documentary research is an important instrument for elucidating social and economic issues (Garcia, Medeiros, Augusta; 2017), such as those proposed by this study. Using exploratory techniques of content, the field of knowledge of research restlessness is deeply explored (Oliveira; 2017). The qualitative approach was used aiming at detailing a content in view of its immeasurable nature (Soares; 2019). We included documents published on the official website of the Municipality of Macapá (MCH), Municipal Departments of Social Assistance (SEMAS) and Municipal Department of Social Assistance and Labor (SEMAST), dated March 2020 to June 2021, as well as reports from local and national newspapers published in the same period. For the purposes of this research, reports of audiovisual content and reports shared on social networks of official or unofficial accounts were not considered. The documents were collected and primarily included in two tables: Chart 1 for official documents and Chart 2 for reports, according to the aspects of completeness, representativeness, homogeneity and pertinence. The data were analyzed according to the criteria proposed by Bardin (Bardin; 2010) for content analysis, through three methodological steps: pre-analysis, exploration of the material and treatment and interpretation of the results. In the pre-analysis, official documents were selected, such as laws, decrees, technical notes and the like, and reports that correlate the themes "population in street situation" and "Covid-19", through the reading of the title of the document and superficial reading of its contents, and a brief form was made for better understanding and more fluid exploration of the content. In the exploration of the material, the actions proposed by the official documents, published on the websites of municipal entities, were compared with the recommendations of Ordinance No. 69 of May 2020 of the Ministry

of Citizenship and its Technical Note 13/2020 (NT 13/2020) (Brazil; 2020), which deals with HP assistance during the Covid-19 pandemic. In view of the above, the following guide questions were elaborated: a) for the official documents: "Are municipal actions in accordance with the proposals proposed by the Ministry of Citizenship?" and b) for the reports: "What municipal actions are being implemented and disclosed?". The documents were categorized through the use of the Context Units (CU), or short excerpts of the text. Considering Resolution n. 510 of April 7, 2016, which provides for the rules applicable to research in Human and Social Sciences (Brazil; 2016), this study uses public domain information pursuant to Law n. 12,527 of November 18, 2011, which regulates access to information (Brazil; 2011).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Few studies have been conducted on HP in the state of Amapá. The incipience of data and information about this population became a challenge in the development of the research, which could be carried out from the consultation of several data published on official websites of the Municipality of Macapá (MCH), Municipal Secretariat of Social Assistance (SEMAS) and Municipal Secretariat of Social Assistance and Labor (SEMAST), as well as reports of local and national newspapers published in the same period. Table 1 presents the number of official documents that make up the study, being identified by the letters "d" followed by the numerals from "01" to "04", while Chart 2 lists reports found and selected within the criteria of representativeness, completeness, homogeneity and pertinence of the Content Analysis technique, proposed by Bardin. The collected reports were identified by the letters "r" and numerals from "01" to "17". Faced with the unique situation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, sanitary measures had to be put in place to ensure HP's protection. However, many difficulties are encountered in developing effective public policies that actually achieve the goals of social protection, health assurance and minimum living conditions for those who live on the streets. For example, the lack of an official and updated census (Oliveira, Guizardi; 2020). Seen as a way to facilitate the adoption of measures by states and municipalities, the Ministry of Citizenship, through the Special Secretariat for Social Development and the National Secretariat of Social Assistance, prepared Ordinance n. 69 on May 14, 2020.

In Technical Note (TN) 13/2020, it has recommendations to protect the HP from the severity of the pandemic, especially those who are part of risk groups, such as the elderly, patients with chronic diseases, respiratory diseases, heart disease, pregnant women and puerperal women and infants between six months of age and five years (Brazil; 2020). According to data from the Single Register for Social Programs, consulted for the preparation of NT 13/2020, 80% of the HP sought specialized reference centers for homeless population (POP Center), Specialized Social Assistance Reference Center (CREAS) and Social Assistance Reference Centers (CRAS) in the months prior to March 2020 (Brazil; 2020). The availability of social assistance services during the pandemic by the aforementioned centers in the city of Macapá can be evidenced in the following sections, taken from the reports "r 06" and "r 07":

[...] These people remain [...] being assisted by services at the POP Center, with breakfast and lunch, in addition to individual, social and psychological care [...] The Specialized Reference Center for Homeless People [...] offers specialized services, with individual and collective services, such as workshops and socialization and socialization activities, as well as actions that encourage the role and social participation of homeless people (r 06).

The Specialized Center for Homeless Population in the city of Macapá began to be implemented in September 2020, during the pandemic, aiming at welcoming and psychological care, and providing the structure of cafeteria, bathrooms and accessibility (r 07), proving the importance of these services for HP. Also according

to TN 13/2020, the risks to be controlled for the reduction of transmission of Covid-19 among the HP are: exposure in public spaces and its aggravating factors, precarious access to food, absence of adequate places to perform personal hygiene, among others. There is the impossibility of maintaining the distance, even with the provision of reception by specialized centers, given the collective characteristic of the activities offered, and measures with clear guidelines should be implemented to avoid agglomeration in the reference and reception centers, as we can see in "r 02" (Brazil; 2020).

[...] the city announced that the *Amizade* Specialized Reference Center for Homeless People (POP Center) had educational activities suspended in groups and workshops.

[...] the hygiene of the homeless population in the POP Center building "following the protocols of prevention and combat against coronavirus" (r 02) is allowed.

Among the provisions mentioned by TN 13/2020 is the availability to the HP of hygiene items, cleaning, face protection mask, food, clothing and other basic subsistence items. A SEMAS Work Plan was found on the MCH website, with the following instructions on this provision:

[...] the execution of individual and collective hygiene is a priority responsibility of public management [...] One of the main concerns of this public is, in addition to the virus, feeding [...] In this sense, the Public Defender's Office of the Union-DPU, issued Recommendation n. 01/2020 [...] for the benefit of homeless people, in a sense [...] the use of spaces [...] with the suspended use, and containing hygiene equipment (clothing/bathroom) to accommodate, avoiding agglomerations, and to allow the basic hygiene of people in street situations (d 03).

According to the spreadsheet "d 04", available on the MCH website, on the management of the coronavirus crisis, in April 2020 social assistance allocated R\$ 6,575.80 BRL for the purchase of seventy personal hygiene kits, distributed to HP according to the document "d 01". And in "r 17", it was demonstrated the intention to distribute homemade face masks to HP, through the program "*Costurando Vidas*", in order to reduce the risk of contagion among this population. Another provision highlighted by TN 13/2020 is the offer of shelter for the HP, since its absence exposes this population to the precariousness of the basic sanitation system, which makes it impossible to protect simple means of protection such as hand hygiene (Stockholm; 2020). This measure was cited in the document "d 03", according to the paragraph:

We sought to guarantee the homeless population adequate space for social isolation, recommended by the Ministry of Health, as an effective measure of containment to the Covid-19, and personal hygiene of this population, alerting, however: "6. on the pretext of carrying out prevention of covid-19, there is no indiscriminate policy of compulsory hospitalization of people in street situation (d 03).

It is noteworthy the wide dissemination in reports related to this infrastructure action, with the realization of an agreement between the Government of the State of Amapá (GEA) and MCH, for the rental of a hotel with capacity to house 70 people in street situation (r 09). Action justified in the document "d 02", by allusion to the need for flattening the pandemic curve through the promotion of social isolation, and published in the reports "r 15" and "r 16".

The work was a task force between the Government of Amapá, through the Secretary of State for Social Inclusion and Mobilization (Sims) and Macapá Prefecture. The government passed, through an agreement to the municipality, more than 430,000 BRL, for expenses with hotel, food, hygiene and PPE; in addition to providing technical support with social workers (r 15).

Chart 1. Disposition of official documents found

Type	Theme/Title	Publication site	Publication data
Documento oficial (d 01)	Assistance for homeless people – Description of social assistance actions for homeless people in Macapá during the pandemic period.	Macapá City Hall page	05/19/2020
Documento oficial (d 02)	Emergency action plan to face the new coronavirus (Covid-19) for the homeless population in the municipality of Macapá, proposed with hotel lease	Macapá City Hall page	April 2020
Documento oficial (d 03)	Work plan: Extension of institutional reception for homeless people due to the Covid-19 pandemic	Macapá City Hall page	April 2020
Documento oficial (d 04)	Social assistance actions - actions carried out by the Municipal Social Assistance in the fight against Covid-19	Macapá City Hall pages	05/19/2020

Source: created by the authors, 2021.

Chart 2. Arrangement of the reports found

Type	Theme/Title	Publication site	Publication data
Report (r 01)	Public defender defends vaccination for the homeless population of Macapá	<i>Diário do Amapá</i>	04/28/2021
Report (r 02)	Coronavirus: hotel will be rented to house homeless people in Macapá, says AP government	<i>gl.globo.com</i>	03/25/2020
Report (r 03)	Covid-19: afraid of contagion and hunger, homeless people await measures in Macapá	<i>selesnafes.com</i>	03/25/2020
Report (r 04)	Homeless people are vaccinated against Covid-19 in Macapá: 'It's my turn'	<i>gl.globo.com</i>	05/12/2021
Report (r 05)	Mobile office seeks to avoid cases of Covid-19 among homeless people in Macapá	<i>gl.globo.com</i>	06/04/2020
Report (r 06)	Macapá City Hall begins work on the Specialized Reference Center for Homeless People	<i>Diário do Amapá</i>	09/22/2020
Report (r 07)	Um lugar para morar: pessoas em situação de rua começam a ser beneficiadas com aluguel social da prefeitura de Macapá A place to live: homeless people begin to benefit from social rent from the city of Macapá	<i>macapa.ap.gov.br</i>	06/15/2020
Report (r 08)	Two homeless people test positive for Covid-19 in Macapá and Executive seeks to renew agreement with hotel	<i>gl.globo.com</i>	04/22/2020
Report (r 09)	Agreement between Macapá City Hall and GEA guarantees temporary shelter for the homeless population of the capital	<i>macapa.ap.gov.br</i>	03/31/2020
Report (r 10)	Macapá City Hall does disinfection and hygiene work in a temporary shelter for homeless people	<i>macapa.ap.gov.br</i>	April 2020
Report (r 11)	Homeless people are prioritized in Macapá	<i>selesnafes.com</i>	05/12/2021
Report (r 12)	Macapá City Hall vaccinates homeless people	<i>Diário da Gente</i>	05/14/2021
Report (r 13)	Assistência social monta novos canais de comunicação com a população de Macapá	<i>Cafê com Notícia</i>	03/23/2020
Report (r 14)	Covid-19: homeless people will be vaccinated this Wednesday (12)	<i>Diário do Amapá</i>	05/11/2021
Report (r 15)	Government of Amapá assisted more than 70 homeless people during the pandemic in the state	<i>Diário do Amapá</i>	06/26/2020
Report (r 16)	State funds hotel to welcome homeless people during the pandemic	<i>Diário do Amapá</i>	03/30/2020
Report (r 17)	Macapá City Hall launches public notice "Costurando Vidas" for the purchase of 100,000 homemade masks	<i>macapa.ap.gov.br</i>	April 2020

Source: created by the authors, 2021.

The quarantine of people in street situation will be held in a hotel in the city center. There will be 70 individual beds, with hygiene kits, cleaning services of the environment, also having access to a space for cleaning clothes and individual belongings, containing washing machines and space to extend them (r 16).

In addition, the Municipality of Macapá had, for those who benefited from temporary shelter, laundry services, cleaning, maid and meal, highlighting the actions offered and public contemplated in the document "d 01" until May 2020:

03/27 to 03/31/2020 hotel accommodation (laundry service, 3 meals, cleaning staff, collective cleaning products, maid service. Number of registered 70. Number of beneficiaries 70. [...] Apr/20 hotel accommodation [...] number of registered 86, number of beneficiaries 86 [...] the hotel was hired with a capacity of 70 guests, but some users attended only during meals. [...] may/20 hotel accommodation [...] number of registered 70, number of beneficiaries 70 (d 01).

In addition to this, another action of the Municipality of Macapá support 137 people with social rent, a benefit also highlighted in TN 13/2020 as an income security for people in situations of extreme vulnerability.

Social Rent is a benefit intended to serve people in social vulnerability, homelessness, at this time we experience the pandemic. The city, through the Secretariat of Social Assistance, has been temporarily guaranteeing the homeless population the eventual benefit of Social Rent [...] These people remain, in addition to social rent, being assisted by services at

the POP Center, such as breakfast and lunch, in addition to individual, social and psychological care (r 07).

Efforts were also made to release the hotel to HP after the contract was expired, evident in the document "d 03". This information can be confirmed in the report "r 08", highlighting the following excerpts:

[...] Extension of the shelter, emergency and temporary, of 70 people in street situation in the municipality of Macapá, in order to avoid the contagion of this population, thus avoiding the spread of the virus [...] duration: beginning 04/26/2020, ending 05/27/2020 (d 03).

[...] the agreement that transforms the hotel into shelter has a shelf life: it ends next Tuesday (28). Thinking about it, the city and the state government [...] seek renewal for another 30 days of the agreement (r 08).

On the maintenance, decontamination and hygiene of temporary shelters for the HP, the following excerpt was found in the report "r 10":

[...] disinfection and hygiene work in the temporary shelter for the homeless population of the Municipality of Macapá. The internal and external area of the building were sprayed with a mixture of water, chlorine and sodium isocyanurate 65%, detergent and a small amount of lavender (mixture used in all places that receive cleaning) (r 10). TN 13/2020 also addresses recommendations with regard to health policy management bodies. Item 3.8 addresses the articulation with the Unified Health System (UHS) to ensure the necessary basis for care units dealing with homeless people. Among the actions

envisaged is access to medicines and vaccination of users and workers of the UHS. Practices carried out in the State of Amapá related to this item were mentioned in the selected reports, according to the following excerpts.

[...] The public defender recalled that the National Immunization Program (PNI) already included these people in the priority group and highlighted the importance of maintaining registration in CadÚnico and street clinics in the priority group of vaccination against Covid-19 (r 01).

The Secretary of Social Assistance, Patricia Ferraz, spoke about the vaccination of this public, and said it was fundamental, due to the vulnerability of this public (r 12).

The Municipal Health Department (Sems) advances in the implementation of the Municipal Immunization Plan and on Wednesday (12), people in street situation will be immunized against Covid-19. Vaccination of this group will be held from 9am at the Pop Center (r 14).

This public is recommended in the National Immunization Plan. Vaccination took place at the Pop Center, in the Perpétuo Socorro neighborhood, in the East Zone. It is in this place that people in this condition are accompanied by a multidisciplinary team [...] (r 04).

The list with the name of the enabled to the first dose of the vaccine was assembled by the POP Center. The vaccine used in this group is Oxford/AstraZeneca. D2 was scheduled for August 4 (r 11).

Regarding the provision of attention to suspected and confirmed cases of coronavirus among the HP, NT 13/2020 recommends referral to the health network and specific spaces for their reception. The person with positive results, presenting mild and moderate symptoms, should follow protocols of social distancing, in severe cases should be referred to reference hospitals for Covid-19 in an exclusive vehicle for severe cases and accompanied by a qualified team (Dumas, et al., 2020). In Macapá, after confirmed two cases of Covid-19 between the temporary residents of the hotel rented by MCH, and two other suspects, they were isolated in the hotel premises (r 08). After the confirmation of the first cases, tests were performed between residents and employees, in addition to being offered by MCH the services of Office on the Street, with consultation, prevention, treatment and isolation in the hotel itself (r 05). In order to avoid the spread of coronavirus, social approach actions are also reported in the reports as recommended by the TN. Practices such as health consulting at strategic points and mask distribution were carried out, according to WHO recommendations to prevent the spread of Covid-19. New communication channels were also created to avoid overcrowding service points related to social programs.

[...] the city of the capital offers services in the Street Office: vehicle with a health team that attends the hotel and other places in the capital [...] The care for residents with symptoms is done in the hotel itself, the health team of the Street Office goes to the space to evaluate the patient's health status (r 05).

Macapá City Hall launches on Tuesday, April 28, 2020, the notice "*Costurando Vidas*", intended for the public call of seamstresses for the acquisition of 100,000 homemade masks, which will be distributed to the population in a situation of social and economic vulnerability [...] (r 17).

Face-to-face service at the Social Assistance Reference Centers (Cras) and Specialized Social Assistance (Creas) will be suspended. However, the coordination of each equipment will be available for the necessary care to the population, through the telephones listed below, from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm (r 13).

Final Thoughts

This article investigated the public policies elaborated for the protection of the Homeless Population in the municipality of Macapá during the pandemic of Covid-19, having as analysis material the publications on official websites of the municipal departments of Social Assistance, Social assistance and Labor and services of the

Municipality of Macapá, as well as newspapers of national and local publications. Thus, the representation of the HP published in newspaper news and official documents was analyzed, revealing the perception of unassistance of the public power at the beginning of the pandemic by homeless people, evidenced in report r 03. This report found the negligence of the state and municipality in relation to the conditions of exposure of the HP to the virus, also highlighting the indignation of these with the delay in the response of the entities in meeting their needs and the fear of coming to death by Covid-19. In addition, hunger has been reported as a cause of great concern among HP during the pandemic. The analyses indicate that only in the course of the evolution of the pandemic the city began to act to minimize the vulnerability of the HP, being part of these actions carried out focused on infrastructure, such as the leasing of a hotel and the provision of underutilized spaces in the POP Center. A huge gain for the HP was their inclusion in the list of priorities for vaccination of the National Immunization Program (PNI - *Programa Nacional de Imunização*), and it was contemplated in May 2021 with the first dose of the coronavirus vaccine. Most of the actions carried out by MCH are in accordance with NT 13/2020, of the Ministry of Citizenship, and its achievements can be proven through the reports described in this research. The actions found and described in the present study, in order to protect the HP, were very successful and accepted by the public, and therefore should be maintained after the end of the pandemic period by coronavirus. Due to the increase in the number of HP during the Covid-19 pandemic, it was necessary to expand measures that support this population in the long term, such as strengthening the social protection system, with plans to improve the quality of life and reduce its vulnerability. Some important actions to be implemented by the public health management of the city are: the installation of washbasins in public places, implementation of collective health information projects for the HP and training of teams to assist homeless people, constant supply of personal protective equipment, promotion of health practices, adequate isolation when there is suspicion and/or confirmation of contagion, being more appropriate a specific environment for this purpose, adaptation of popular restaurants to meet those who seek social assistance only during meals and the elaboration and implementation of an emergency plan for a possible infectious outbreak in this population (Honorato, Oliveira; 2020). In short, a limitation of this work was the lack of updated and official data on the situation of Brazilian states during the pandemic. The expansion of these data during the epidemic process could configure in a future extension of the research. Moreover, for being a qualitative research, the perception of events occurred during the period in which data were collected may have undergone changes, taking into account the troubled political and social period we live in. Another suggestion, as a measure of protection of the HP, the realization of an emergency census to quantify more accurately the number of people in street situation in Macapá. In order to implement measures that reach this whole group, given the concern with the exclusionary nature of some strategies that were adopted when the number of people in this situation of vulnerability could not be foreshadowed.

Conflict of interest: The authors declare that the research was carried out in the absence of any commercial or financial relationship that could be interpreted as a potential conflict of interest.

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