

Epidemiological Profile of Visceral Leishmaniasis in Maranhão State, Brazil

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Visceral leishmaniasis (VL), also known as kala-azar, characterized by irregular bouts of fever, substantial weight loss, swelling of the spleen and liver, and anaemia. If the disease is not treated, the fatality rate in developing countries can be as high as 100% within 2 years. This parasitic disease is transmitted by the bite of female sandflies of *Lutzomyia longipalpis* species. Ninety per cent of the new cases occurred in Brazil, Ethiopia, India, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan. Between 2005 to 2014, 35,403 cases of VL were observed in Brazil, of which 4,791 occurred in the state of Maranhão. The Maranhão State maintain an average of more than 500 cases per year. With this, the objective of this work was to trace the epidemiological profile of Visceral Leishmaniasis in the state of Maranhão in the last 5 years (2011 to 2015). In order to do so, we collected data from the Brazilian system of information, called SINAN, obtained from DATASUS website. The total number of confirmed cases, by zone, sex, age group, evolution and HIV-VL co-infection were observed. In the last five years, It was recorded 2,746 cases of VL in Maranhão, with a higher prevalence of cases in the year 2013, with the São Luis city presenting the highest number of cases in the period evaluated. The majority of the cases diagnosed came from the urban region, male, age group from 0 to 4 years old and low level of schooling. There was a high percentage of cure of the disease (49.6%) and we recorded 228 individuals had HIV-VL co-infection. Although there was underreporting data, it was possible to trace the epidemiological profile of the disease in the state of Maranhão. Besides that, we concluded that SINAN is an important tool for the characterization of this disease in public health.