



## INTERVENTION FOR HOSPITALIZED CHILDREN AND LUDO THERAPY: INTEGRATIVE REVIEW

### INTERVENÇÃO À CRIANÇA HOSPITALIZADA E LUDOTERAPIA: REVISÃO INTEGRATIVA

### INTERVENCIÓN AL NIÑO HOSPITALIZADO Y LUDOTERAPIA: REVISIÓN INTEGRATIVA

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#### RESUMO

**Objetivo:** analisar, na literatura, a contribuição da Ludoterapia como método de intervenção no processo saúde-doença da criança hospitalizada. **Método:** trata-se de uma revisão integrativa de literatura. A coleta de dados ocorreu em agosto de 2017, sendo realizada nas bases de dados eletrônicas da Biblioteca Virtual em Saúde, Literatura Latino-Americana e do Caribe em Ciências da Saúde, Sistema Online de Busca e Análise de Literatura Médica e Base de Dados de Enfermagem. **Resultados:** foram encontrados 200 artigos publicados entre 2013 e 2016. Ao final, 15 artigos foram selecionados para a realização desta revisão integrativa. Tais estudos abordaram os benefícios que atividades lúdicas como desenhos, músicas, brinquedos e interações com palhaços doutores trazem para a criança no âmbito hospitalar. **Conclusões:** a Ludoterapia pode trazer benefícios relevantes para a criança hospitalizada, ajudando-a na melhora do seu bem-estar e na estadia no ambiente hospitalar, além de facilitar o entendimento do seu estado de saúde e de trazer benefícios na comunicação com sua família e com a equipe de profissionais envolvida.

**Palavras-chave:** Ludoterapia; Criança Hospitalizada; Humanização da Assistência.

#### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** to analyze, in the literature, the contribution of Ludo therapy as a method of intervention in the health-disease process of hospitalized children. **Method:** it is an integrative literature review. The data collection took place in August 2017, being carried out in the electronic databases of the Virtual Health Library, Latin American and Caribbean Literature in Health Sciences, Online System of Search and Analysis of Medical Literature and Nursing Database. **Results:** 200 articles were published between 2013 and 2016. In the end, 15 articles were selected for this integrative review. Such studies have addressed the benefits that play activities such as drawings, music, toys and interactions with clown doctors bring to the child in the hospital setting. **Conclusions:** Ludo therapy can bring relevant benefits to hospitalized children, helping them to improve their well-being and stay in the hospital environment, as well as facilitating their understanding of their health status and bringing benefits in communicating with their family and the team of professionals involved.

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**Keywords:** Play Therapy; Child Hospitalized; Humanization of Assistance.

## RESUMEN

**Objetivo:** analizar en la literatura la contribución de la Ludoterapia como método de intervención en el proceso salud-enfermedad del niño hospitalizado. **Método:** se trata de una revisión integrativa de literatura. La recolección de datos ocurrió en agosto de 2017, siendo realizada en las bases de datos electrónicas de la Biblioteca Virtual en Salud, Literatura Latinoamericana y del Caribe en Ciencias de la Salud, Sistema Online de Búsqueda y Análisis de Literatura Médica y Base de Datos de Enfermería. **Resultados:** se encontraron 200 artículos, publicados entre 2013 y 2016. Al final, 15 artículos fueron seleccionados para realizar esta revisión integrativa. Tales estudios abordaron los beneficios que actividades lúdicas como dibujos, canciones, juguetes e interacciones con Payasos Doctores, traen para el niño en el ámbito hospitalario. **Conclusión:** la ludoterapia puede traer beneficios relevantes para el niño hospitalizado, ayudándola en la mejora de su bienestar y en la estancia en el ambiente hospitalario, además de facilitar el entendimiento de su estado de salud y de traer beneficios en la comunicación con su familia y con equipo de profesionales involucrados.

**Palabras-clave:** Ludoterapia; Niños Hospitalizados; Humanización de la Asistencia.

## INTRODUCTION

Hospitalization brings several changes in the common routine of children and their families, allowing the emergence of disorders that will affect their development.<sup>1</sup>

The process of staying in the hospital environment is reported as an event that affects the child, and can bring to the surface anxieties and fears that did not exist before in their daily lives.<sup>2</sup>

Painful procedures, repetitive and exhaustive exams make it develop responses that are not common to their traditional behavior, such as aggression, anxiety, apathy, depressive states, phobias and sleep and eating disorders.<sup>3-4</sup>

When not properly managed, the hospitalization is capable of causing impacts to the child that remain after discharge, jeopardizing their development and may even interfere with their adult life.<sup>1</sup>

Play, in turn, constitutes an important stage in the life of a child capable of shaping his physical, verbal and intellectual development, providing him with a general well-being and the improvement of factors such as communication, stimulation of interaction, interpersonal relationship, group interaction, seizure of procedures and acceptance of norms.<sup>1-2,5</sup>

In Brazil, based on the importance of the mentioned act for the pediatric age group, on March 24, 2005, the National Congress approved Law 11,104, which made possible the idealization of the hospital toy library. This regulation

established, as mandatory, the installation of toy libraries in health care units that have hospitalized children and gave other measures.<sup>6</sup>

The legislative initiative was praised by sectors of Education and Health, and was received with good eyes by the researchers of the area. The main argument of those scholars who are dedicated to the approach of this line is that the insertion of Ludo therapy in the hospital scope allows the child to undergo a process of adaptation and understanding of its current state, contributing to its permanence and early rehabilitation.<sup>7</sup>

In view of the above, this study aims to analyze, from an integrative literature review, the contribution of Ludo therapy as a method of intervention in the health-disease process of the hospitalized child. As a guiding question, the problem was: "What benefit contribution is made possible by the introduction of Ludo therapy in the health care of hospitalized children reported in the literature?"

## **METHOD**

The study is characterized as an integrative review, a method that allows to gather and synthesize the relevant knowledge about the proposed theme, through the analysis of the results of studies already evidenced, with the objective of deepening the knowledge and possible applicability of the studies in the practice.

The search strategies on the research question were defined in a research protocol, which guided the construction of the work. The stages of the integrative review were: delimitation of the theme and definition of the research question; searching the databases using the descriptors; application of criteria for the inclusion and exclusion of articles; definition of the information to be used; analysis of results and presentation of results.

Data collection took place in August of 2017, being carried out in the electronic database VHL (Virtual Health Library), which brings together articles from other national and international databases, such as Latin American and Caribbean Literature in Health (LILACS), the Online System of Search and Analysis of Medical Literature (MEDLINE), the BDENF - Nursing (Nursing Database), among others.

The following inclusion criteria were used for the articles: complete articles in Portuguese or English, published between 2013 and 2016, available in full and

free of charge, containing in their titles and abstracts the descriptors Ludo therapy, Hospitalized Child and Humanization of Assistance defined in the survey. The exclusion criteria were: duplicate studies in the different databases, not available in their entirety, Completion Coursework (TCC) or that did not meet the research objectives.

For the selection of publications, all titles of the studies were first read. Following, in the publications in which the titles had some descriptor and / or words that go back to the objective of the integrative revision, the abstracts were analyzed.

In the third step, for the organization and tabulation of data, an electronic data collection instrument was developed containing: author, year of publication, title of the article, objectives, main results and conclusion. The articles were analyzed and then the concepts addressed in each article were extracted, which were in accordance with the study objective.

In the fourth stage, the analysis of publications occurred and the methodological rigor was evaluated, considering the clarity in the description of the methods used, participants subjects, intervention, results and limitations.

The fifth and last stage was composed by the discussion of the results, being presented in a descriptive way, making possible the identification of the evidences and the necessity of other studies.

## **RESULTS**

Through the combination of the descriptors, 200 studies were identified in the database. At first, 175 articles were excluded because the year of publication was less than 2013. After performing the detailed analysis of the titles and abstracts of the articles, two were excluded because they did not contain any of the descriptors and did not fit the research proposal; one was excluded because it did not fit in the context of a scientific article; one was excluded because it was not available in full and six were excluded because they were repeated in the database. Subsequent to the application of the exclusion criteria, 15 articles were selected for the accomplishment of this integrative review.

Of the 15 papers selected, for the year of publication, three (20%) were published in 2013; six (40%) in 2014 and six (40%) in 2016. Of these, one (6.7%) was published in the BDENF - Nursing; six (40%) in MEDLINE and eight

(53.3%) in LILACS. Regarding the area of professional approach, nine (60%) are from the Nursing area and six (40%) are from a multiprofessional approach.

The 15 articles are published in 13 journals. Of these, seven (53.8%) are Brazilian journals and six (46.2%) are international journals. Among the thirteen, nine (69.2%) are nursing journals and four (30.8%) are journals with a multi-professional approach. As to the writing language of the articles, of the 15, ten (66.7%) articles are in Portuguese and five (33.3%) are in English.

A summary table was prepared with the systematization of the selected papers according to authors, year of publication, journal and titles of the articles (Figure 1).

Author and year of publication	Journal	Title of the article
Fioreti, Manzo, Regino /2016	Mineira Journal of Nursing	Ludo therapy and Hospitalized Child in Parents' Perspective
Paixão, Damasceno, Silva /2016	CuidArt Journal of Nursing	Importance of Play Activities in Childhood Oncology Therapy
He, Zhu, William, Wang, Vehviläinen-Julkunen, Chan /2013	Journal of Advanced Nursing	A randomized controlled trial of the effectiveness of a therapeutic play intervention on outcomes of children undergoing inpatient elective surgery: study protocol
Lima, Barros, Costa, Santos, Vitor, Lira /2014	Mineira Journal of Nursing	Play Activity as a Tool for Nursing Care for Hospitalized Children
Santos, Bonfim, Mazza, Wall, Mercês /2014	Cogitare Nursing (Digital Library of Journals)	Hospital Play Process Guided by Playful Model
Nicola, Freitas, Gomes, Costenaro, Nietzsche, Ilha /2014	Research Journal: Care is Fundamental	Careful care of the hospitalized child: perspective of the family caregiver and nursing team
Lemos, Oliveira, Gomes, Silva, Silva, Fernandes /2016	Cuidarte Journal (Bucaramanga. 2010)	Therapeutic Toy in Venous Puncture Procedure: A Strategy to Reduce Behavioral Changes
Committee on Hospital Care and Child Life Council /2014	Pediatrics (Official Journal of The American Academy of Pediatrics)	Child Life Services
Jonas, Costa, Souza, Pinto, Morais, Duarte /2013	Brazilian Journal of Health Sciences	The Play as a Communication Strategy for the Promotion of Humanized Care with the Hospitalized Child
Caleffi, Rocha, Anders, Souza, Burciaga, Serapião /2016	Gaúcha Journal of Nursing	Contribution of the structured therapeutic toy in a model of nursing care for hospitalized children
Ullán, Belver, Fernández, Lorente, Badía, Fernández /2014	Pain Management Nursing	The Effect of a Program to Promote Play to Reduce Children's Post-Surgical Pain: With Plush Toys, It Hurts Less
Li, Chung, Ho, Kwok /2016	BMC Pediatrics	Play interventions to reduce anxiety and negative emotions in hospitalized children

Paladino, Carvalho, Almeida /2014	USP School Journal of Nursing	Therapeutic toy in preparation for surgery: behaviors of preschoolers in the intraoperative period
Martins, Silva, Fernandes, Souza, Vieira /2016	Research Journal: Care is Fundamental	Repercussions of Clown therapy in the hospitalization process of the child
Linge/2013	International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health Well-being	Joyful and serious intentions in the work of hospital clowns: A meta-analysis based on a 7-year research Project conducted in three parts

Figure 1. Systematization of selected articles.

It was observed that ten (66.7%) talk about Ludo therapy and its approach as a whole, three (20%) deal specifically with the topic of therapeutic toys and two (13.3%) deal with therapeutic toys on clown therapy as a way of acting within the Ludo therapy.

<b>N. of the article</b>	<b>Journal</b>	<b>Qualis</b>
3	<i>Journal of Advanced Nursing</i>	A1
11	<i>Pain Management Nursing</i>	A1
8	<i>Pediatrics (Official Journal of The American Academy of Pediatrics)</i>	A1
1 e 4	<i>Mineira Journal of Nursing</i>	A1
13	<i>USP School Journal of Nursing</i>	A2
12	<i>BMC Pediatrics</i>	B1
5	<i>Cogitare Nursing (Digital Library of Journals)</i>	B1
10	<i>Gaúcha Nursing Journal</i>	B1
7	<i>Cuidarte Journal (Bucaramanga. 2010)</i>	B2
6 e 14	<i>Research Journal: Care is Fundamental</i>	B2
9	<i>Brazilian Journal of Health Sciences</i>	B5
2	<i>CuidArt Nursing Journal</i>	B5
15	<i>International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health Well-being</i>	*

Figura 2. Distribution of articles according to methodological quality. \* does not have Qualis.

Figure 2 describes the distribution of selected papers according to the publication period and its respective quality stratum, according to the classification assigned by the Coordination of Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES) for the period 2013-2016 and information available from the Sucupira Platform.

According to the published articles and their respective Qualis, it was observed that three (23%) journals have an A1 classification; one (7.7%) has A2 classification; four (30.8%) had B1 classification; two (15.4%) have B2 classification; two (15.4%) are classified as B5 and one (7.7%) have no classification.

## **DISCUSSION**

For the systematization of the discussion, categories of analysis were selected through the selection of the main concepts and guiding ideas present in the selected papers.

### **The act of playing and its role in the child's development**

The process of hospitalization in pediatric units that the process of hospitalization completely changes the daily life of a child, promoting anxiety and fears about procedures that can cause pain and bring physical and psychological limitations. Such attitudes are shown mainly as responses of discomfort, frustration, tensions and mood swings.<sup>10-1</sup>

For the hospitalized child, play causes ties to be formed and strengthened, as well as bringing a different perception of the health area environment, promoting greater collaboration to the treatments performed and decreasing the idleness of hospitalization. For the authors, this link brings, to the professional, a desire to take the treatment to that patient in a more humanized way.<sup>8-9</sup>

That playing is a necessary activity in childhood, because it is directly related to the physical, emotional and social development of this age group, helping in its adaptation to the reality faced.<sup>10-2</sup>

Giving children the opportunity to play within the hospital allows the child to deal with their situation and also helps in communicating with the health team, improving the interaction and enabling them to express everything they feel.<sup>8-9,11,13</sup>

The act of playing is recognized by the United Nations as a basic right to the needs of every child and is defended by the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. In Brazil, the right to play is still protected by Law 8,069, of July 13, 1990, which approves the Statute of the Child and Adolescent. Article 16, section IV, shows that the right to freedom of the child includes playing, playing sports and having fun.<sup>1,5,13</sup>

### **Play activities and their benefits**

In general, it was observed that consensual speech in the consulted works asserted that play, when presented in the form of a play, reading, dance and



others, is a great aid in the hospital routine and that its action occurs directly on the changes that hospitalization can bring to the child's life.<sup>1-2</sup>

The playful model has as theoretical principle the use of a systematization of play, with the purpose of assisting the child in the development of abilities to be able to act and take actions when facing daily life.<sup>5</sup>

The child must be seen as an active subject and participant in the health-disease process and what play favors the right to make their own decisions, to have control of the situation and thus to represent a little of their own experience and your day to day.<sup>10</sup>

The Ludo therapy, implemented in the hospital environment, allows the reduction of a series of negative impacts of hospitalization, facilitates the child's understanding of the interventions performed, improves adherence to treatment, allows a strengthening of their relationship with the team contributes to promote humanized care and helps professionals to understand their limitations and potentialities.

Playful care can be present in innumerable ways in everyday hospital through play and toys, dialogues, songs, drawings and paintings, dramatizations, clown therapy and other tools.<sup>2,5-6</sup>

### **The therapeutic toy**

The therapeutic toy is a playful resource that contributes to the reduction of the effects of hospital stay, helps the child understand and deal with daily necessities and also expresses himself without worrying about the adult audience identifying who she is talking about of herself.<sup>10,13</sup>

It is a tool - usually a doll - that serves as an intermediary to reach three directions: the dramatic therapeutic toy, which helps the child to be active in the joke by assuming roles that allow him to manifest his desires and experiences; the therapeutic toy of physiological functions that helps children to understand and learn to use their physiological capacities in the best possible way in their new condition and the institutional therapeutic toy that allows the child, through the play, to understand how it will be performed the procedure to be submitted, seeing the process being done in the toy and can also actively participate.<sup>7,10,13</sup>

The efficacy of the therapeutic toy in helping children to understand the procedures to which they will be submitted, since they often refuse to perform



them because of fear of pain and even lack of knowledge of what will be done with her during the process.<sup>7,13</sup>

That by playing, the child will transfer some of their current situation to the doll and diminish their negative view of the hospital and the health team, understand better the reason for having to be in that place and become more open communication and interaction not only with the professionals, but also with other children also hospitalized.<sup>7,10</sup>

## **Clown therapy**

Clown therapy emerges as an alternative therapeutic resource within the field of Ludo therapy performed by professionals or volunteers who are characterized by clown doctors and use music, magic, storytelling and dramatizations to approach the patient, seeking to promote their well-being, the companion and the multi-professional team, bringing the participation of all in the activities and showing the importance of the humanization of assistance through non-conventional strategies.<sup>4,14</sup>

That the intention of only distracting and playing, characteristic of circus clowns, is no longer the focus of the performance of hospital clowns.<sup>15</sup> Other authors, corroborating this same line of reasoning, report that, from the moment in which the hospital operation begins, the intention of the intervention becomes to fill gaps that arise in the environment due to the suffering of the child, to improve the interpersonal communication with your family and the health team, facilitate understanding and collaboration in the stages of care, give space to the child's joyful experiences and opportunities to be creative through play, stimulate "being a child" and lessen the negative effects tied to the hospitalization process.<sup>6,14-5</sup>

The shared moment between a clown doctor and a child is unique, transcending barriers and being turned into a magical and secure place where problems are left out, where the child becomes the focus of the moment, bringing a lighter side to hospitalization and promoting health from a differentiated perspective.<sup>14-5</sup>

## **CONCLUSION**

When analyzing the data proposed in the literature, it was possible to see how effective Ludo therapy seems to constitute as a method of intervention to hospitalized children. The use of play as a tool for care is pointed out as a helping strategy in the development of self-confidence and safety in children, helping them to adapt to the environment of the hospital and the people around them and allowing them to socialize and express the issues that surround it. In addition, it is highlighted that such a method can cause the patient of this age group to develop a bond with the health team, enabling their understanding and cooperation with the treatment and other stages of the care process.

In view of the above, the importance of a change in the hospital aspect, making the environment less hostile, more receptive and welcoming, allows the child to present physical and mental well-being and is aware of their state of health and of each strategy proposed for its treatment.

This study sought to contribute to the systematization of information about the proposed theme and, consequently, to consolidate knowledge about the subject. Through it, it was possible to obtain an updated notion about the strategies, benefits and uses of the Ludo therapy in the scope of the hospital units directed to the care for the pediatric age group. During the realization of this work, it was possible to notice more emphasis on the materials produced for the Nursing area, being remarkable the scarcity of materials in this area in other health areas. Thus, one possibility of expanding research in this segment would be to verify the contribution of each profession to the process of operationalization of strategies such as those presented here, as well as the perception of the various formations and the multi-professional team about its uses, applications and difficulties in the scope of health care practice.

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