

# Changes in the labor law framework and uncertainty on their impact on workers' health

Mudanças no arcabouço legal trabalhista e incertezas sobre seus impactos na saúde dos trabalhadores

The Brazilian Federal government announced in May 2019 that it will simplify the Regulatory Standards (RS) for Workplace Health and Safety (WHS), namely, a complement to the Consolidation of Labor Laws<sup>1</sup>. The adduced aim of this revision is to enhance the productivity and competitiveness of businesses, on the grounds that the current number of legal requirements for employers interferes with their performance.

Integration between the academic milieu and everyday practice is one of the challenges posed to WHS actions at present. This is to say, how to apply the evidence gathered in scientific research to health promotion and disease prevention among workers. One possible path is to take profit of scientific findings to influence the design of broad scoped public policies likely to foster a prevention culture. For this reason, the upcoming RS revision may, and should, be seen as fertile soil for tripartite groups seeking to design a regulatory framework fit to boost good practices in work environments and relations.

The present issue of *Revista Brasileira de Medicina do Trabalho* contributes significantly to the ongoing debate on WHS through the publication of studies on subjects such as: occupational cancer surveillance, inclusion of older adults in the labor market, impact of shift work on health, vaccination matrix for healthcare workers, and noncommunicable diseases, among others. One example is the ecological study by Gomes and Caldas of work accidents involving exposure to biological materials among healthcare workers in Brazil in the period from 2010 to 2016, which evidenced flaws in the reports to the System of Information on Notifiable Diseases (SINAN). In turn, the study by Leite and colleagues indicates that burnout among university professors in Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil, is associated with occupational factors.

In addition to scientific research, also technical recommendations by experts supply sound grounds to the groups involved in the RS revision. For instance, the recent International Labor Organization Convention C190, from June 2019, which focuses on the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work, as a result of partnerships between governments, employers and employees<sup>2</sup>. This complex subject, with well-known implications for the physical and mental health of workers, is also addressed in ANAMT Technical Guideline DT07 (*Epidemiological mapping and preventive interventions against workplace violence*) by Myung and colleagues, also included in this issue of RBMT.

To conclude, society at large should pay continuous attention to the impacts of changes in the labor legislation, as e.g. the waiver of Occupational Health Medical Control Programs in some companies, as per the new RS no 1–General Determinations<sup>3</sup>. One may expect that investigators engaged in the study of the health-work relationship will contribute over time with responses to various questions currently being asked. I invite all our readers to take profit of *Revista Brasileira de Medicina do Trabalho* as a means for divulgation of their future research.

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João Silvestre Silva-Junior  
Associate editor

## REFERENCES

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