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123 - PREVALENCE OF NONCOMMUNICABLE DISEASE RISK FACTORS AMONG REFUGEES IN PORTUGAL: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

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Resumen

Background/Objectives: Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) are the leading causes of global mortality and morbidity, accounting for more deaths than all other causes combined. Although traditionally associated with high-income countries, NCDs are increasingly prevalent in low- and middle-income countries, including those of origin of many refugees and migrants arriving in Europe. Limited access to healthcare in countries of origin may result in undiagnosed or poorly controlled NCDs, while barriers to comprehensive healthcare in host countries can further exacerbate these conditions.

Methods: To describe the prevalence of NCD risk factors among refugees residing in Portugal during the 12 months before leaving their country of origin and to compare it with the prevalence observed in the host country.

Results: A cross-sectional study was conducted between 2019 and 2020 that included all refugees attending a refugee reception centre in Lisbon, Portugal. Behavioural and biological risk factors for NCDs -including alcohol consumption, tobacco use, inadequate fruit and vegetable intake, physical inactivity, overweight and obesity, hypertension, elevated blood glucose or type 2 diabetes mellitus, and dyslipidaemia- were assessed using a modified WHO STEPwise questionnaire. Descriptive statistics were used for data analysis.

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Conclusions/Recommendations: Refugees exhibited a lower prevalence of NCD risk factors in the year preceding migration than in the host country. These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions addressing behavioural changes after migration, including smoking cessation, improved dietary habits, better management of type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, and ongoing surveillance of NCD risk factors and outcomes among refugee populations in host countries.

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