

## **HTLV CHANNEL: INCREASING AWARENESS ABOUT HTLV**

Assone T<sup>1,3\*</sup> & Rosadas C<sup>2,3\*</sup>

1 Laboratory of Dermatology and Immunodeficiencies, Department of Dermatology,  
2 Medical School, University of São Paulo Brazil/Institute of Tropical Medicine of São  
Paulo, São Paulo, SP, Brazil.

3 Department of Infectious Disease, Imperial College London;  
HTLV Channel, Brazil

\*TA and CR are co-senior authors.

### **Background/Purpose:**

The use of social media to disseminate scientific knowledge increased during Covid-19 pandemic. There is a high number of people living with HTLV in Brazil, however this virus remains unknown to healthcare workers and society. The lack of reliable information about HTLV infection in social media led to the creation of HTLV Channel.

### **Approach:**

HTLV Channel is a social media platform founded in May/2020 aiming at increasing awareness about HTLV. Educational digital content based on scientific evidence was created to be disseminated among non-specialist audience. Live interviews with researchers and pre-recorded lectures in Portuguese were produced, covering various aspects of HTLV infection (virus, transmission, prevention, associated diseases, diagnosis). An Instagram® account was also created.

### **Outcomes/Impact:**

From 05/2020-01/2022, HTLV Channel produced 50 videos (YouTube®). They had 23,273 views and were shared 855 times, with 248,790 positive impressions. HTLV Channel has 500 posts and 1,250 followers on Instagram®. In January 2022 alone, this channel reached 2,843 accounts and had 18,536 impressions. Audience engages directly with researchers. On-demand content can be easily accessed worldwide. Campaigns to empower patients, to improve their quality of life and to tackle stigma were created. In addition, two main events were organised: a national Webinar, co-organised with the Brazilian Ministry of Health (with 16 Brazilian lecturers); and an international Webinar to discuss public policies, co-organised with PAHO/WHO (20 international speakers and attendees from 42 different countries). Lack of investment and cultural barriers are considered limitations.

### **Innovation and Significance:**

Increasing awareness about HTLV is important to support patients, inform health professionals, to tackle stigma and to push for the implementation of health policies. Low-cost platforms, such as HTLV Channel, may facilitate the inclusion of this virus in the local and international agenda. Collaboration between researchers, patients' representatives and policymakers are essential and can be fostered by online platforms.

**Disclosure of Interest Statement:**

TA and CR are co-founders of HTLV Channel, a non-profit, self-funded platform.