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Country: **South America**

Titel of the project: **ALFA Project: Latin America, CVA and Atrial Fibrillation**

## Project details

### **Beatriz Champagne**

Fundación InterAmericana del Corazón

Award amount: €100,000

With the idea of heightening awareness in the general population about the risk factors for CVA and atrial fibrillation in four countries in Latin America, knowledge will be evaluated through a survey and the results will be used as a bridge to spread information through the media.

The goals of this project are: (1) to evaluate knowledge and perceptions about cerebrovascular accident (CVA) and atrial fibrillation (AF) in the general population in 4 countries in Latin America: Argentina, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela; and (2) to heighten awareness in the population in general in these countries and particularly in those people with the highest risk factors and how to avoid them. The evaluation of knowledge and perceptions will take place via telephone surveys. The information to be obtained shall include: a) Knowledge about CVA, AF and their risk factors; b) Presence of risk factors for CVA and atrial fibrillation; and c) Knowledge of whether or not a person has atrial fibrillation. The surveys will be performed on the population of the entire country, meaning that the information collected shall be considered representative. The a priori hypothesis is that a majority percentage of the adult population will not have enough knowledge of the problem and will not know whether they suffer from this arrhythmia and that 30-50% of the adult population will have some risk factor for it. We will perform an analysis of the results, following a predetermined protocol of statistical analysis that will include an analysis by subgroups according to age and risk factors. In the second stage of the project, the knowledge spreading campaign will take place, using methods of (1) media advocacy and (2) development of networks, at the level of the four countries listed, with a focus on the capital cities with repercussion in the rest of the country. Media advocacy can include the use of press conferences, interviews with experts, patient testimonials and health professionals in accordance with the local situation. The publicity will be present in the press, radio and television. The development of networks will take place at two levels: patients and families, and health professionals. Interested individuals and organizations will be invited. They will receive information and recommendations. The purpose of the networks is to increase the interaction around the issue at hand and to provide information to the public, particularly to those at greatest risk. The contents to be communicated in this campaign will be: a) The results of the surveys; b) Knowledge about CVA and AF, including their risk factors, such as hypertension, diabetes and obesity; c) Recommendations for the general population, for patients and for people at the highest risk of CVA and AF. It is expected that the data obtained from the initial survey act as motivating factors in the information spreading campaign. Easy-to-read materials will be prepared that present the messages in a clear and concise manner. These materials will be dissolved principally for the participating countries, with local specifications. They can include informative sheets and educational materials to raise awareness in journalists, health professionals, et al. The impact of the campaign will be measured by monitoring the media, which will allow for observing an increase in the coverage of these subjects in the press. The media will be monitored three months prior to the campaign and three months during and immediately following the campaign.

## **Audience**

### **Type**

- AF Patients
- Healthcare professionals
- General public
- Media

### **Location**

South America