

<https://doi.org/10.29289/259453942025V35S1127>

Challenges in the diagnosis of breast cancer in homeless women: a literature review

Rafaela Del Piccolo Campos¹, Amarflis de Oliveira Almeida², Daniel Tineu Leite Maia³, Júlia Ferreira Gonçalves Blitzkow⁴, Liz Maria Pilla Boeira⁵, Rebeca Batista Félix⁶, Luiza Malícia Guerreiro de Mendonça⁷

¹Universidade de Medicina de Santo Amaro – Santo Amaro (SP), Brazil.

²Universidade Nove de Julho – São Paulo (SP), Brazil.

³Faculdade Serra Dourada de Lorena – Lorena (SP), Brazil.

⁴Universidade da Região de Joinville – Joinville (SC), Brazil.

⁵Faculdade de Medicina de Valença – Valença (RJ), Brazil.

⁶Universidade Municipal de São Caetano do Sul – São Caetano do Sul (SP), Brazil.

⁷Universidade de Araraquara – Araraquara (SP), Brazil.

Introduction: Breast cancer is the most common neoplasm among women and a global public health challenge. Homeless women face barriers to diagnosis and treatment due to the lack of preventive exams, stigma, and social vulnerability—factors that compromise early detection and adherence to treatment. **Objectives:** The study aimed to analyze challenges in diagnosing breast cancer in homeless women, highlighting barriers and strategies for inclusion. **Methods:** The bibliographic review was conducted using the PubMed, SciELO, and Google Scholar repositories, employing the descriptors “breast cancer,” “social vulnerability,” “challenges,” and “treatment”, including studies from 2015 to 2024. **Results:** This review analyzed the factors that hinder the diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer in vulnerable women, especially those experiencing homelessness. Limited access to healthcare, long waiting lines, socioeconomic inequality, and lack of information exacerbates the problem. Racial disparities indicate that Black and mixed-race women face greater difficulties. Public policies are essential to ensure equity in accessing proper examinations and treatments. **Conclusion:** The review on breast cancer diagnosis in homeless women in Brazil (2015–2024) identified difficulties in accessing healthcare, long waiting lines, a lack of examinations, and insufficient knowledge about prevention. Socioeconomic and racial disparities exacerbate the scenario, with advanced stages being more prevalent among Black and mixed-race women. The absence of continuous screening and adapted policies contributes to delayed diagnoses. Effective measures, such as mobile units and targeted campaigns, are essential to broaden access. Improving data quality can make strategies more precise, reducing inequalities in care and treatment.

Keywords: breast cancer; social vulnerability treatment.