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ACTIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY RESTAURANT - CAMPINAS CAMPUS: PIONEERING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEAL DISTRIBUTION MODEL IN FACE COVID-19

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Abstract: During the COVID-19 pandemic, University Restaurants underwent significant adaptations to ensure safe and continuous service. The Food Division (DA) implemented numerous changes, aiming to protect users, especially healthcare professionals, contractors, scholarship students and members of the COVID Task Force. The DA based its actions on internal records, research on the University City Hall's websites, and GR Ordinances that followed the guidelines of public health and health surveillance bodies. After the suspension of classes, Resolution GR 24/2020 was signed, leading to emergency measures such as the exclusive maintenance of the RU for specific audiences and the transition to the provision of marmitex instead of self-service, avoiding crowds. The team faced challenges such as adapting menus, restructuring the service model and quick review to avoid food waste. RU operated uninterruptedly, serving essential areas and scholarship students, while adopting measures such as frequent cleaning, distancing during service and disseminating information about COVID-19. In the Resumption Plan, there were continuous adaptations to ensure safety. The DA actively participated in the development of specific protocols, guidance booklets and control spreadsheets for the partial resumption. Even amid the uncertainties of the pandemic, more than 45 thousand meals continued to be distributed monthly. DA's actions were vital for student retention and the constant supply of meals to essential professionals. Furthermore, service protocols and revisions of operational procedures were developed, demonstrating the constant adaptation of the DA to the needs of the new university context.

Keywords: University Restaurants; Pandemic adaptation; COVID-19 safety measures; Recovery Plan; Food Division.

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic, declared by the WHO on 03/11/2020, imposed the need for changes to the entire service model of University Restaurants. After the publication of GR 24/2020, which suspended in-person activities at UNICAMP from 03/13/2020, the Food Division quickly initiated changes to the Restaurant service model to minimize the risk of transmission of COVID-19 during their use and maintain the supply of meals to essential areas of the university.

With the suspension of classes and other non-essential face-to-face activities, the number of meals served reduced drastically, going from approximately 14,000 meals/day on 03/12/2020 to approximately 4,000 meals/day on 03/13/2020. This reduction generated urgency in reviewing menus and purchasing plans to avoid wasting food and, consequently, the University's financial resources.

OBJECTIVE

In view of new publications and recommendations from the Health Surveillance and Ministry of Health regarding social distancing, contraindication of the use of self-service counters, subsequent prohibition of eating on-site and the need to implement the provision of lunch boxes, the objective of this work was to describe the restructuring of the Food Division's service following the Health Surveillance guidelines during the pandemic, which aimed to ensure quality and safe meal production in the fight against COVID-19.

METHODOLOGY

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the adaptation of the way in which University Restaurants (RUs) are served, as they are places prone to crowds and, therefore, pose risks for the transmission of COVID-19. This way, several actions were taken by the

Food Division/University City Hall, since March 2020, in order to guarantee safe and uninterrupted service from the RUs to employees in the health sector and other essential services, outsourced workers, scholarship students (students with low income) and subsequently to those involved in the COVID Task Force.

All steps taken to implement the new model were based on internal records and documents from the Food Division (DA). In addition, research was carried out on the websites of the University City Hall, UNICAMP and public information sources. These activities showed how the DA monitored the development of the pandemic, observing UNICAMP's actions through the GR Ordinances and following the guidelines of public health and health surveillance bodies to support the decisions made.

The DA team, faced with the publication of GR24/2020, quickly mobilized to make all the necessary changes in this new context, such as adapting menus, updating the service model in light of Health Surveillance publications with guidance on distancing, use wearing a mask and changing the supply model of the healthcare cafeteria which, at the beginning of the pandemic, served around 800 lunches and 200 dinners. The team also needed to act quickly by reviewing the entire menu to rearrange food that would be left over as a result of the abrupt reduction in demand, from 14,000 to 4,000 meals, in order to avoid wasting food and other inputs, paying special attention to the date of validity.

There was a restructuring of the service model, which went from self-service/portioning by waiters to the supply of lunchboxes, to avoid crowding, a heavily publicized recommendation to minimize the transmission of the COVID-19 virus, as the cafeterias were places that served more of 5 thousand people per day. The UK remained

in operation uninterruptedly throughout the pandemic to meet the essential areas and scholarship students.

Monitoring spreadsheets were created to increase the frequency of hand hygiene, increase points to provide the use of alcohol gel, markings on the floor or bench during portioning of food in lunch boxes to ensure distancing, and dissemination of posters informing necessary care to face the pandemic.

With the University Resumption Plan, created in August 2020, the DA participated in the development of protocols to combat COVID-19 specific to restaurants, in the review of institutional guidelines in the form of folders and videos, and prepared a Guidebook for the use of RUs and control spreadsheets for the partial resumption of students authorized by institute committees, in order to optimize the use of restaurants in a staggered manner.

The DA monitored the evolution of the pandemic, publications from Health Surveillance and the Ministry of Health throughout and gradually adapted to resuming activities safely.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

On 03/12/2020 the Rectory announced in a statement the suspension of activities, with only essential and health services being maintained. On 03/13/2020, Communiqué 01-GT COVID-19 updated this note.

Even with the suspension of classes, RU continued to serve servers, outsourced employees and scholarship students. Resolution GR 24/2020 was signed on 03/13/2020 and as a result of this, the DA initially took emergency measures such as: maintaining the operation of the UK only, exclusively for the public already described; suspension of the use of self-service counters and distribution of all items by waiters, to avoid manipulation by customers (tray, cutlery, cup, napkin and preparations); and cleaning with

70% alcohol of trays, cutlery, handrails, access turnstiles and distribution utensils.

Despite these measures, there was still a risk of contamination, mainly due to the worsening of the pandemic. Therefore, from 03/23/2020 other actions were necessary, such as: suspension of breakfast and use of "marmitex" type packaging to package the meal with local pickup. Over time during the lunchbox offering, the menu was improved with the inclusion of salad, which was initially suspended due to logistical issues resulting from the unavailability of inputs (food and appropriate packaging).

In August 2020, the Recovery Plan was created, which was conditioned to the evolution of the pandemic in the São Paulo Plan. The DA team kept up to date with publications from health authorities and the University (GR Ordinances), with adaptations to serve RUs safely.

Given all the needs to adapt the food service, even in the face of adverse situations, there was no interruption, not even for a day, the distribution of meals, with more than 45 thousand meals provided per month to serve the health area, scholarship students and employees of the outsourced company (cleaning and security) and students in isolation in student housing.

Although it was a very tense and extremely worrying moment given the severity and uncertainties of the Pandemic, the action of the Food Division/University City Hall in combating COVID-19 was essential for the student stay of the scholarship holders and the maintenance of the supply of meals to essential health professionals and participants in the COVID-19 Task Force. The actions also included the development of service protocols in the new context of the University, the review of Standard Operating Procedures, considering ANVISA's Specific Technical Notes and CVS guidelines.

CONCLUSION

After implementation of all actions, it was possible to produce meals with quality and safety in the fight against COVID-19. A balanced and safe nutrition in the routine of students and frontline workers, facilitating the continuity of their purposes and contributing to the adequate maintenance of daily activities, which in the case of health employees, referred to caring for and treating patients with COVID-19.

Furthermore, the service provided had a high level of acceptance, mainly because people could eat safely, complying with what was recommended by the Health Surveillance and Ministry of Health, and all this without

losing the quality meal that was offered by the University.

THANKS

For the success of the project, there was the dedication of all nutritionists from the Food Division, administrative sector, UK sectional warehouse, employees involved in the UK meal production process, City Hall office to speed up the processes of making financial resources viable, commitment of the DGA in the acquisition of disposables, essential for the provision of meals in the lunch box model, with quick scheduling of electronic auctions and the Rectory that created the Restaurants GT to support the decisions to be made.

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