JOÃO PAULO NOGUEIRA RIBEIRO

Volunteer Doctors Seek Patient

In Brazil, public hospitals are so overwhelmed that those who can't afford a private establishment may decide to not seek treatment at all. Realizing that many doctors were ready to give free consultations, João Paulo Nogueira Ribeiro launched Horas da Vida to connect available doctors with individuals in need of health services. Since 2012, 45,000 patients have benefitted from Horas da Vida.

horasdavida.org.br

The Brazilian health system (SUS)[1] theoretically guarantees universal coverage. So why are so many people without access to care?

J. P. N. R. : This public system does indeed exist, but the demand is so great that the waiting time for consultations and exams is very long. For example, in 2014, in São Paulo, 600,000 patients were on waiting lists. Furthermore, only a quarter of Brazilians benefit from the insurance needed to access private clinics. The goal of *Horas da Vida* is to provide basic care to this population.

What solution have you developed?

J. P. N. R. : We let numerous health care professionals offer hours of free consultations, exams and products