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**T**he Second Brazilian Congress on Epidemiology, organized by the Brazilian Association of Graduate Education in Public Health (Abrasco), held in Belo Horizonte from July 13 to 17, 1992, was an event which reaffirmed the vitality of Epidemiology in the country. The central theme "Quality of Life: The Historic Commitment of Epidemiology" reflects the synchronization of the Congress with contemporary movements which defend the right not only to a longer life, but also to a more pleasurable one. It is a challenge for Epidemiology to create or to redeem indicators that express quality of life, and not merely the number of years lived.

The program emphasized methodological issues of modern epidemiological research, as well as conceptual and epistemological frameworks relevant to the national health picture, issues regarding the use of epidemiology in health services, and the specific characteristics of the so-called "epidemiologic transition" in Latin American countries.

Epidemiologists from almost all countries in the continent participated, thereby contributing to the growing Latin American exchange in this area. Our Congress is an opportunity for in-depth theoretical and conceptual discussions on what constitutes the most appropriate Epidemiology for explaining health in Latin America.

Continuing the tendency for growth in the field, already noted during the First Congress in Campinas, in 1990, the Second Congress had 1,200 participants, 391 students in the 22 short courses that were offered, and 528 papers were read or presented as posters. These numbers confirm the growing interest in exchange of ideas, demand for new knowledge and productivity of the field.

The agenda attempted to create new spaces for professionals coming from different institutions, and with different backgrounds, to present the results from their investigations. This aim was fully achieved. From the 528 contributions, 224 (42%) were from universities, 166 (31%) from public health services, 40 (8%) from research institutions,

and 98 (19%) represented different forms of institutional exchange. This indicates that the growth of Epidemiology in Brazil is occurring not only at academic institutions, but also within health services. This expresses Abrasco's commitment with the health status of the Brazilian population and fulfillment of their health needs.

The potential contribution of disciplines such as Geography, Anthropology, Philosophy, Computer Sciences, and Social Sciences to Epidemiology was debated. This initiative contributed to the interdisciplinary character of our Meeting.

A publication named after the Congress — "Quality of Life: The Historic Commitment of Epidemiology" — will be available this year with the contributions from the conferences, round-tables and workshops held during the Congress.

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