

Background

The aging process implementation in Portugal, and the consequent augmentation in the number of elderly people is evident and constitutes an increasing process. Undeniably, the elderly people are the main users of health services and specifically physiotherapy services. The economic and financial crisis that affected Portugal, has imposed restrictions on the health system and specifically on the National Health Service (NHS)¹

Objectives

We aim to:

- Understand the current and future numbers of the elderly people at the regional level (NUTS III);
- know the current number of physiotherapy services and human resources (NUTS III);
- Prospective the future physical therapy services and human resources, considering the health political trends related to services and human resources;
- Assess if these services and human resources respond to the needs of the current and future elderly people.

Methods

We performed a statistical analysis at the regional level NUTS III, considering the indicators: number of elderly people; number of physical therapy services and human resources.

We used the data from the Statistics National Institute, the Health Regulatory Body, the Health General Directorate, the Portuguese Physiotherapists Union and the Portuguese Association of Physiotherapists.

The main investigation limitations are concerned to the absence of data (NUTS III) related to physiotherapy health services and human resources included in *Centros de Saúde e Extensões dos Centros de Saúde*

Conclusions

With the increasing number of elderly people and the restrictive political trend, we assume that, if the political trends continues, proportionality will remain non-existent.

We conclude that current and future physiotherapy services and human resources do not respond to the needs of the current and future elderly population, and there is a need to adapt physiotherapy services and human resources to the current and future demographic reality, in order to achieve better levels of healthy life expectancy

References

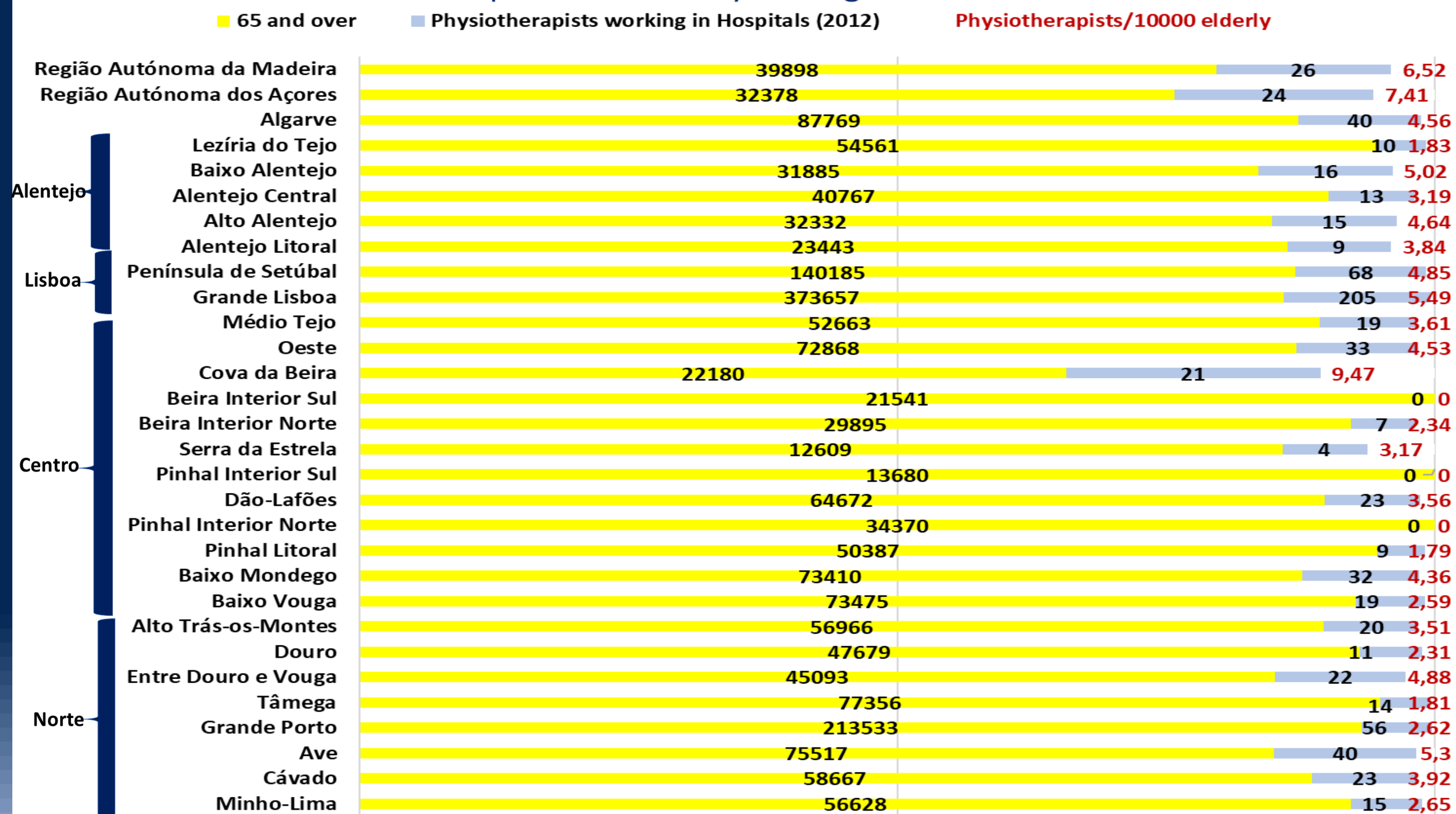
1. Coelho, C. I. Leão S. S., *Envelhecimento e saúde em Portugal. Práticas e desafios num cenário de aumento da população idosa (1974-2031)* [DoctoralThesis]. Lisbon: Universidade NOVA de Lisboa; 2017 .

Results

The results showed that at the regional level (NUTS III), physiotherapy services and human resources are scarce and there is no proportionality between the number of elderly people and the physiotherapy services and human resources.

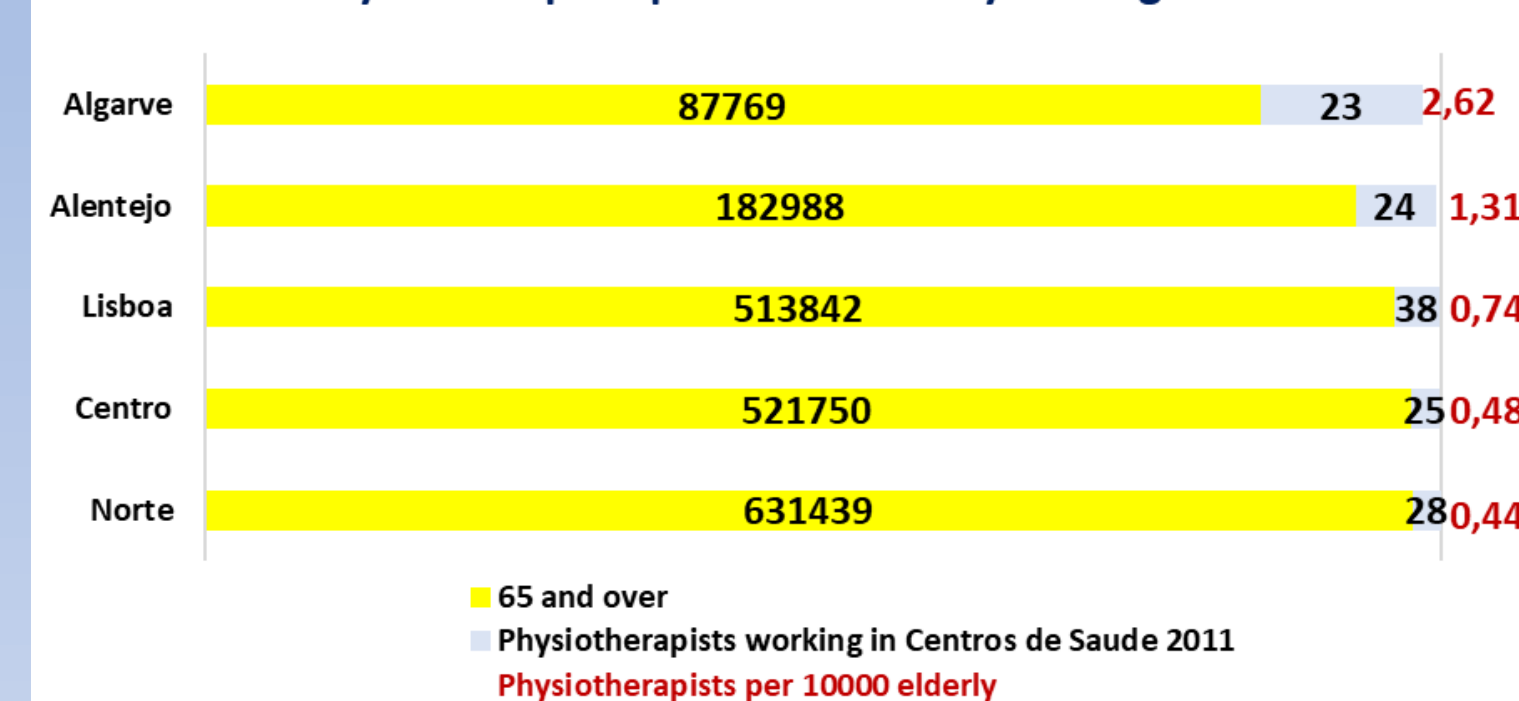
In 2011 the elderly represented about 18% of the Portuguese population and in 2030 will increase to 25% reflecting its impact in all regions

Elderly (2011)/Physiotherapists working in hospitals (2012) /Physiotherapists per 10000 elderly: Portugal - NUTS III



At *Centros de Saúde* level, there are no data related to NUTS III concerned to physiotherapy human resources, but there are at NUTS II level

Elderly (2011)/Physiotherapists working in Centros de Saúde/ Physiotherapists per 10000 elderly: Portugal - NUTS II



At NHS the main physiotherapy services and human resources are integrated in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Units, and in Portugal 9% of that kind of services are public, the others 91% are from social and private sector

