Background: Gastroenteritis due to bacterial pathogens constitutes a major public health problem. The setting of a reliable method to monitor and control bacterial gastroenteritis is important. This work described the susceptibility (S) profile of isolates capable of producing gastroenteritis in Latin American medical centers (SENTRY Antimicrobial Surveillance Program, 2001) and discussed the implications of the results.

Introduction: The SENTRY Antimicrobial Surveillance Program (1997-2001) monitored the susceptibility of bacterial pathogens in Latin American centers to antimicrobial agents and reported results in six publications. The SENTRY Antimicrobial Surveillance Program (Table 1) was followed by a second report (1998-2001), which studied the susceptibility of the same pathogens to a larger panel of antimicrobial agents. The expanded program was conducted in 21 countries, and the second report included data from all 21 countries. The present report was based on data from 18 Latin American countries, which were located in Buenos Aires (Argentina), Santiago (Chile), and São Paulo (Brazil), among others. The SENTRY Antimicrobial Surveillance Program provided epidemiological data on the incidence of bacterial gastroenteritis in Latin America. The data included the number of pathogens causing gastroenteritis in the Latin American centers, the number of pathogens that are capable of producing gastroenteritis in the Latin American centers, and the number of pathogens that are capable of producing gastroenteritis in the Latin American centers of the SENTRY Program. The objective of this study was to determine the frequency of occurrence and the antimicrobial susceptibility profile of isolates capable of producing gastroenteritis in the Latin American medical centers of the SENTRY Program.

Methods: The SENTRY Antimicrobial Surveillance Program was established in 1997 and monitored the susceptibility of bacterial pathogens in Latin American centers to antimicrobial agents. The program was conducted in 21 countries, and the results were published in six publications. The present report was based on data from 18 Latin American countries, which were located in Buenos Aires (Argentina), Santiago (Chile), and São Paulo (Brazil), among others. The SENTRY Antimicrobial Surveillance Program monitored the susceptibility of bacterial pathogens in Latin American centers to antimicrobial agents, and the data were used to determine the frequency of occurrence and the antimicrobial susceptibility profile of isolates capable of producing gastroenteritis in the Latin American medical centers of the SENTRY Program.

Results: Our results demonstrate that multidrug resistance, especially fluoroquinolone resistance, does not represent a serious problem among gastroenteritis pathogens collected from the Latin American medical centers by the SENTRY Program.

Conclusions: The results indicate that control measures implemented now could prevent the emergence and spread of multidrug resistant gastroenteritis pathogens in the Latin American region.