Background Brazil invests more in scientific research than any other Latin American country. Its Ministry of Health is a source of funding for research, along with other development agencies, and its Department of STDs, HIV/AIDS and Viral Hepatitis is one of the agencies that most strongly supports and promotes research in the field of STDs/HIV/AIDS in Brazil. However, it remained to be seen whether or not effective use is being made of scientific evidence during public health policy formulation and if it is being used to validate the government’s decision-making process. The purpose of this study was to assess the use of scientific evidence produced by projects funded by the Department.

Methods An exploratory study was carried out that surveyed former directors of the Department. Questions were asked concerning the Department’s institutional mission, support for research and technological development, use of the results of research projects, and use of these projects’ scientific evidence during public health policy formulation.

Results Analysis of the data showed that the Department has promoted and encouraged research studies and technological development, in partnership with centres for excellence in research, institutes of higher education, and national and international development agencies, and has funded 220 projects since 2004, resulting in 1,198 scientific publications. Despite these contributions to advances in scientific knowledge, the present study showed that incorporation of scientific evidence was limited to the research the Department had specifically requested, such as economic and strategic analyses and studies on operational programmes.

Conclusion Strategies for integrating science-based evidence with its practical application should be identified. Science-based evidence should be disseminated, promoted and incorporated into the process of developing public health policies, strategies, and practices.
The objectives of this study were to evaluate the quality of life of people living with HIV/AIDS and its relationship with clinical factors. This cross-sectional analytical study was performed with a non-probabilistic sample, consisting of people living with HIV/AIDS and undergoing clinical and outpatient treatment in two health services specialised in AIDS care in the municipal healthcare network of Ribeirão Preto, São Paulo, Brazil. Data collection was performed by means of individual interviews using a script for the sociodemographic and clinical characterization, and the HIV/AIDS-targeted quality of life instrument (HATQoL). The participants were 228 individuals living with HIV/AIDS, 122 (53.5%) men and 106 (46.5%) women, with a mean age of 39 years. Regarding the clinical variables, it was identified that the participant’s time of awareness regarding the HIV diagnosis was related to a poorer quality of life (QL) in several domains. The immunological condition is one of the variables that was related with a better QL, as individuals with a CD4 cell count greater than 500 cells/mm³ showed better means with statistically significant differences in five domains: overall activity, health worries, HIV mastery, life satisfaction, and medication worries. Furthermore, it was identified that individuals with AIDS had lower scores with significant differences in the domains: overall function and disclosure worries. Understanding the variables related to the QL of people living with HIV/AIDS is key, considering the chronic evolution of the infection, the possibility of treatment, greater survival and dealing better with the disease. The clinical variables should be continually monitored by the health team considering that the clinical and/or immunological condition is related to several aspects such as adherence to treatment, evolution of the infection, physical and mental health condition, as well as quality of life.