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CONTINUING TRAINING PROGRAM IN THE NEW PUBLIC HEALTH FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS IN LITHUANIA

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Significant health services restructuring is occurring across the Lithuania. This restructuring process provides an opportunity to reorient the system from illness to a focus on health of individuals and communities, as it is directed towards decentralisation and primary health care. However, national health services are remarkably ineffective in promoting good health or preventing illness and disability of the population. Health professionals are trained as effective clinicians, but it is no longer enough only to treat some of the sick. The aim of medical education is to produce professionals who will promote health. It is vital to ensure that health promotion plays an increasingly prominent role in the reforms. Health professionals in Lithuania are lacking basic knowledge in the new public health, health promotion, health care management, so it is necessary to develop continuing training program in the new public health for at postgraduate level (managers, doctors, nurses).

The aim of the program is to reorient health professionals from illness to a focus on health of the community, from pathogenic to salutogenic understanding.

The objective is to start a new program in the department of Social Medicine, Kaunas medical Academy in 1997 with support of other high schools of Lithuania and foreign countries. It will consist of several modules in the major topics of the new public health, which are the most important for health professionals according to their opinion and international programs in the new public health.

The major constraints in the program are: conservative thinking of some health professionals, lack of qualified teachers in the field of the new public health, problems in understanding English language, financing.

The interest in the new public health and modern health care management is growing and increasing number of participants and applicants for the courses is expected. When continuing postgraduate program is developed, we could think about postgraduate degree in public health. This education would help in reorientation of Lithuanian health care from curative to health promoting.

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The aim of the program is to reorient health professionals from illness to a focus on health of the community, from pathogenic to salutogenic understanding.

The objective is to develop a program in the new public health in the department of Social Medicine, Kaunas medical Academy. It will consist of several modules in the major topics of the new public health, which are the most important for health professionals according to their opinion and international programs in the new public health.

Target groups: health care managers,
doctors,
nurses.

Project stages and duration:

- needs assessment in discussions, questionnaires (2-3 months),
- organising the team, training trainers (continuing),
- creating the program (topics, themes), (continuing),
- starting the program (1997),
- improving the program according to the criticism and needs (continuing).

Constraints :

- conservative thinking of some health professionals,
- lack of qualified teachers in the field of the new public health,
- problems in understanding English language,
- financing.

Opportunities:

- the growing interest in the new public health and modern health care management,
- support from the Rector of Kaunas Medical Academy, Health Care Ministry,
- support from abroad.

Financing:

- Kaunas Medical Academy,
- international programs,
- local health care institutions.

Evaluation process:

- number of health care professionals, graduating the course,
- number of applications for the course,
- evaluation from the course participants.

Expected results - criteria of success:

- number of applications and participants is increasing,
- number of topics and courses is increasing,
- number of local teachers is increasing,
- local (regional) activities in public health are developing (courses in regional hospitals, outpatient departments).

Overall expectations:

when continuing postgraduate program is developed, we could think about postgraduate degree in public health. Number of “public health oriented” health professionals is growing, and health care in Lithuania is more and more health promoting than treatment oriented. This could help to improve health of Lithuanian population, which is now deteriorating, and needs active health promoting measures and interventions.

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*Continuing training program in the new
public health for health professionals.*