

PUBLIC HEALTH ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES: SYMPOSIUM OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MOSTAR FACULTY OF HEALTH STUDIES

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SUMMARY

Public health is an important area of health care that reflects the readiness of the state and society to provide the welfare of all citizens through the promotion of health and the preservation of a healthy environment - factors that directly affect the health of the population. The field of public health is very broad and its concept is changing over time, being defined in a narrower and wider sense. In short, public health is a science and practice that aims at ensuring the conditions in which people can preserve and improve their health and prevent health damage. The third millennium brings its specifics, needs and priorities according to challenges public health is faced by in the twenty-first century: the economic crisis, rising inequality, population aging, rising rates of chronic diseases, migration, urbanization, ecosystem change, climate change, etc. The role of public health is to protect, improve health, prevent diseases and injuries. Such a public health approach implies a multisectoral work focusing on "wider health determinants", and within this activity experts from various medical and non-medical profiles, whose field of public health is concerned, can be found. The development of inter-departmental co-operation skills contributes to a better understanding of health professionals and professionals of other profiles, and facilitates common, synergistic actions in addressing public health problems in the community. Symposium on Public Health Achievements and Challenges organized by the University of Mostar Faculty of Health Studies is just another indication of the obligation, the need and the desire for professional and scientific contribution to the fight for better health. Our faculty has so far organized other numerous symposia, and the aim of this symposium is to present public health achievements and challenges in our surrounding in order to protect, improve health, prevent diseases and injuries in a modern way.

Key words: public health – achievements – challenges - faculty

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INTRODUCTION

Symposium on Public Health Achievements and Challenges, which will be held in Mostar, on May 4, 2017, is organized by the University of Mostar Faculty of Health Studies, with the participation of experts from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Montenegro. It is intended for a wide range of health professionals and professionals of various disciplines working in the field of public health protection and improvement. The symposium is recognized as a place of exchange of opinions on certain public health problems. The concept of the symposium is designed to cover the most important topics in the field of public health and present news, provide the latest guidance and share experiences related to public health outcomes and challenges, both in the system and outside the healthcare system.

Public health is an important area of health that reflects the readiness of the state and society to provide the welfare of all citizens through the promotion of health and the preservation of a healthy environment - a factor that directly affects the health of the population. The long history of public health in this area is reflected in the successful suppression of disease, their prevention and promotion of health. However, in the context of rapid changes in population, demographic changes, globalization, environmental risks, it is necessary to

continuously evaluate the functioning of the public health system with the aim of capacity building, organizational improvements and the growth of disease prevention and quality of life (WHO 2006).

The field of public health is very broad and its concept is changing over time, being defined in a narrower and wider sense. It is commonly understood too simple ("public health is all that is not private in healthcare") or too narrowly ("public health is an activity exclusively involving public health institutes"). In short, public health is a science and practice that aims at ensuring the conditions in which people can preserve and improve their health and prevent health damage (Berridge 2000).

The concept of public health has changed at the outset, from the need to protect against contagious diseases and has now improved to a respectable level in most parts of the world. However, the third millennium brings its specifics, needs and priorities according to challenges public health is faced by in the twenty-first century: the economic crisis, rising inequality, population aging, rising rates of chronic diseases, migration, urbanization, ecosystem change, climate change, etc. The role of public health is to protect, improve health, prevent diseases and injuries. However, in such circumstances, it is necessary, but at the same time demanding and costly, to provide the highest possible

level of population health. Public health focuses on the whole range of health and wellbeing, not just to eradicate certain diseases. Many activities focus on the population, such as public health campaigns, but also include providing individual services to individuals such as vaccination, behavioral counseling or health tips (Walke & Simone 2009).

Such a public health approach implies a multisectoral work focusing on "wider health determinants", and within this activity experts from various medical and non-medical profiles, whose field of public health is concerned, can be found. The development of inter-departmental co-operation skills contributes to a better understanding of health professionals and professionals of other profiles, and facilitates common, synergistic actions in addressing public health problems in the community.

According to SZO-EPHOS (WHO 2011), the ten essential public health competency functions are:

1. Population health monitoring;
2. Monitoring and response to health and emergency hazards;
3. Healthcare including environment, occupational exposure, food safety;
4. Promoting health, including actions in relation to social determinants and inequalities in health;
5. Prevention of illness, including early detection of disease;
6. Provision of health and wellbeing management;
7. Sufficient insurance of competent workforce important for public health;
8. Ensuring a sustainable organizational structure and its financing;
9. Advocacy, communication and social mobilization for health;
10. Promoting public health research to public policy and practice policy.

SYMPOSIUM: PUBLIC HEALTH ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

Among the papers that will be presented at the symposium, some of the topics related to the above mentioned essential public health operations can be identified.

Introductory presentation at the symposium "Health Management Diary" (Z. Sostar), in which the author points out the need for "new skills, such as leadership, teamwork, quality systems, resource allocation, decision making and the most demanding, human resources management "is in line with the above-mentioned PH functions ("Ensuring health and wellbeing management "or" Ensuring sufficient, public health competent workforce").

The paper "Monitoring quality and outcomes of hospital health services - pilot project in HNC" (R. Bosnjak and the group of authors), is about monitoring and

analyzing "the connection between the cost of health care and the quality of the health services provided, contributing to the planning of the network of hospital health systems", which is one of the essential public health interventions" Ensuring a sustainable organizational structure and its financing", according to which the next topic is about" Family medicine as a component of primary health care in hercegbosna county - current perspective" Bagaric, B. Hrabac). In the paper "Crisis communication in healthcare" (Z. Tomic), the author emphasizes that "media relations, internal and external, and the development of crisis communication plans and the crisis communication team, is imposed as the imperative of every health institution", confirming the importance of communication for public health as evidenced by the work "Significance of communication in the prevention of anti vaccine activities" (I. Peric and the group of authors). In the paper "Medical nutrition prevention and medical nutrition therapy from the public health perspective" (D. Stojisavljević and the group of authors), a "set of various public health interventions aimed at improving nutrition and improving and preserving the health of the population, ie medical nutritional therapy as a component part of the measures directed at control and management of illness and associated complications" is presented.

A comprehensive overview of individual areas, topics that talk about threats to public health-public health challenges and possible responses will be presented at the symposium: potential danger of biological terrorism, monitoring and response to health hazards (increasing prevalence of cardiovascular, malignant and other chronic non-contagious diseases, drug abuse and other risky behaviors, environmental threats, connections between sociodemographic determinants and inequalities in health, reduction in vaccine coverage, the need to strengthen public health capacities for the control and surveillance of contagious diseases, as well as to act in emergency situations such as natural disasters and other crisis situations.

The symposium will show works on the results of public health activities during the catastrophic floods in 2014 as an instructive model of "emergency prevention", showing a number of activities in response and measures to reduce adverse impacts in emergency situations.

At the same time, the symposium will be an opportunity to promote the university textbook "Special Epidemiology of Infectious Diseases", which offers advanced knowledge of the epidemiology of infectious diseases, which will enable future and current health professionals to plan various types of preventive measures aimed at more effective public health interventions because successful control of infectious, especially contagious diseases, depends critically, if not dominant, on the basic knowledge of epidemiological facts.

We hope that the results of this symposium will justify the organizer's intentions and expectations that the symposium will contribute to the exchange of

experience and opinions, and among other things, what we need to do in particular, and what competencies should we build to ensure sufficient education and training of the competent workforce who will have the knowledge and skills to deal with, in practice, multi-sectoral and more effectively with the challenges of complex public health problems.

CONCLUSION

Symposium on Public Health Achievements and Challenges organized by the University of Mostar Faculty of Health Studies is just another indication of the obligation, the need and the desire for professional and scientific contribution to the fight for better health. Our faculty has so far organized other numerous symposia, and its teachers and students have participated in symposia and congresses around the world and have written numerous scientific and professional papers, some of which have been published in very high indexed journals. The desire for better education is reflected in the newly opened doctoral study that started this year and the electronic journal Health Bulletin launched three years ago and in which we repeatedly wrote about this issue (Mimica et al 2015, Marušić et al. 2015, Šimić 2016, Sinanović & Babić 2016, Babić et al. 2017).

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Inga Marijanović: concept of the paper;
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