

DEBATE AND EDUCATION

Transformation of the system of education in health care services

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“Nursing” and “Public Health Care” are new study specializations which have been offered by the Faculty of Medicine, Comenius University in Bratislava from the study year 2002/2003 and from the study year 2003/2004 “Midwifery”, “Laboratory and examination methods” and “Physiatrics, balneology and rehabilitation” accredited by AK SR have followed. It is the consequence of the transformation of the specialization Nursing and definition of the nurse’s qualifications according to the European Strategy of WHO for education of so called regulated non-physician professions nurses and midwife. The government Regulation on further education of health care workers No. 157/2002 of the Statute has brought about new trends in the system of education in health services. As a consequence of these changes Faculty of Medicine of the Comenius University promptly reacted to this public requirement to increase the level of qualification of health care workers. (Ref. 5.)

Key words: education, nursing, public health care, midwifery, university education.

In the context of the present changes in the health care (reform efforts to lower the costs), increase the efficacy and quality of health services, development of the primary care the requirements for nursing practice and it’s flexibility on the labour market grow. Transformation of education in the specialization „Nursing“ and the specification of competencies of the nurse with regard to the European Strategy of WHO for education of so called regulated non-physician professions (nurses and midwives) from 1998, to the relevant directions of EU (77/452/EHS) and to the valid legislation of SR (The Act of The National Board of Slovak Republic on the profession of nurse and SKS No. 311/2002 of the Statute, The Regulation of the government on further education of health care workers No. 157/2002) brought new trends in to the system of education of health care workers.

As a consequence of these changes Faculty of Medicine of the Comenius University promptly reacted to this public requirement to increase the level of qualification of health care workers and following intense preparations has integrated in to the group of accredited educational and research institutions providing University education for health care workers.

In the study year 2002/2003 were three new accredited specializations established at the Faculty of Medicine, Comenius University in Bratislava – Bachelor degree (Bc.), 3 years and Magister degree (Mgr.), 5 years of internal University study – the specializations “Nursing” and “Public Health Care”. In the

study year 2003/2004 were next specializations accredited as follows: Midwifery (Bc.), Laboratory and examination methods (Bc., Mgr.) and Physiatrics, balneology and rehabilitation (Bc., Mgr.) in both, the internal and external forms of study.

The specialization “Nursing” can be studied according to the System of study specializations issued by the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic No. 2090/2002, dated 16-12-02, as follows:

- in the first degree of academic study (Bc.) with standard duration of 3 years for internal study and 4 years for external study,
- in the second degree of academic study (Mgr.) with standard duration of 2 years for internal study and 3 years for external study,
- by the graduates who finished the first degree of the study in the study specialization “Nursing” or “Midwifery”,
- in the third degree of academic study PhD.

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The bachelor study graduates (Bc., first degree) independently provide individual nursing care – preventive, supportive, therapeutic, rehabilitation or auxiliary – to individuals, families and groups using the method of nursing process; maintain and support optimal health state of individuals, families, groups and communities in various situations requiring nursing care; promote active participation of individuals, groups and communities in the process of health, therapy and care maintenance and support; monitor the need for nursing care including education of individuals, families and groups and in mutual cooperation ensure its maximal quality in accordance with ethical principles and rights of the patients.

The master study graduates (Mgr., second degree) provide nursing care in all fields and facilities of the health care system; are able to critically think and work with the results of different research projects; participate on the scientific research and employ scientifically approved methods, procedures, techniques; identify nursing problems, that are subjects to research; employ and apply results of the research in nursing care in agreement with ethical principles.

The postgraduate study graduates who obtain the title *philosophiae doctor* (PhD., third degree), are able to perform independent scientific work in the nursing discipline and substantially contribute to the development of nursing care as a scientific discipline.

The first and the second degrees are finalized with a state examination including the defence of the final thesis (Diploma thesis) and oral examination verifying the knowledge, abilities and skills to handle the problems of nursing care in the range of the specialization profile of the graduate.

The requirements for admittance to the study are: finalized secondary education with final exam, application for academic study, and moreover in the case of external study three years of nursing practice and successful entrance examinations from biology.

The graduates of the study specialization “Public Health Care” obtain theoretical and practical knowledge and skills focused on the protection and support of health, based on the main medical and other disciplines (natural sciences, health care management) that complete the education. The obtained knowledge enables the graduate in a defined range to evaluate selected aspects of the relations between life conditions and the health of the population, work in the field of health protection in different departments, participate on the management of environmental, social and health care politics, work in the field of consulting and health education and participate on the multidisciplinary

scientific activity. The education is realized also as three or five years of Bachelor or Magister study.

The purpose for introducing this type of academic study is to increase the qualification of existing middle health care workers in agreement with the requirements of modern nursing in providing health services to the public as a part of primary, secondary a tertiary prevention as well as care in the case of disease, rehabilitation and follow-up.

Nursing is a multidisciplinary scientific discipline focused on acquisition of theoretical knowledge and practical skills connected with the therapeutic-preventive care for sick person. Nursing education graduate has a good command of the nursing principles and is able to apply it in his professional life. The Faculty of Medicine, Comenius University in Bratislava possesses all necessary theoretical and preclinical foundations for full accomplishment of the nursing curriculum.

Public Health Care relies on the basic principles of health care transformation that consider prevention and health protection of the population to be one of the priorities in consequence to the main strategy of WHO. Public Health Care helps to formulate the theoretical principles and provides data for formulation and realization of the State’s health care politics. It represents an integral and independent education of a special category of health care workers. At present this type of education is not provided at any University in Slovak Republic.

The employment possibilities for the graduates are in hospitals of all types, at Universities specialized on nursing, in state health institutes, centers for health support, health consulting agencies or in research institutions and in the management of health services.

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