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ASSESSMENT OF INTEREST IN TAKING UP SECOND-CYCLE PROGRAMME IN PUBLIC HEALTH AMONG FIRST-CYCLE STUDENTS OF WARSAW MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

Introduction:

Pursuant to the Bologna Declaration, a vast majority of students graduating from the first-cycle programme (Bachelor's degree) at Warsaw Medical University (WMU) may enrol in the second-cycle programme (Master's degree) in the same major or change a major after obtaining a Bachelor's degree and start a programme e.g. in Public Health. Beginning in the academic year 2017-2018, the second-cycle programme in Public Health runs at the Faculty of Health Sciences, WMU as a full-time course (day studies), offering three specialities: Health Promotion, Healthcare Management, and Clinical Trials and Health Technology Assessment. Since 2017 Public Health Division, Faculty of Health Sciences, Warsaw Medical University has been the only one to offer a programme in Public Health in Warsaw as a member of ASPHER - The Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region. An original curriculum implemented since the academic year 2017-2018 matches European standards. A number of selected courses are taught in English, e.g.: International Health Policy and European Health Policy. The curriculum includes also modules of courses devoted to developing skills expected by employers: Prevention of burnout and Developing relationships with customers.

Aim:

The study aimed at assessing the interest in taking up second-cycle programme in Public Health among first-cycle students of Warsaw Medical University.

Material:

The study enrolled a total of 115 third-year Bachelor's degree students of Warsaw Medical University (women comprising 57.9% of the total). Mean age was 21.92 years (SD: 1.61, median: 22, min. 21, max. 32). First-cycle students of Public Health constituted the largest subgroup (24.6%), followed by students of Emergency Medicine and Obstetrics (10.5%).

Methods:

Participation in the survey was voluntary. Respondents completed an original and anonymous questionnaire available online at: <https://goo.gl/forms/j1rGpofw56TphmUM2>. The questionnaire comprised three questions and additional questions on sociodemographic data. In the survey, the respondents assessed their interest in commencing the second-cycle programme in Public Health and indicated a speciality that was most interesting for them at a full-time Master's programme. The questionnaire was sent to students to their current email addresses by respective Dean's Office staff members on May 22, 2017. The authors of the present study did not receive the approval of the Ethical Review Board of Warsaw Medical University for the study due to the fact that, according to the communication of the Ethical Review Board of WMU: "The Ethical Review Board do not give any opinion on surveys, retrospective, and other non-invasive studies."

Results:

Less than half of the students (42.1%, n=48) considered taking up second-cycle programme in Public Health at the Faculty of Health Sciences, Warsaw Medical University. Most students were interested in the new speciality introduced in the academic year 2017-2018: Clinical Trials and Health Technology Assessment (47.9%). The remaining two specialities: Healthcare Management (25%) and Health Promotion (14.6%) taught in the Public Health Division, Faculty of Health Sciences, WMU since 2012 were much less popular.

Conclusion:

Steps should be taken on a large scale to inform candidates and first-cycle students about the career development prospects after graduation from Public Health and to encourage students to continue education on a Master's programme.

Keywords: MA, master degree, Public Health, field of study, Bologna Process.