

IOTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

# CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

SEVILLE (SPAIN)
16-18 NOVEMBER 2017



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

### Ilona Cieślak, Aleksander Zarzeka, Lucyna Iwanow, Mariusz Panczyk, Mariusz Jaworski, Joanna Gotlib

The Department of Teaching and Education Outcomes, Faculty of Health Sciences with the Nursering Division, the Public Health Division and the Dietetics Division, Medical University of Warsaw (POLAND)

#### 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.

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

The Bologna process began in Europe on June 19, 1999, at the signing of the Bologna Declaration by ministers from 29 European countries. In accordance with the provisions of the Bologna Process, the vast majority of fields of study, including the fields of studies related to health sciences, are implemented in the form of two-cycle studies: first-cycle studies (Bachelor's degree) and second-cycle studies (Master degree) [1-3]. In many European countries, the introduction of the discussed process into higher education has caused in an increase in the quality of education and contributed to the more effective preparation of graduates to enter the labor market [4-10]. At Medical University of Warsaw, for most majors, the time requirement to complete bachelor's degree studies (academic degree I) is 3 years (6 semesters, 180 points of the European Credit Transfer System - ECTS) and graduates obtain a bachelor's degree, while master's degree studies (academic degree II) take two years (4 semesters, 120 ECTS points). Students may enroll 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

Teaching commenced at the faculty of Public Health at the Division of Health Science in the academic year 2000/2001. Initially it offered only M.A degree studies (first offered in the academic year 2000/2001), however B.A. degree studies were also offered since 2003 (started in the academic year 2003/2004). Until the academic year 2016/2017 the curriculum of the B.A. degree studies at the Department of Public Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, Medical University of Warsaw was mainly based on the guidelines covering the suggestions of the representatives of the students and Employers' Council [11]. 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.

Graduates of the second-cycle studies have the competence to perform managerial functions, inter alia: institutions performing public health tasks and non-public health care facilities; health insurance institutions. He has skills for this purpose: identification and prediction of threats and health problems of particular groups, recognition of social problems and demographic structures on the health of the human population; organizing, evaluating the effectiveness and evaluation of prevention programs and the promotion of health for various social backgrounds; mobilizing the public to implement state health policy at local and national level, controlling and assessing the sanitary and epidemiological situation at national and regional level, using knowledge about public health objectives and tasks in the European Union to enrich health promotion and promotion programs in the local environment; development of reports, publications and publications in the field of public health and the use of professional foreign language literature [12].

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.

#### 1.1 The aim of the study

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

#### 2 METHODOLOGY

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%). The distribution of respondents' studies is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** The distribution of respondents' studies.

Field of study	Percentage
Dietetics	10%
Medicine	1%
Midwifery	10%
Public Health	25%
Emergency medical Services	10%
Nursing	10%
No answer	34%

Source: developed on the basis of own results

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."

#### 3 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. The vast majority of the respondents who planned to start the second cycle program would like to continue their education at daytime (89.6%, n=43). Most students were interested in the new speciality introduced in the academic year 2017-2018: Clinical Trials and Health Technology Assessment (47.9%) (Chart 1).

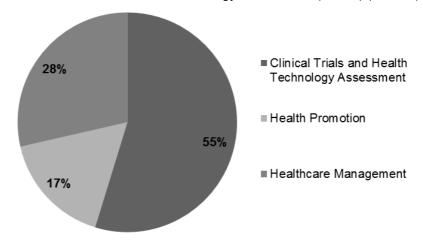


Chart 1. Frequency distribution of the answer to the question: "If you are going to take a full time study, what is your specialty?";

Source: developed on the basis of own results.

#### 4 CONCLUSIONS

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.

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