Gerald & Patricia Turpanjian School of Public Health

NEWSLETTER

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Implementing WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control Article 14 through Advocacy and Trainings

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Gerald and Patricia Turpanjian School of Public Health (SPH) was one of the 19 organizations worldwide that was competitively awarded the 2-year grant to expand the work in the field of tobacco dependence treatment. The grant was presented by Global Bridges Healthcare Alliance for Tobacco Dependence Treatment and hosted by the Mayo Clinic and Pfizer Independent Grants for Learning & Change (IGLC) and aimed to develop national capacity in implementing the World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) Article 14 in Armenia.

The SPH envisioned development of the national capacity in implementation of best practices for the tobacco dependence treatment in Armenia through development of a smoking cessation training program for practicing primary healthcare physicians in Armenia. The application of the existing best practices in a transition country such as Armenia required a careful examination and a thorough adjustment of the approaches to the local context. This necessitated a formative research during development of the training course, such as:

1) qualitative research with future beneficiaries to clarify their knowledge, attitude and practices regarding smoking cessation, their perceived needs for training and support for addressing tobacco use among their adult patients in Armenia

2) pharmaceutical market research to determine availability, affordability, and prices of the smoking cessation drugs.

The results of the formative research indicated an urgent need to enhance Armenian physicians' knowledge and skills in smoking cessation and to ensure wide accessibility, availability, and affordability of smoking cessation products in Armenia.

Training participants

To arm physicians with evidence-based smoking cessation counseling and treatment knowledge and skills the SPH research team developed the first smoking cessation training program for practicing primary healthcare physicians in Armenia. All the training materials were developed based on evidence-based international resources and were adapted to the local context using the findings of the formative research.

The Ministry of Health accredited the training curriculum and designated five continuing medical education (CME) credits. Overall, 58 primary healthcare physicians (family physicians and general therapists) from 18 polyclinics in Yerevan and Gyumri participated in the series of evidence-based tobacco dependence treatment trainings.

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