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Improving Nursing Education, Practice and Policy in Armenia



Dr. Sarah Kagan

The partnership between the American University of Armenia School of Public Health and the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing (Penn Nursing) is recommending that Armenia *develop a culture of experimentation and testing for new nursing models and then expand them across the country*. The recommendation comes after a one-day meeting on March 10th, 2016 when a diverse, global group of nurse leaders met in Yerevan to suggest an *action plan to improve nursing education, practice and policy in Armenia*.

The Nursing in Armenia Project Stakeholder's Meeting was the culmination of a comprehensive project launched in October 2014 to complete a national, comprehensive assessment of the nursing landscape in the country. Penn Nursing's Dr. Sarah Kagan, the Lucy Walker Honorary Term Professor of Gerontological Nursing, served as the Academic Consultant and Mentor for this project team. She is also an adjunct faculty member at AUA SPH.

Dr. Petrosyan, the Dean of the AUA SPH, highlighted the role of nursing workforce in the performance of health systems and the potential to improve quality of care, patient outcomes and efficiency of the health system through strengthening the nursing workforce and nursing education in Armenia.

The project core team members Kristina Akopyan and Serine Sahakyan shared the most important findings from the project fieldwork.

After hearing the results, the diverse group of international and local attendees including policy makers, practicing nurses, researchers,



Drs. Armen Der-Kiureghian, Haroutune Armenian, Ara Babloyan

nursing faculty, representatives of non-governmental organizations and international organizations broke into three working groups, based on their experience and expertise in the field, to suggest a plan of action and discuss the possibilities for modernization and restructuring of the field of nursing in Armenia. Among the international participants were nursing professors Dr. Cheryl Resha and Dr. Antoinette Towle from Southern Connecticut State University, which has a Memorandum of Understanding for collaboration with AUA, and Dr. Kathleen White, Associate Professor and



Participants

Director of the Master of Science in Nursing Program of Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing. Dr. Ara Tekian, Professor and Associate Dean for International Affairs, College of Medicine, University of Illinois at Chicago, facilitated the reporting of the education, practice and policy working groups. Dr. Haroutune Armenian, the AUA President Emeritus and Professor at UCLA Fielding School of Public Health, synthesized and reflected on the project findings and recommendations suggested by the working groups.

This project and partnership between Penn Nursing and AUA was made possible thanks to the generous support of Edele Hovnanian, University of Pennsylvania alumna and trustee of her family's foundation, the Hirair and Anna Hovnanian Foundation. The Hovnanian family remains committed to improving lives and making a difference in Armenia.



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To learn more...



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Shabitha Alexander, Knowledge, Attitude and Practice towards Evidence Based Medicine among General practitioners and specialists in Yerevan.

Zaruhi Arakelyan, Knowledge, Attitude And Practice of Healthcare Providers Who May Come in Contact With Women Who Have Experienced Intimate Partner Violence: a Qualitative Research.

Inesa Chilingaryan, The Risk Factors of Urinary Stone Disease in Armenia: A Case-Control Study.

Varduhi Hayrumyan, Smoking Cessation after Acute Myocardial Infarction among Patients of Nork Marash Medical Center in Armenia: a Cross-Sectional Survey.

Janani Ramasamy Kali, Implementation and Evaluation of Fluorosis Education Program in Tamil Nadu, India.

Karin Karbouian, Oral Hygiene in Children Under 3 Years of Age in Yerevan, Armenia: A Qualitative Exploration of Maternal Knowledge, Attitude, Beliefs, and Experience.

Vahe Krmoyan, Osteoporosis knowledge, beliefs, and practice among the general population in Yerevan and Gyumri.

Hratchia Lylozian, The Health Component of the Social Package: a Cross-Sectional Survey of Beneficiaries.

Anush Mnatsakanyan, Determinants of iron deficiency anemia among hospitalized children aged 6-59 months in Armenia: a case-control study.

Tatevik Movsesyan, Establishing hepatitis C patients' surveillance system in the Republic of Armenia: Community Service Grant Proposal.

Shogher Muradyan, Qualitative Description of Experiences of Dealing with Temporomandibular Joint Disorder Symptoms in Yerevan, Armenia.

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Dhamodharan Ramasamy, Cervical Cancer Prevention Program in Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu state, India.

Artem Vrshikyan, Improving Oral Hygiene to Prevent Dental Problems through Awareness Raising Among Children in Armavir Marz: a Community Service Grant Proposal.

Full project reports are available at http://sph.aua.am/master-projects_2016/webpage



Zaruhi Arakelyan



Vahe Krmoyan



Janani Ramasamy Kali



Hratchia Lylozian

Nutrition Today Matters Tomorrow: The 2nd International Conference



Dr. Kim Hekimian

The American University of Armenia (AUA) School of Public Health (AUA SPH) hosted a two-day international conference on May 30-31, 2016 entitled “*Nutrition Today Matters Tomorrow*” with over 350 health professionals, program planners, and policy makers attending.

This conference was the second International Nutrition Conference in Armenia; it was organized and sponsored by the Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR), Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons Institute of Human Nutrition, and the AUA School of Public Health. The focus of the conference was the importance of key micronutrients, dietary approaches to sufficiency, the importance of growth monitoring and the need for better data to develop and implement evidence based policies. The event had several sessions, panel discussions, and breakout

sessions on the following topics: overview of micronutrients and cost of their deficiency; dietary approaches to micronutrient sufficiency; the need for Armenian dietary guidelines and nutrition policy, the need for better data about shortfall nutrients, vulnerable populations, and risk-benefit analyses; nutrition updates from Armenian programs; nutritional needs of children 0-5 years of age; “My Armenian Plate”; and the relationship between diabetes, obesity, and osteoporosis. The conference concluded with a discussion on barriers to implementing nutrition programs and ways to overcome them.

The guest speakers of the conference included Drs. Richard Deckelbaum, Sharon Akabas and Kim Hekimian from Columbia University Institute of Human Nutrition, Dr. John Bilezikian and Nicholas Hutchings from Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeon, Health Nutrition Specialist Dr. Omar Dary from USAID, Dr. Eugene Dinkevich from the SUNY Downstate College of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics, and Dr. Edward Toromanyan, the Chief Endocrinologist. Drs. Nune Pashayan from the Ministry of Health, Hambardzum Simonyan from FAR, Anahit Demirchyan from AUA SPH, Anush Sahakyan from World Vision Armenia, Nune Dolyan from Children of Armenia Fund, and Sergey Sargsyan from Arabkir Medical Centre Institute of Child and Adolescent Health, Arin Balalian from Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health and Talin Kevonian from Meline's Garden made presentations on nutrition related projects in Armenia.



Conference audience

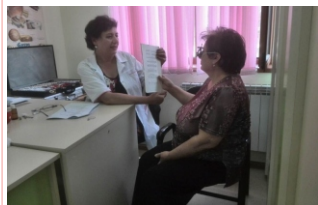


Drs. Omar Dary, Sharon Akabas & Richard Deckelbaum

Garo Meghrigian Institute for Preventive Ophthalmology 2015-2016 overview



April 2016 Garo Meghrigian Institute for Preventive Ophthalmology launched its annual eye screening program among socially vulnerable children. The staff of the Meghrigian Institute visited Achapnyak Social Care Center where 92 children participated in detailed eye screenings. Thirty two children were found to suffer from eye disorders and received treatment. Twenty children were diagnosed with refractive errors and those in need received eye glasses. Those who had other eye conditions were referred to specialized centers for more detailed examination.



October 2015 Garo Meghrigian Institute for Preventive Ophthalmology launched a campaign in the Martuni region of Artsakh. Free eye screenings were offered during the summer months to the residents of the town of Martuni, as well as villages of Tchartar, Karmir Shuka, Berdashen, and Gishi. Over 280 patients received eye screenings, and patients who were diagnosed with eye pathologies received free ophthalmic consultation about their diagnosis and further treatment; 207 people received eye glasses.



October 2015 Garo Meghrigian Institute for Preventive Ophthalmology celebrated World Sight Day (WSD) by organizing free eye screenings for the children living at the Gavar Children's Home (mankatun). Fifty five children participated in detailed eye screenings. All children with eye diseases received free ophthalmic consultation, treatment and eye glasses from the Meghrigian Institute.



May 2015 Garo Meghrigian Institute for Preventive Ophthalmology launched an eye screening program for World War II veterans living in Yerevan as a dedication to the 70th anniversary of the victory. Thirty-seven veterans participated in detailed eye screenings. All veterans with eye diseases received free ophthalmic consultation, medical treatment prescription and eye glasses from the Meghrigian Institute.

Trainings for Primary Healthcare Physicians in Tobacco Dependence Treatment: For the First Time in Armenia



Dr. Arusyak Harutyunyan

The American University of Armenia (AUA) School of Public Health's (SPH) Center for Health Services Research and Development (CHSR) in collaboration with the Global Bridges Healthcare Alliance for Tobacco Dependence Treatment conducted a series of evidence-based tobacco dependence treatment trainings for primary healthcare physicians in Yerevan and Gyumri in May 2016.

The training program included topics on tobacco epidemics, neurobiology of nicotine addiction, the role of primary healthcare professionals in smoking cessation, motivational interviewing, pharmacotherapy for smoking cessation, as well as relapse prevention. 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 that the CHSR conducted within this project. In the scope of the training, the trainers used breath carbon monoxide (CO) monitors as an example of motivational visual aid in smoking cessation. Overall, 58 primary healthcare physicians (family physicians and general therapists) from 18 polyclinics in Yerevan and Gyumri participated in the 2-day trainings.

Smoking cessation trainings were conducted by the CHSR's senior researcher Arusyak Harutyunyan, MD, MPH and research assistant and clinical psychologist Armine Abrahamyan, MS, MPH and senior lecturer from the Department of Family Medicine, Yerevan State Medical University Armine Danielyan, PhD. Dr. Arusyak Harutyunyan, the Principal Investigator of this project, is the only expert in Armenia that has the Mayo Clinic's provisional Tobacco Treatment Specialist Certificate.

All participants received five continuing medical education (CEM) credits from the Ministry of Health (MoH) of the Republic of Armenia.



Training participants



Training participants

The grant, presented by Global Bridges Healthcare Alliance for Tobacco Dependence Treatment, hosted by Mayo Clinic, and Pfizer Independent Grants for Learning & Change (IGLC), is part of the program to support healthcare professional training and advocacy around the world. The CHSR is one of 19 organizations worldwide selected to receive this award to expand the work in the field of tobacco dependence treatment.

Public Health Seminar Series

June 13, 2016: Nursing in Armenia project held a workshop on *Elder care* at Nork Marash Medical Center, where Dr. Sarah Kagan introduced the topic by describing the growing older population and the importance of fostering geriatric competence among healthcare workers and creating an age-friendly environment. On **June 16, 2016**, Nursing in Armenia project held another workshop on *Culture of Nursing Practice* at Gyumri State Medical College. SPH intern Abigail Burns from Penn Nursing covered the main characteristics of nursing profession, basics of clinical thinking, as well as some basic practical skills to promote building self-esteem and professional identity among Armenian nurses.

May 17, 2016: AUA SPH hosted the “*Global Health Symposium: Lessons from Oncology*” in collaboration with the Global Health Initiative of Dana-Farber/Boston Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders Center, the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, the Armenian Association of Hematology and Oncology, City of Smile, and IDeA Foundation. The presentations covered many important topics in the field, including choosing global health as a profession, cooperating globally to conquer cancer, creating psychosocial programs globally treating kids in low and middle income countries, and the role of nursing in pediatric oncology in low-resource settings. Dr. Bogler gave a special talk on “*How I Survived Cancer*”.

May 11, 2016: AUA SPH hosted a public health seminar with Dr. James C. Anthony. Dr. Anthony is a Professor of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, College of Human Medicine, Michigan State University; Adjunct Professor, Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg SPH; and Profesor Honorario, Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia. He presented “*Truths, Half-truths, and Possible Mischief-making in Psychiatric Epidemiology*”.

April 19, 2016: AUA SPH hosted a public seminar led by Fulbright Specialist Shakeh Kaftarian, PhD. She is a medical psychologist, having served as research and evaluation scientist, and senior adviser on women's health and gender research at the National Institutes of Health of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She talked about *Empowerment evaluation Methodology* which is designed to demystify the planning, implementation, and Evaluation of service programs.



Armenian American Medical Society's Health and Heritage Award

The Armenian American Medical Society (AAMS) honored Dr. Haroutune Armenian with the **AAMS Health and Heritage Award** for his 50 years of devotion to and passion for public health research, education, and health care in Armenia and around the world.

Haroutune K. Armenian MD, MPH, DrPH, is a Professor in Residence at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health, and Professor Emeritus at Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Armenian is President Emeritus of the American University of Armenia and the founding Dean of the AUA School of Public Health.

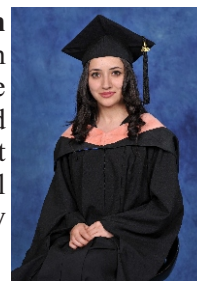
MPH Student & Alumni Successes



Inessa Chilingaryan (MPH 2016) has been appointed as the Laboratory Network Coordinator in the National TB Control Center of the Ministry of Health of the RA.



Hratchia Lylozian (MPH 2016) has been appointed as the Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist at the National TB Control Center of the Ministry of Health of Armenia.



Varduhi Hayrumyan (MPH 2016) has been appointed as a Research Assistant at the Center for Health Services Research and Development (CHSR).



Arman Tsaturyan MD, MPH (2013) has published his master's project that explored the risk factors for complications after radical cystectomy in Armenia in the internationally ranked peer-reviewed open-access journal SpringerPlus.



Kristina Akopyan and Arman Tsaturyan (MPH 2013) published an article on the experience of application of a rare surgical technique. The article was published in the internationally ranked peer-reviewed open-access journal Central European Journal of Urology (CEJU).



Ani Movsisyan MPH (2013), MSc, DPhil candidate has published her MPH master's thesis that looks at the diagnostic accuracy of the Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist (PCL) in the Journal of Traumatic Stress Disorders & Treatment.