



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



Armine Abrahamyan,

Arusyak Harutyunyan & Armine Danielyan

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.

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.

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



Training participants



IN THIS ISSUE:

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

[page 1]

- ✓ Sharing With The International Community Publications in 2015-2016

[page 2]

- ✓ Garo Meghrigian Institute for Preventive Ophthalmology 2016 Highlights

[page 3]

- ✓ Public Health Events

[page 4]

- ✓ MPH Alumni & Student Successes

[page 4]

We are social



Contacts:

Phone: (+374 60) 61 25 92

Fax: (+374 60) 61 25 66

E-mail: mphinfo@aua.am

Address: 40 Marshal Baghramian Avenue
Yerevan 0019, Republic of Armenia

Web: sph.aua.am, chsr.aua.am

Sharing With International Community Publications in 2015-2016

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Garo Meghrigian Institute for Preventive Ophthalmology 2016 Highlights



October: Meghrigian Institute distributed eye glasses to the beneficiaries of the Center for Social Services for Single Elderly and Disabled People in Yerevan to celebrate World Sight Day 2016. The staff of the Meghrigian Institute screened 382 beneficiaries of the Center for Social Services for Single Elderly and Disabled People between May and October 2016. All patients with eye problems received free ophthalmic consultation, medical treatment prescription, and 324 free eye glasses from the Meghrigian Institute. Meghrigian institute plans to continue eye screenings among single elders and disabled people living in Gyumri and Gavar.

October-November: Meghrigian Institute conducted a 4-day training on “Ophthalmic Diseases, Modern Diagnostic and Treatment Methods” among ophthalmologists and a 2-day training on “Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment of Ophthalmic Diseases” among ophthalmic nurses from nine marzes of Armenia in October and November 2016. This project has been implemented to fulfill the mission of Meghrigian Institute to educate health providers and establish an ophthalmic care and prevention network to expand service delivery to under-served populations.

Dr. Varsik Hakobyan, an Ophthalmic Consultant at Meghrigian Institute conducted the trainings. Twenty two ophthalmologists and twenty five ophthalmic nurses from nine marzes participated in the training. The Ministry of Health accredited the training curricula and designated 14 theoretical and two practical continuing medical education (CME) credits for the ophthalmologists’ training and eight theoretical CME credits for the ophthalmic nurses’ training. All the participants received certificates in recognition of successful completion of the training course and credits signed by the Minister of Health in December.



Dr. Varsik Hakobyan



November: Meghrigian Institute completed eye screenings among people who live in Vardenis Neuropsychological Retirement Home, which currently serves around 430 people that started in July 2016. Only 299 people were able to participate in the detailed eye screenings. Women constituted the majority of participants (57.2%). Refractive errors such as nearsightedness, farsightedness, astigmatism, and presbyopia were found in 110 participants. Meghrigian Institute distributed 120 free eye glasses to them. Other eye conditions such as infections, allergic conjunctivitis, cataract, glaucoma, diabetic angiopathy, hypertonic retinopathy and macular degeneration were diagnosed in 160 patients. All patients with eye diseases received free

ophthalmic consultation and medical treatment prescription from the Meghrigian Institute.

December: Meghrigian Institute distributed 100 eye glasses to the beneficiaries of the Armenian Caritas Day Care Centers for the Elderly in Gyumri and Gavar cities. The staff of the Meghrigian Institute screened 76 and 31 beneficiaries of the Armenian Caritas Day Care Centers for Elderly in Gyumri and Gavar, respectively in late fall 2016. Women constituted the majority of the beneficiaries (84.1%). Refractive errors such as nearsightedness, farsightedness, astigmatism, and presbyopia were found in 89 participants. Other eye conditions such as infections, allergic conjunctivitis, cataract, glaucoma, diabetic angiopathy, hypertonic retinopathy and macular degeneration were diagnosed in 103 patients. All patients with eye problems received free ophthalmic consultation, medical treatment prescription, and free eye glasses from the Meghrigian Institute.



PUBLIC HEALTH EVENTS



Ms. Marion M. Karian

credits for participation in professional development.



Dr. Haroutune Armenian

that pays more attention ANTIFRAGILE.



Dr. Anahit Demirchyan, Monica Thomas & Dr. Tsovinar Harutyunyan

Care for Children with Special Needs: Reaching the Nursing Community from Rehabilitation Centers and Primary Healthcare Facilities: On October 3 and 5, the Nursing in Armenia project continued its outreach efforts with nurses and held a workshop on promoting healthy development among children with special needs. Ms. Marion M. Karian and Ms. Lilith Assadourian, child development specialists from California designed and led the workshop in collaboration with Nursing in Armenia team members Serine Sahakyan (MPH '15) and Kristina Akopyan (MPH '13). About 30 nurses from primary health care facilities and specialized institutions providing care to children with disabilities attended the workshop. The Ministry of Health of Armenia provided five CPD (CME) theoretical

From Robust to Anti-fragile: a New Dimension for Health: On November 7, Turpanjian School of Public Health organized a public health seminar with Dr. Haroutune Armenian. At the beginning of the seminar the Executive Director of the Association of Healthcare Organizers of Armenia Dr. Smbat Daghbashyan and the Director of the National Institute of Health Dr. Alexander Bazarchyan presented the special Award recognizing Dr. Armenian's outstanding contribution to Public Health. Then Dr. Armenian focused his presentation on the topic "From Robust to Anti-fragile: a New Dimension for Health" where he described the paradigm shift to building a better state of health or, using Nassim N. Taleb's vocabulary,

Third MPH Poster Conference Showcases Public Health Internship Experiences: On December 2, the second-year Master of Public Health (MPH) students from Gerald and Patricia Turpanjian School of Public Health delivered poster presentations describing their internship experiences at various public health related organizations in Armenia. This was the third poster conference organized for the MPH students. Dr. Tsovinar Harutyunyan is the internship coordinator.

Internship sites included Fund for Armenian Relief, Nork-Marash Medical Center, Jinishian Memorial Foundation, State Health Inspectorate of the Ministry of Health, Children of Armenia Fund (COAF), National Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the Armenian Red Cross Society, Garo Meghriyan Institute for Preventive Ophthalmology, Center for Health Services Research and Development (CHSR), and the Clinic of Chemotherapy of Muratsan Medical Complex of Yerevan State Medical University.

MPH ALUMNI & STUDENT SUCCESSES



Armine Abrahamyan, (MPH 2015) and **Varduhi Hayrumyan**, (MPH 2016) were competitively selected to receive full scholarships to participate and present during the Tobacco Control Workshop for Health Professionals in Warsaw, Poland, October 25-26, 2016.



Nare Navasardyan, (AUA MPH 2016) was competitively awarded a Short-Term Conference and Travel Grant by Galouste Gulbenkian Foundation to attend the ASPHER Young Researchers Forum, a pre-conference event of the 9th European Public Health Conference, which took place in Vienna, Austria, November 9 to 12, 2016.



Tatevik Balayan, (MPH 2017) received a grant to participate in the sixth International Meeting on Emerging Diseases and Surveillance, which took place in Vienna, Austria on November 4-7, 2016.



Suren Galstyan, (MPH 2015) has published an article on barriers and facilitators of a hazard analysis critical control point based food safety management system (HACCP FSMS) adoption in the Armenian dairy industry in the internationally ranked peer-reviewed British Food Journal. The article was based on his MPH thesis.