



CHS NEWSLETTER

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Winter-Spring 2012

Blindness Prevention in Armenia



Dr. Babayan in Gegharkunik marz

Garo Meghrigian Institute for Preventive Ophthalmology (Meghrigian Institute) of the College of Health Sciences at the American University of Armenia is currently implementing a project aimed at reducing the incidence of blindness and visual impairment due to diabetic retinopathy in Gegharkunik marz of Armenia.

Diabetic retinopathy is a well-

recognized complication of diabetes mellitus. Improved control of diabetes significantly reduces the risk for diabetic retinopathy, and the treatment of retinopathy can reduce the risk for visual loss by more than 90%. Screening programs for detecting retinopathy at early stages when treatment can prevent loss of vision as well as health education programs for persons with diabetes help to prevent blindness due to diabetic retinopathy.

Meghrigian Institute is now conducting free ophthalmic examinations for diabetes patients in regional centers and villages of Gegharkunik marz for early detection of diabetic retinopathy and for the assessment of possible visual impairment due to diabetes. All diagnosed patients receive free ophthalmic consultations and treatment as well as educational brochures developed by Meghrigian Institute to increase patients' awareness about diabetes management and prevention of diabetic retinopathy.

Meghrigian Institute continues to conduct its annual eye screening program among socially vulnerable children. The staff of Meghrigian Institute provides services to the Achapnyak Social Care Center, which currently serves 100 school-aged children, and Mary Ismirlyan Orphanage, which currently cares for 90 children. Comprehensive eye screening was conducted for 141 children in these institutions.

Among them, 46 children were found to suffer from nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism. Meghrigian Institute prescribed and distributed eye glasses to twenty-nine children. More serious eye conditions such as infections, allergic conjunctivitis, dry eye syndrome, and uveitis were diagnosed in 79 children at the Achapnyak Center and Ismirlyan Orphanage. All children with eye diseases received follow-up medical care from Meghrigian Institute.



Dr. Babayan in Achapnyak Center



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GRADUATING COHORT 2011 (PART III)

MPH Integrating Experience Project Brief Abstracts

Arin Balalian; The Role of Physician-Related Characteristics in Prescribing Practices for Secondary Prevention of Myocardial Infarction in Nork Marash Medical Center

Cardiovascular diseases are considered to be a serious public health problem both in developing and developed countries. They account for 37% of deaths in the US and 50% of all deaths in Armenia. The aim of the study was to look at patients diagnosed with myocardial infarction that received all the recommended drugs following their episode and to explore the effects of physicians' characteristics on their prescribing practices.

Vahe Bakunts; Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of Kidney Stone Formers in Armenia Regarding Prevention of Kidney Stone Disease

One of the most common disorders in urology is Kidney Stone Disease (KSD). It affects about 10% of adult male and 5% of female population worldwide and has a high recurrence rate. This is the first study conducted in Armenia that assessed KSD patients' knowledge, attitude, and practice for prevention of recurrence.

Sumit Kumar Bansal; Knowledge Attitude and Practice of Taxi Drivers Towards Seatbelt Use in Yerevan, Armenia

Globally road traffic crashes account for more than 1.3 million deaths and 50 million injuries/disabilities. Traffic crashes are one of the leading causes of premature death in Armenia. This qualitative research was conducted to explore knowledge, attitude and practice of taxi drivers in Yerevan regarding seatbelt use.

Tatevik Blbulyan; Risk Factors for Miscarriage in Armenia

The purpose of the following research grant proposal was to determine the prevalence of miscarriage and identify the main risk factors and effect modifications between risk factors for miscarriage in Armenia.

Tatevik Gevorgyan; Physicians' Prescription Practices and Knowledge about Brand-Name Versus Generic Drugs in Yerevan, Armenia

Health care expenditures have continuously grown during the past decades. The use of less expensive generic bioequivalent drugs instead of brand-name can reduce prescription drug expenditures and make healthcare for families more affordable. The aim of the study was to measure the magnitude of the problem among general practitioners working in Yerevan

polyclinics and assess and characterize their knowledge about generic vs. brand-name drugs, perceptions and prescribing practices.

Lilit Hovhannisyan; Primary Health Care Providers' Adherence to Child Growth Monitoring Protocols and Prevalence and Predictors of Stunting, Wasting and Underweight Among Children Aged 5-17 Months Residing in Yerevan, Armenia

Both undernutrition and overnutrition are considered as malnutrition leading to numerous health problems: poor cognitive development, restricted growth and even death. The prevalence of undernutrition is globally declining; however, it still remains a major public health problem in many low

and middle income countries. The aims of this study were 1) to identify the prevalence of undernutrition, and 2) to explore the main risk factors for stunting, wasting, and underweight among 5-17 months old children residing in Yerevan, Armenia.

Kristine Mnatsakanyan; Assessment of the Problem and the Main Determinants of Incorrectly Performed Laparotomies in FMF Patients with Abdominal Attacks in Yerevan, Armenia

Familial Mediterranean fever (FMF) is an autosomal recessive inherited disease characterized by recurrent attacks of fever and pain secondary to polyserositis, mainly of the abdomen and joints. Because of similar clinical and laboratory symptoms, it is difficult to differentiate an FMF attack from acute appendicitis and other acute abdominal conditions. This study aimed to describe the situation regarding incorrectly performed laparotomies for acute abdomen among FMF patients with abdominal attacks in Yerevan, Armenia.

Armine Podosyan; Consequences of Trafficking on Women's Health

Human trafficking is a modern form of slavery. Trafficked women and men are exploited in the service of illicit and criminal services and labor, including sex work and labor in the garment industry and domestic service. Women and children are most likely to be trafficked. The primary aim of the study was to characterize physical, psychological, and emotional health

of women trafficked in and through Armenia from the narratives of women who had been trafficked and representatives from various organizations (e.g., governmental, international, and non-governmental) currently working in the field of trafficking.



Mery Tadevosyan, MPH 2011



Hayk Kanchinyan, MPH 2011

SHARING WITH INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

PUBLICATIONS

▲ Petrosyan D, Armenian H, Arzoumanian K. *Interaction of Maternal Age and Mode of Delivery in the Development of Postpartum Depression in Yerevan, Armenia*. *Journal of Affective Disorders* 2011; 135: 77–81.

▲ Khachatryan L, Scharpf R, Kagan S. *Influence of Diabetes Mellitus Type 2 and Prolonged Estrogen Exposure on Risk of Breast Cancer among Women in Armenia*. *Health Care for Women International* 2011; 32: 953-971.

▲ Demirchyan A, Petrosyan V, Thompson ME. *Psychometric value of the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression (CES-D) scale for screening of depressive symptoms in Armenian population*. *Journal of Affective Disorders* 2011; 133: 489–498.

▲ Petrosyan Y, Petrosyan V. *Risk Factors for Development of Angiopathy of Lower Extremities in Type 2 Diabetes Patients: a Case-control Study*. *Middle East Journal of Family Medicine* 2011; 9 (6): 3-7.

▲ Markosyan K, Lang D, Darbinyan N, DiClemente R, Salazar LF. *Prevalence and correlates of inconsistent condom use among female sex workers in Armenia*. *Sexual Health*, 2011, 8, 259–261.

▲ Lang DL, Salazar LF, DiClemente RJ, Markosyan K, Darbinyan N. *Predictors of Condom Errors among Sex Workers in Armenia*. *International Journal of STD & AIDS* 2011; 22(3): 126-130.



Drs. Frances Stillman, Arusyak Harutyunyan and Narine Movsisyan

CONFERENCES

Fifth European Conference Tobacco or Health, March 28-30, 2011 Amsterdam, The Netherlands

▲ Petrosyan D, Movsisyan N, Petrosyan V, Harutyunyan A, Hepp L, Avika-Tang E, Donaldson E, Stillman F. *Smokefree Hospitals: Determinants of Success* [oral presentation].

▲ Harutyunyan A, Movsisyan N, Petrosyan V, Petrosyan D, Hepp L, Avika-Tang E, Donaldson E, Stillman F. *Developing a Model for Smokefree Universities* [oral presentation].

XIII Annual Meeting of the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco (SRNT) -Europe, September 8-11, 2011, Antalya, Turkey

▲ Harutyunyan A, Petrosyan D, Movsisyan N, Petrosyan V, Stillman F, Hepp L, Avila-Tang E, Donaldson E. *Encouraging Smokefree Homes in Yerevan, Armenia: a Clinical Trial* [oral presentation].



Dr. Anahit Demirchyan at the 4th European Public Health Conference

▲ Petrosyan D, Harutyunyan A, Movsisyan N, Petrosyan V, Hepp L, Avila-Tang E, Donaldson E, Stillman F. *Smoke-free Healthcare Facilities: Lessons Learned from Armenia* [oral presentation].

33rd Annual Meeting of the Society for Medical Decision Making (SMDM): "From Evidence to Decision Making: Role of Behavioral Economics in Medicine," October 22-26, 2011, Chicago, Illinois, USA

▲ Tadevosyan M, Petrosyan V, Harutyunyan A. *Influence of Financing and Payment Mechanisms on Medical Decision Making: Vaginal Delivery vs. Cesarean Section* [poster].

▲ Truzyan N, Crape B, Petrosyan V, Grigoryan R. *Perceptions and Realities of Food Fortification in Preventing Anemia* [poster].

4th European Public Health Conference, November 10-13, 2011, Copenhagen, Denmark

▲ Petrosyan V, Grigoryan R, Crape B, Truzyan N, Martirosyan H, Armenian H. *Analysis of Health Surveillance Systems in Armenia, 2009-2010* [moderated poster presentation with brief oral presentation].

▲ Harutyunyan A, Petrosyan D, Movsisyan N, Petrosyan V, Stillman F, Hepp L, Evila-Tang E, Donaldson E. *Smoke-free Universities in Yerevan, Armenia, 2009* [moderated poster presentation with brief oral presentation].

▲ Demirchyan A, Petrosyan V, Thompson M. *Predictors of Poor Self-rated Health in Armenia, 2006* [moderated poster presentation with brief oral presentation].

▲ Markosyan K, Lang D, DiClemente R, Darbinyan N. *Investigating HIV-risk Behaviors of Female Sex Workers in Armenia: Inconsistent Refusal of Unprotected Sex and Its Correlates* [moderated poster presentation with brief oral presentation].

LATEST NEWS



Dr. Harutyunyan presenting the new program

Dr. Harutyunyan presenting the new program opportunity: Master of Public Health (MPH) and Master of Business Administration (MBA) Dual Degree Program starting this year. Students interested in this option will be able to complete both programs and earn two degrees in three years instead of four.

March 2012: CHS and the College of Business and Economics announced a new educational opportunity:

March 16-17, 2012: A collection of over 70 watercolor paintings by Dr. Haroutune Armenian, President Emeritus of the American University of Armenia and Associate Dean of Academic Programs and Professor in Residence at the UCLA Jonathan and Karin Fielding School of Public Health was exhibited at the UCLA Kerckhoff Art Gallery on March 16 and 17, 2012. These paintings reflected "expression of places where a peaceful moment got transformed into a positive reality." Thirty two of the paintings were sold to support a new fund for UCLA students to do internships and research at the American University of Armenia.



Drs. Armenian, Diener-West & Brookmeyer



February 24, 2012: Drs. Ara Ter-Grigoryan, RA Ministry of Health, Ara Babloyan, RA National Assembly, and Artak Kyurumyan, World Vision Armenia; CHS panel discussion "Health Financing in Armenia"



March 6-7, 2012: Blacksmith Institute technical review workshop for RA ministries of Health and Nature protection in collaboration with CHS and Acopian Center for the Environment (ACE)



May 3-4, 2012: Dr. Margrit von Braun; CHS and ACE Seminar "Lessons Learned from Hazardous Waste Sites from Around the World" and Panel Discussion "Role of Safety, Health, and Communities in Mining and Metals"



May 16, 2012: CHS seminar "History of Nursing in the United States" in collaboration with the Embassy of the United States in Armenia



Hilary R. Clinton with Ruzanna Grigoryan and other award recipients (Photo: U.S. Embassy Yerevan)

MPH ALUMNI SUCCESSES

On June 4, 2012, Ruzanna Grigoryan, MD, MPH (2007), together with the members of the environmental civil initiative received Universal Rights Award at the Embassy of the United States in Armenia. The U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton was present at the ceremony and stated: "Change begins with a group of courageous activists who fight to stop environmental degradation so Armenians can live healthier lives."

To learn more

about the College of Health Sciences please contact:
Phone: (+374 10) 51 25 92
Fax: (+374 10) 51 25 66, or
E-mail: mphinfo@aua.am
40 Marshal Baghramian Avenue
Yerevan 0019, Republic of Armenia
www.aua.am, www.auachsr.com

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