



SPH NEWSLETTER

AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA
GERALD & PATRICIA TURPANJIAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
AUA IS A U.S. ACCREDITED INSTITUTION AFFILIATED WITH THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

www.sph.aua.am, www.chsr.aua.am

Winter - Spring 2017 / Issue 19/

Ribbon-Cutting of Gerald and Patricia Turpanjian School of Public Health

On June 20, 2017, the American University of Armenia (AUA) hosted an official ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Gerald and Patricia Turpanjian School of Public Health. The event was attended by the Turpanjian family, as well as faculty, staff, and students. The benefactors after whom the school is named, Gerald and Patricia Turpanjian, were unable to be present. However, their children, grandchildren, and members of their extended family participated in the celebration marking the naming of the school in their honor.



Gary Turpanjian, Lori Muncherian and Paul Turpanjian

Provost Randall Rhodes, in a message from the president of the University, Armen Der Kiureghian, read that "It is an honor for this university to name its school of public health the Gerald and Patricia School of Public Health." The president's message noted the Turpanjians' extensive contributions to the University beyond those made to the School of Public Health, including to the Turpanjian Rural Development Program, the Turpanjian Center for Policy Analysis, DigiLib, and the Turpanjian Foundation Scholarship among many others.

Varduhi Petrosyan, Dean of the School of Public Health (SPH), introduced the school's mission of "improving the health of the population, improving health services in Armenia and in the region. We strongly believe in transparency, in community engagement, in the highest level of ethics, and in sustainable development. We also strongly believe in the highest level of quality in the education that we provide to our students and in the research and development projects that we implement in the school of public health."



Dr. Haroutoune Armenian

The School of Public Health has already seen over 230 students graduate from the program, 85% of whom went on to work in various institutions in Armenia and around the world, and 10% of whom went on to pursue doctorate degrees.

Paul Turpanjian, Gerald and Patricia's son, speaking on behalf of the Turpanjian family, stated "Collaborating with people he [Mr. Turpanjian] respects, talented people like the ones we've met today, is really the most rewarding thing that he's done in his life." Mr. Turpanjian's closing remark was in praise of AUA's accomplishments: "This is the epicenter [of success for Armenia] this is the hope, AUA."



IN THIS ISSUE:

- ✓ Ribbon-Cutting of Gerald and Patricia Turpanjian School of Public Health [page 1]
- ✓ Graduating cohort 2017 MPH Integrating Experience Projects [page 2]
- ✓ In-Patient Tuberculosis Treatment in Armenia: Establishment of a Continuous Quality Improvement System [page 2]
- ✓ World No Tobacco Day 2017 [page 3]
- ✓ TRDP Entrepreneurs in Health Program for Practicing Physicians [page 3]
- ✓ The State of Armenia's Health Care 25 Years after Independence [page 3]
- ✓ Public Health Events [page 4]
- ✓ Ara Tekian Receives Ellis Island Medal of Honor [page 4]
- ✓ MPH Student and Alumni Successes [page 4]

To learn more...



Or contact... Phone: (+374 60) 61 25 92
Fax: (+374 60) 61 25 12
E-mail: mphinfo@aua.am
Address: 40 Marshal Baghramian Avenue
Yerevan 0019, Republic of Armenia
Web: www.sph.aua.am, www.chsr.aua.am

Tatevik Balayan, Determinants of adherence to antiretroviral treatment among people living with HIV in Armenia.

Sarah Ghazarian, Assessment of Sugar-Sweetened Beverage (SSB) Consumption and its Determinants among Armenian Adolescents in Yerevan: a Cross-Sectional Study.

Tatevik Hovakimyan, Risk of Obstructive Sleep Apnea in Patients with Repaired or Palliated Congenital Heart Disease.

Manya Karapetyan, Perceptions and Experiences of Parents of Children with Autism on Diagnosis and Treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorders: a Qualitative Research Study.

Shahane Mnatsakanyan, Hepatitis B and C Infection-related Knowledge, Attitude and Practices of Dentists Practicing in Yerevan: a Cross Sectional Survey.

Tamara Simonyan, Lived Experiences of Pediatric Oncology Nurses in Armenia: a Qualitative Study.

Madhubala Subramaniam, Piloting an Educational Program to Reduce Obesity Among Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) Patients in India: a Community Service Grant Proposal.

Monica Steffi Thomas, The Association between Iron Supplementation During Pregnancy and Childhood Anemia Status among One to Five Year Old Children in India.

Full project reports are available at http://sph.aau.am/master-projects_2017/



Tatevik Hovakimyan



Sarah Ghazarian



Madhubala Subramaniam

In-Patient Tuberculosis Treatment in Armenia: Establishment of a Continuous Quality Improvement System



Presentation of the project findings

In 2015 - 2017, with financial support from the Armenian Medical Fund Zvart Avedisian Onanian Center for Health Services Research and Development (CHSR) of the SPH collaborated with the National TB Control Center (NTCC) of the Ministry of Health to implement the In-patient Tuberculosis (TB) Treatment in Armenia: Establishment of a Continuous Quality Improvement System project. During the first phase of the project, the CHSR team conducted a thorough needs assessment of the NTCC's diagnostic and inpatient treatment services in the TB inpatient facility located in Abovyan city. The project team used the Joint Commission International Accreditation Standards for Hospitals, International Standards for TB Care, and World Health Organization (WHO) framework.

During the needs assessment, the study team 1) reviewed and summarized the literature on quality assessment of inpatient TB facilities, 2) qualitatively explored practices of healthcare professionals working at NTCC and inpatient treatment experience of TB patients and their family members, 3) assessed the documentation, staff practices and environmental conditions of the NTCC's inpatient facilities using standardized checklists, 4) evaluated the compliance level of TB diagnostic and treatment practices with internal policies and procedures, national and international guidelines and standards, and 5) made recommendations for establishing a continuous quality improvement system at the NTCC.

At the end of the needs assessment, the NTCC Director Dr. Armen Hayrapetyan invited the CHSR researchers to discuss the results and recommendations with the NTCC team. The CHSR researchers have also presented the findings in scientific conferences and are currently working on two manuscripts for publishing in peer-reviewed international journals.



Administrative staff of the NTCC

The CHSR and NTCC plan to continue the fruitful collaboration with the Armenian Medical Fund for the full implementation of the Continuous Quality Improvement System at NTCC.



Dr. Arusyak Harutyunyan

Every year, on May 31, the world celebrates World No Tobacco Day (WNTD) under the auspices of the World Health Organization (WHO) highlighting the health risks associated with tobacco use and advocates for effective policies to reduce tobacco consumption. The theme of this year's campaign was "Tobacco – a threat to development."

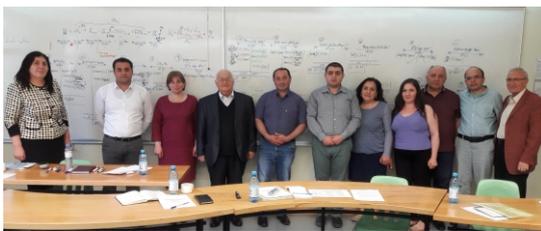
Dr. Arusyak Harutyunyan, CHSR Senior Researcher, was invited to the "Media Center" press-club to reflect on the WNTD theme. She mentioned, "Tobacco consumption and exposure to secondhand smoke have devastating health, social, economic and environmental consequences worldwide. Tobacco use costs national economies enormously through increased health-care costs and decreased productivity.

Smoking also exacerbates poverty, as the poorest people spend less on essentials such as food, education and health care. In fact, about 80% of deaths related to smoking occur in low- or middle-income countries which is an evidence of health inequity." She also highlighted the role of healthcare professionals in tobacco control and referred to the training of primary healthcare professionals designed and implemented by the CHSR in 2014-2016. The CHSR researchers visited primary healthcare physicians that participated in tobacco dependence treatment trainings in 2016 and provided them with the educational materials to be shared with their smoking patients.



Healthcare professional

TRDP Entrepreneurs in Health Program for Practicing Physicians



M. Kirakosyan, G. Harutyunyan and participants

In May 2017, Gerald and Patricia Turpanjian School of Public Health (SPH) conducted a Quality of Care (QC) training for physicians practicing in rural Armenia within the scope of the Entrepreneurs in Healthcare (EIH) project. Training participants were practicing physicians from TRDP who wanted to enlarge already established healthcare centers, as well as those who wanted to open and operate quality private health practices in rural areas. Overall, 10 physicians from seven regions of the Republic of Armenia and the Artsakh Republic completed the QC training course.

The training course was developed by the EIH experts based on the review of international and local experiences. The course introduced the core principles of healthcare quality improvement, including Donabedian's model of quality assessment, continuous quality improvement cycle, quality improvement tools, and reviewed quality improvement case studies from other countries and Armenia. Dr. Murad Kirakosyan taught the course on quality of care and Dr. Garnik Harutyunyan covered the financial issues, development of financial reports, and the process of getting a license for medical activity and getting financial resources from the State Health Agency. Vahe Kazandjian, MPH, PhD, made a guest lecturing on the quality indicators via Skype.



EIH training participants

The main objective of the EIH program is to increase access to quality health services in rural areas of Armenia through facilitation of innovation and entrepreneurship in the healthcare sector including interventions that help young physicians and other health practitioners to open and operate quality private health practices in rural areas of Armenia.

The State of Armenia's Health Care 25 Years after Independence



Dr. Varduhi Petrosyan

Dr. Varduhi Petrosyan, the Dean of Gerald and Patricia Turpanjian School of Public, was invited to present on the health system reforms, important public health issues, and Tuberculosis Control in Armenia during the panel discussion The Good, the Bad, the Ugly: The State of Armenia's Health Care 25 Years after Independence moderated by Dr. Kim Hekimian, Assistant Professor, Institute of Human Nutrition, Columbia University. Around 100 health professionals from New York and New Jersey areas attended the event organized by the ARF Dro Gomideh, the Armenian Medical Fund (AMF), and the American Armenian Health Professionals Organization (AAHPO) in New Jersey, at Hackensack University Medical Center.

January 20-29, 2017: The Armenian Heritage Cruise (Armenian Cultural Association) organized a Special Program for Health Care Professionals on Medical and Dental Health in Armenia and for the first time provided Continuous Medical Education (CME) credits (ACCME and CDE Accreditation) to the participating health professionals. The SPH Dean Varduhi Petrosyan was invited to make two presentations: the first one on the Health System of Armenia and Important Public Health Issues and the second one on Tuberculosis and Tobacco Control in Armenia. The SPH former Dean Robert Bagramian was also among the invited speakers and made a presentation on Dental Health in Armenia.



Organizers and speakers

February 18, 2017: The RA Minister of Health Dr. Levon Altunyan and Chief of Staff Dr. Nelson Zuloyan visited the SPH. AUA President Armen Der Kiureghian and SPH Dean Varduhi Petrosyan greeted the Minister and the Chief of Staff, and gave a tour of the AUA facilities. SPH faculty and researchers then gave a presentation on the results of environmental health projects conducted in the last couple of years. The presentation was followed with an active discussion on study findings and actions that could mitigate health risks in the polluted communities. Drs. K. Akopyan and Dz. Melkom Melkomian contributed to the discussion.



Minister Altunyan and SPH

March 22-25, 2017: Armine Abrahamyan (MPH '15) and Varduhi Hayrumyan (MPH '16) were competitively selected to participate and present during the 7th European Conference on Tobacco or Health in Porto, Portugal. Armine Abrahamyan made two oral presentations on the results of the "Implementing WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control Article 14 in Armenia," and Varduhi Hayrumyan made an oral presentation of her master thesis project entitled "Smoking Cessation at 6 to 12 Months after Myocardial Infarction: A Cross-Sectional Study in Armenia" co-authored by Drs. A. Harutyunyan and Ts. Harutyunyan.



A. Abrahamyan, K. Kemper, V. Hayrumyan

Ara Tekian Receives Ellis Island Medal of Honor



May 12, 2017: Dr. Ara Tekian, AUA Pillar and one of the MPH program founding faculty members, receives Ellis Island Medal of Honor presented by the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations (NECO). Immediately following his receipt of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, Dr. Tekian also received the American Educational Research Association (AERA) 2017 Distinguished Career Award. Dr. Ara Tekian is Professor and the Director of International Affairs at the Department of Medical Education (DME), and the Associate Dean for the Office of International Education at the College of Medicine, University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC).

MPH STUDENT & ALUMNI SUCCESSES



Tatevik Hovakimyan (MPH 2017) has been admitted to the two-year Master of Science Program in Health Economics, Outcomes and Management in Cardiovascular Sciences at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).

Gohar Abelyan (MPH 2015) published an article entitled "A case-control study of risk factors of chronic venous ulceration in patients with varicose veins" in the Journal of Phlebology. The article was based on her master's thesis project.



Karine Minasyan (MPH 2015) has been awarded a year-long research scholarship (2017/2018) to conduct the research project entitled "Study of Thyroid Dysfunction in Patients with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus" at the Department of Endocrinology, Charité University Hospital (Berlin, Germany).

Yelena Sardaryan (MPH 2013), **Zaruhi Arakelyan** MPH (2016), and **Dhamodharan Ramasamy** MPH (2016) were competitively selected to make a presentation during the Empowerment of Girls and Women in Armenia conference. Zaruhi and Yelena presented their master thesis project.



Sarah Ghazarian (MPH 2017) has been awarded the first place in a nationwide competition for "Best Student" among health professionals in 2017 by RA Ministry of Education and Science.

Mher Beglaryan (MPH 2013) published an article entitled "Development of a tripolar model of technology acceptance: Hospital-based physicians' perspective on EHR" in the International Journal of Medical Informatics. The article was based on his master's thesis project.