AUA American University of Armenia
TURPANJIAN SCHOOL of PUBLIC HEALTH

NEWSLETTER

AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA
GERALD & PATRICIA TURPANJIAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Winter - Spring 2019 /Issue 23/

AUA SPH Launches Tuberculosis Awareness Raising Campaign

On March 24, 2019, the American University of Armenia Turpanjian School of Public Health (SPH) launched the tuberculosis (TB) awareness raising campaign echoing the 2019 World TB Day theme "It's Time to end TB in Armenia." The campaign is part of a broader project "Institutionalization of Patient-Centered Tuberculosis Treatment in Armenia," which supports patients and their families along the TB care pathway and helps achieve sustained treatment outcomes. The activity is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by AUA SPH, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia and the National TB Control Center (NTCC).

G. Ghukasyan, L. Kocharyan, L. Nanushyan, V. Petrosyan

The World TB Day event was the launch of the communication campaign to raise patient, community, and population awareness about TB. As part of the awareness raising campaign, the NTCC provided its mobile clinic that provided free testing in collaboration with the Armenian Red Cross Society. AUA SPH has prepared awareness raising materials that the clinic spread among the general population providing healthcare advice. The awareness raising tour started from Northern Avenue in the heart of Yerevan, and reached some cities and villages in Gegharkunik, Lori, Tavush and Aragatsotn regions.

Attending the launch event, Deputy Minister of Health Dr. Lena Nanushyan (MPH'05) reaffirmed the government's commitment to eliminating TB. "We know we have come a long way in effective TB management in Armenia, but the journey is not over. It's time to build on previous efforts and step up our efforts to end TB by 2030," she said.

TB-related stigma is also a serious issue, with many patients reluctant to share their TB status with colleagues, friends and family members. However, studies suggest that support from family and friends is essential for TB patients to complete their treatment and overcome the disease. "Family member involvement in a patient's treatment journey has been successfully tested in Armenia through a clinical trial that we conducted and it is currently recommended by WHO. Now, we aim to scale up its implementation in Armenia as best practice. So, if you know someone who is fighting TB, it's time to stand by them," said Dr. Vahe Khachadourian (MPH'11), the Principal Investigator of the Project.

Group photo

"One important fact TB patients need to understand is that TB treatment is a lengthy journey, lasting at least six months. However, following treatment, people with TB can enjoy a healthy life, work and contribute to their family and society. It's time we join hands to end TB in Armenia." said Dr. Lusine Kocharyan (MPH '13), the Director of NTCC.

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GRADUATING COHORT 2019
MPH Integrating Experience Projects

Arpine Abrahamyan, *Needs and Gaps in Services Provided for Children with Down Syndrome in Yerevan, Armenia. Perspectives of Parents and Healthcare Providers: a Qualitative Research. Turpanjian School of Public Health, American University of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia 2019*

Vanaja Dhanumoorthi, *Prevalence of Vitamin D Deficiency and Factors Associated with Vitamin D Deficiency among 13-17 Years Old Adolescents in Coimbatore: a Research Grant Proposal. Turpanjian School of Public Health, American University of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia 2019*

Grace Blessina Egaraj, *Improving Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices of Menstrual Hygiene among Women Dwelling in the Riverside Slums of Chennai, India: a Community Health Education Intervention. Turpanjian School of Public Health, American University of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia 2019*

Syuzanna Hovsepyan, *Oral Health-related Quality of Life and Oral Hygiene Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices of the General Population in Sevan and Artashat Cities, Armenia. Turpanjian School of Public Health, American University of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia 2019*

Nune Karapetyan, *Factors Contributing to Appraisal and Help-seeking Delay among Patients with Colorectal Cancer in Armenia: a Research Grant Proposal. Turpanjian School of Public Health, American University of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia 2019*

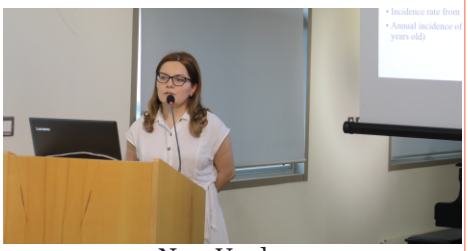
Andrea Kurunathan, *A Cross-Sectional Survey to Assess the Relation Between Disclosure of Same-Sex Behavior, Depression and Risky Sexual Behavior among Men who have Sex with Men in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. Turpanjian School of Public Health, American University of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia 2019*

Yeva Margaryan, *Parental Knowledge, Attitudes, Beliefs and Acceptance of Human Papillomavirus Vaccination Among Their Daughters: a Cross-Sectional Study in Yerevan, Armenia. Turpanjian School of Public Health, American University of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia 2019*

Marine Mkrtchyan, *Dental Care in Yerevan, Armenia: Assessing Quality and Patient Experience. Turpanjian School of Public Health, American University of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia 2019*

Syuzanna Hovsepyan

Vanaja Dhanumoorthi


Nare Vardanyan

Nune Karapetyan

Taguhi Sevoyan, *Risk Factors of Lower Extremity Amputation in Diabetic Foot Ulcer Patients: a Hospital Based Case-Control Study. Turpanjian School of Public Health, American University of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia 2019*

Anush Taslakyan, *Knowledge, Beliefs and Practice of Sleep Hygiene as a Determinant of Insomnia among the Employed Adult Population of Yerevan: a Research Grant Proposal. Turpanjian School of Public Health, American University of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia 2019*

Nare Vardanyan, *Gender Differences in Health-Related Quality of Life in Patients with Congestive Heart Failure and Past Coronary Artery Bypass Graft Surgery. Turpanjian School of Public Health, American University of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia 2019*

Ismail Adil, *Perceptions and Experiences of Patients living with Type 2 Diabetes on Diabetic Foot Complications: a Research Grant Proposal for a Qualitative Study. Turpanjian School of Public Health, American University of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia 2019*

Lilit Ayvazyan, *Factors associated with diabetes related distress among adult Type 2 diabetic patients in Yerevan, Armenia: a Research Grant Proposal. Turpanjian School of Public Health, American University of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia 2019*

Lakshmi Priya Mooventhan, *Women's Knowledge on Cesarean Section and Vaginal Delivery in the Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu, India: a Community Service Grant Proposal. Turpanjian School of Public Health, American University of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia 2019*

Full projects are available at ***https://sph.aua.am/master-projects_2019***

Training of Tuberculosis Counseling Teams to Work with Patients and Family

CHSR Researchers, Dr. A. Tekian, Participants

On March 28-30, 2019 the Avedisian Onanian Center for Health Services Research and Development of the AUA Turpanjian School of Public Health held a three-day training for psychologists, social workers and Tuberculosis (TB) nurses on the basics of patient-centered treatment, patient counseling and motivational interviewing organized within the scope of the "Institutionalization of Patient-Centered Tuberculosis Treatment in Armenia" project, which supports patients and their families along the TB care pathway. The activity is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by AUA SPH, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia and the National TB Control Center (NTCC).

The training aimed to equip the counseling teams, including a psychologist and a nurse or a social worker and a nurse, with solid knowledge and skills for providing effective education and psycho-social counseling to TB patients and their family members.

The main concepts covered during the sessions were developed and delivered using different teaching approaches and methods. The SPH researchers responsible for the training made interactive presentations, organized various exercises with the participants, and showed role-playing videos.

Dr. Ara Tekian, Professor of Medical Education and Associate Dean, College of Medicine, University of Illinois at Chicago, and Adjunct Professor in the SPH, helped the project team to develop the training materials and videos and coached them to be effective trainers.

Ophthalmic Trainings on Rapid Assessment of Avoidable Blindness Held at AUA

Lions Clubs International FOUNDATION

In April, 2019, the Garo Meghrigian Institute for Preventive Ophthalmology of the Avedisian Onanian Center for Health Services Research and Development, Turpanjian School of Public Health, conducted a three-day training on Rapid Assessment of Avoidable Blindness (RAAB) and a two-day training on Improvement of Ophthalmology Qualifications. The trainings were held at the American University of Armenia (AUA) and participants were granted Continuous Professional Development (CPD) credits.

A. Mkhitaryan, A. Giloyan, Dr. A Paduka

After successfully completing the theoretical part of the RAAB training, the teams put their knowledge into practice. Each team practiced visual acuity testing on each other, using the E chart and a pinhole.

The RAAB training has been implemented to thoroughly train RAAB survey team members so that they uniformly follow the same procedure to identify eligible subjects, assess visual acuity through E charts and a pinhole, and examine the eye lens, as well as record data. Dr. Ala Paduka, a certified RAAB trainer, conducted the training in collaboration with Dr. Naira Khachatryan, the principal investigator of the project. Five ophthalmologists, three nurses, and four interviewers participated in the training.

The trainings were developed and organized in the scope of the project "Nationwide Epidemiological Survey Using Rapid Assessment of Avoidable Blindness (RAAB) Methodology," which is made possible by the financial support from the Lions Club International Foundation (LCIF). The main goals of the project are to estimate the prevalence of ocular morbidity and its potential causes and vision loss due to cataract and other major causes among population aged 50 and over in the Republic of Armenia, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the innovative public health approach, supported by a LCIF-SightFirst grant in 2003-2008, implemented in Gegharkunik province of Armenia to reduce cataract related ocular morbidity and vision loss.

Meghrigian Institute's Work with Socially Disadvantaged Children Continues

The Garo Meghrigian Institute for Preventive Ophthalmology of the AUA Turpanjian School of Public Health continues to conduct screenings among socially disadvantaged children and children with specific health issues.

Eye screening

The staff of the Meghrigian Institute visited the Nikoghayos Tigranyan Special School N 14 for Children with Visual Impairments in Yerevan, which serves 77 children. Overall, 61 children and 10 family members from the selected center were screened. All children from the center suffered from different types of ocular pathology.

In March 2019, twenty three children from the center, diagnosed with refractive errors such as myopia, hyperopia or astigmatism, received spectacles from the Meghrigian Institute. Others with corneal opacity, premature retinopathy, retinal angiopathy, glaucoma suspect, congenital cataract and keratoconus were referred to a specialized eye clinic for further diagnosis and treatment.

Winners of Best Poster Award

December 10, 2018: The second-year Master of Public Health students (MPH) delivered poster presentations describing their internship experiences at various public health related organizations in Armenia and India. Internship sites included the Armenian Red Cross Society (ARCS); Nork-Marash Medical Center (NMMC); the Chemotherapy Clinic at Muratsan Hospital Complex; Children of Armenia Fund (COAF); FMD K&L Europe; Jinishian Memorial Foundation (JMF); Ministry of Health (MoH) of the Republic of Armenia (RA); Health and Labor Inspectorate Body of RA Coimbatore Cancer Foundation (CCF), India; National Institute of Research in Tuberculosis, Chennai, India; and University of Utah.

S. Kharazyan, S. Tsaturyan, E. Zaitsev, A. Torosyan

February 13, 2019: The AUA SPH organized a panel discussion with experts on how Armenia could aspire to institute universal health coverage using social health insurance as a tool for reaching this goal. They emphasized the importance of improving the efficiency of the health system given the scarcity of resources and the value of social solidarity. The members of the expert panel included Arsen Torosyan, Minister of Health of RA; Egor Zaitsev, WHO Representative in Armenia; Saro Tsaturyan, World Bank expert; Samvel Kharazyan, Asian Development Bank expert. SPH Dean Dr. Varduhi Petrosyan moderated the discussion.

February 18, 2019: The CHSR of the AUA SPH, in partnership with the European Network for Smoking and Tobacco Prevention developed, adapted for the local context and translated into Armenian the "Tobacco Treatment" e-learning course, which received accreditation from the European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education. This training program provides the opportunity for health care professionals in Europe to receive training in the latest evidence-based practice for helping their patients to quit smoking. CHSR Senior Researcher Dr. Arusyak Harutyunyan and Research Assistant Zhanna Sargsyan led the e-learning training adaptation process in Armenia.

Dr. Haroutune Armenian

February 19, 2019: Dr. Haroutune Armenian, President Emeritus of the American University of Armenia and Founding Dean of Turpanjian School of Public Health, donated more than 130 books, journals and other library materials from his own collection to the AGBU Papazian Library. In the collection there is a copy of his Doctoral dissertation titled 'The Relationship of Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia to Cancer of the Prostate: An Epidemiologic Study.

May 31, 2019: The AUA SPH joined the world in celebrating the annual World No Tobacco Day which highlights the health risks associated with tobacco use and advocates for effective policies to reduce tobacco consumption. SPH researchers joined the local public health community during the flash mob organized jointly by the WHO Armenia Country Office, the RA Ministry of Health, the National Institute of Health, and Be Informed NGO. AUA's SPH also prepared a social advertisement to highlight the link between smoking and lung health, particularly TB.

MPH ALUMNI & STUDENT SUCCESSES

Meri Tadevosyan (MPH' 11) and **Anna Ghazaryan** (MPH' 11) published an article based on their master projects titled "Factors contributing to rapidly increasing rates of cesarean section in Armenia: a partially mixed concurrent quantitative-qualitative equal status study" in the January issue of BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth.

Dr. Vahe Khachadourian (MPH' 11) received 2019 AUA Faculty Teaching Excellence Prize. He also earned Dean's Outstanding Student Award in Epidemiology, established to honor a top graduating student from each department at the Fielding School of Public Health of the University of California, Los Angeles.

Varduhi Hayrumyan (MPH' 16) and **Zhanna Sargsyan** (MPH' 18) were competitively selected to present at the 4th annual International Conference on Tobacco Control 2019 of the European Network for Smoking and Tobacco Prevention organized in partnership with the Romanian Society of Pneumology in Bucharest.

Aram Ghulijanyan, Meri Sahakyan, Saro Tsaturyan, Ani Shatvoryan, Tatev Arakelyan, and Manushak Avagyan (MPH 2018-2020 cohort) are the winners of shootout round of What? Where? When? intellectual game organized by the Center for Student Success of the American University of Armenia.