

EVALUATION REPORT

for

Master's Programme

Improving Healthcare Outcomes in Chronic Disease (IHOD)

- Enhancing the Curriculum at Masters Level

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the evaluation process

The Master's programme Improving Healthcare Outcomes in Chronic Disease (IHOD), is aligned with the APHEA (Agency for Public Health Education Accreditation) Master's in Public Health curriculum, which are supported by the Erasmus+ Project. Accordingly, this Master's IHOD training programme was developed in line with international standards for public health education and competences and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

The evaluation was intended to help higher education institutions to constantly improve their study programmes and to inform the public about the quality of studies.

Aim of the Project was to create and develop a Master's Programme Improving Healthcare Outcomes in Chronic Disease (IHOD), which underpins improved healthcare outcomes and preventative approaches to chronic disease by modernising the HE curriculum in the partner countries with the broad objective of modernising the curriculum supported by innovative courses and methodologies at Master's level in public health studies.

The new Master's Programme is delivered over two years and upon successful completion students acquire Master's Degree in Health Sciences.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

These aims and objectives directly addressed the priorities for curriculum development in the subject area "Health" for the following regions: Russia, South Eastern Asia and Central Asia as well as addressing the introduction of new learning and teaching tools and methodologies, life-long learning and cooperation between universities and the public health sector. This project underpinned improved healthcare outcomes and preventative approaches to chronic non-communicable diseases by modernizing the HE curriculum in the partner countries with the broad objective of modernizing the curriculum supported by innovative courses and methodologies at Masters Level in public health studies.

The aim of the program is specific, clearly formulated and realistic to be achieved. It includes all the areas of activities of health care workers (public health specialist, nurses), scientific background of the profession and core values, required for modern health care workers profession. The aim of the program fits with the requirements of the second cycle of university study level.

The program seeks to ensure eligibility for graduated students to work in broad practice area and evaluate the health changes in the society. It corresponds to a growing need of care services of society and ensures access of health workers resources to labour market.

There are four main competences in the program: Knowledge, Cognitive skills, Practical skills and Transferable skills. Each of these have designated specific learning outcomes. The study subject description is clearly presents an annotation, purpose of the course unit, course content (names of the subjects, contact work hours and planned learning activities, independent work hours and tasks) related to each module.

The learning outcomes of IHOD Master's programme are compatible with each other and correspond adequately to the content of the entire program. Learning outcomes are designated suitably to achieve the goals of the program and ensure the acquisition of obligatory knowledge and skills. Learning outcomes of the program as well as learning outcomes of the course unit, course unit methods and assessment strategy are presented in a table under each study module in study subject description and this forms a clear picture of the learning outcomes. Furthermore, the assessment weighting percentage is presented under each study subject.

Students are aware on aims and learning outcomes, teachers present these when a new course begins and they can read also from intranet. Criteria for the assessment of student achievement are consistent with the expected outcomes of the studies.

In summary: The aims and learning outcomes of the IHOD Master's program have been presented clearly and understandably.

2.2. Curriculum design

The strategic intent encompasses the development and introduction of online modules through the utilisation of innovative, online teaching and learning materials and methods. The online modules should be adapted for the international students with sufficient on-line and independent studying time.

The curriculum design based on the core areas according to APHEA and this content to ensure students are exposed to a modern and comprehensive public health curriculum (APHEA, 2014).

The curriculum design meets legal requirements for second level of university study programs. Volume of the program is 120 credits appropriately distributed through 2 year period of studies. Students finish studies by preparing and defending final **Research Project**. Studies are carried out in the modular principle allied subjects are grouped together into a single module with a common goal.

This programme will allow students at the Master's Level to address healthcare related problems on local and global scale, through the implementation and application of international best-evidence practice, to become internationally renowned public health professionals.

2.3. Teaching staff

Program is delivered by scientists within relevant field of specialty to public health, nurse or health science field. The trend towards having more and more teachers in leading roles with a public health, general practice or advanced nursing background has been strongly recommended, emphasised and systematically developed by institutions involved.

The IHOD Master's programme was coordinated and managed by the academic staff of the various international university partners (Ireland, Spain, Italy, Lithuania, Russia, Uzbekistan and Vietnam) and academic programme coordinators were appointed for continuous and sustainable management. The programme coordinators throughout the different third level institutional centres were responsible for the operational management of the programme, the monitoring of programme processes, academic assessment procedures and the integration of quality assurance principles. The programme coordinators also ensured a collaborative partnership with clinical staff who supported students in clinical practice placements for successful clinical experience. Additionally, the programme coordinators collaborated with programme representatives and key stakeholders through their involvement in taught graduate curriculum groups. This forum facilitated quality control assessments to be achieved and evaluated.

Various teaching methods are being used along with lectures. Teachers included case studies, presentations, discussions, group work and practical placement for development critical thinking. Evidence based learning and problem-based learning are used.

2.4. Facilities and learning resources

Library staff supported students with principles of advanced research practice and services staff supported the procurement of material resources and assistance as needed. Assessment procedures were delivered and supported by assessments committees.

Material resources for core modules of the programme were facilitated and managed by each partner institution. Academic schools had complete access to resources on their campuses, which included libraries, computer rooms, lecture theatres and seminar rooms. Students also had free access to technological applications such as on-line databases, email etc. On-line platforms to support student learning were also available at each institution allowing students to download

course materials, reading lists through distance learning. European IHOD programme partners from programme countries conducted on-site visits in order to evaluate the strength and limitations of local learning resources. Additional audio-visual and computer equipment was provided for partner universities in the framework of IHOD project.

2.5. Programme management

Responsibilities for program management presented are very specific and clear. Performance management and development implementation plans at each educational institution supported and prepared the academic staff in the delivery of the programme and ensured academic staff's maintenance of clinical expertise. This progression plan detailed academic staff's career goals, academic achievements and specific developmental requirements and support needed to further equip them for their role as educators.

In summary: management system for IHOD master's program was clear and accurate. Top down and bottom up information flows are active as well as horizontal communication is in place. All the stakeholders seem to be involved in quality assurance system and ready to provide it in the sustainable way.

III. SUMMARY

The IHOD Master's program is comprehensive well-prepared, in-depth analysis of partners institutions capacities.

The program is focused upon education of health care staff who can clearly articulate what the role of the public health specialist is within Improving Healthcare Outcomes in Chronic Disease and how this is situated within a wider European and Global context.

The program aims and intended learning outcomes, teaching methods are well defined, described in details and were discussed and piloted during training the trainers and student placement courses.

The articulation of the program and course outcomes with the evidence of taught content designed in the study plans.

The content of the program generally reflects the latest science achievement, scientific evidence-based knowledge and practice. In addition, the learning facilities and equipment tailored for modern technological progress in onsite and on-line teaching.