



Development of the medical educational process

Recommendations on further training development activities

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Abbreviations

The project	Development of the medical educational process and capacity building, funded by Ministry of Foreign affairs
PSKUS	Valsts sabiedrība ar ierobežotu atbildību "Paula Stradiņa klīniskā universitātes slimnīca"
TSU	Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University



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1. Summary

1.1. Project Implementation Process

These recommendations were prepared as part of the project "Development of the medical educational process and capacity building", implemented by the PSKUS in collaboration with TSU and the Latvian Association of Young Doctors.

The project was funded through a grant provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia.

Project implementation period: June 2023 to November 2024.

1.2. Tasks

The recommendations were developed through a collaborative process, drawing on Latvian and Georgian expertise, insights from working groups, conducted both remotely via the Zoom platform and in-person meetings with field specialists in Georgia and Latvia, and alignment with international standards. They address a broad range of critical areas:

- Introduction of simulation technologies to improve practical training.
- Enhancement of regional access to education and professional development opportunities.
- Regulating/ certification of educational processes to ensure consistent standards.
- Raising the prestige of the nursing profession.
- Refinement of residency programs to align with modern medical education requirements.

1.3. Goals

These recommendations reflect a commitment to achieving the following objectives:

- Expanding access to inclusive, high-quality, and lifelong learning opportunities.
- Developing skills that support employability, professional excellence, and innovation in healthcare.
- Modernizing infrastructure by integrating advanced technologies, such as simulation-based training, to enhance hands-on learning experiences.



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- Strengthening collaboration between public institutions, private organizations, and international partners to facilitate effective implementation and ensure sustainable outcomes.

1.4. Vision for Sustainable Development

Grounded in a comprehensive approach, these recommendations aim to:

- Enhance the quality and accessibility of professional training.
- Elevate the prestige of healthcare professions within the system.
- Align educational and professional standards with international best practices, contributing to sustainable growth in healthcare education and ensuring Georgia's readiness to meet future challenges effectively.



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2. Assessment of Georgia's current system of continuing training

2.1. *Continuing Education for Healthcare and Medical Support Personnel in Georgia*

The continuing education system in Georgia for medical professionals - physicians, nurses, and other healthcare personnel - is designed to promote professional development, enhance qualifications, and ensure compliance with international medical standards.

2.1.1. *Mandatory Continuing Education*

Continuing education is compulsory for healthcare professionals in Georgia to maintain certification and practice rights. This system is regulated by the Georgian Ministry of Health and relevant professional councils.

Physicians and nurses regularly undergo recertification processes, requiring a certain number of credits for participation in training sessions, seminars, conferences, and other professional activities.

2.1.2. *Credit-Based System*

Continuing education activities are evaluated through a credit system. Professionals must accumulate a specified number of credits within a defined period (typically five years) to renew their certification.

These credits are earned by attending approved programs offered by universities, medical organizations, or international institutions.

2.1.3. *Modes of Learning*

Continuing education is delivered through various formats:

- Lectures and Seminars: In-person or online training;
- Clinical Training: Hands-on sessions in hospitals or specialized centres;
- E-Learning: Online platforms with accredited programs;
- International Courses and Conferences.



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2.1.4. Accredited Organizations

Continuing education programs in Georgia are organized by both state institutions, such as Tbilisi State Medical University, and private entities accredited by the Ministry of Health. International organizations, including the World Health Organization, collaborate with Georgian institutions to provide specialized programs.

2.1.5. Regulation and Oversight

The Georgian Medical Council regulates the continuing education process for healthcare professionals, oversees accreditation of training institutions, and manages certification for medical and support personnel.

2.1.6. Challenges

Healthcare System Structure: Approximately 90% of Georgia's healthcare system operates in the private sector, with the government purchasing services from private providers.

This focus on profit can limit access to comprehensive services, especially for complex, high-risk procedures like emergency care, impacting education at all levels.

Healthcare Worker Ratios: Georgia's physician-to-nurse ratio per 10,000 people is imbalanced—53.3 physicians and 59.8 nurses—compared to European averages (37.6 physicians and 82.6 nurses). The lack of interest in the nursing profession may lead to a significant shortage of nurses and an oversupply of physicians.

Regional Disparities: Access to qualified healthcare personnel is unequal, with urban centres like Tbilisi having better coverage than rural regions.

2.2. Residency Programs in Georgia

Georgia's residency system prepares highly qualified physicians through specialized training following medical school graduation.

2.2.1. Residency Structure

Duration: Residency programs typically last 2–6 years, depending on the specialty:

- Family medicine: 2–3 years;
- Surgery or other complex specialties: 4–6 years.



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Training Format: Combines theoretical and practical training, with most learning taking place in clinical settings.

2.2.2. Admission to Residency

Qualifications: Applicants must complete a 6-year medical program (bachelor's and master's combined) and obtain a medical degree.

Examinations: Candidates must pass a national exam or compete in a selection process involving knowledge tests in their chosen field.

2.2.3. Training Programs and Locations

Clinical Practice Sites: Training occurs in state and private hospitals and specialized medical centres.

Rotations: Residents gain broad experience by rotating through various departments.

Mentorship: Each resident is supervised by an experienced physician providing academic and practical guidance.

2.2.4. Regulation

Residency programs are overseen by the Ministry of Health, medical universities, and national medical institutions.

Quality Control: Accreditation is ensured by the Georgian Medical Education Council, aligning programs with national and international standards.

2.2.5. Certification and Professional Rights

Graduates take certification exams to receive practice licenses in their specialty.

Certification is valid for a specific period and must be renewed through continuing education programs.

2.2.6. International Recognition

Georgia's residency programs increasingly align with international standards to ensure recognition in other countries, especially within the EU.



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2.3. *Simulation-Based Training in Georgia*

Georgia is developing simulation-based training for healthcare and medical support personnel to provide high-quality education and practical skills in line with international standards.

Current Status

Key Role of Simulations: Simulations provide a safe environment for students and medical professionals to practice clinical skills without risking patient safety. Participants learn from simulated scenarios and their associated errors.

Emergency Training: Professionals are trained to handle emergencies such as trauma care, anaphylactic shock, or surgical complications. Simulations improve teamwork among healthcare staff.

Simulation Centres

TSMU: Hosts a simulation centres where students and professionals practice clinical procedures with modern simulators.

Private Initiatives: Some private medical education organizations invest in simulation equipment and programs.

Hospital Training Units: Major hospitals incorporate simulation techniques for continuing education and skill assessment.



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3. Recommendations

The recommendations were developed through discussions in working groups, conducted both remotely via the Zoom platform and in-person meetings with field specialists in Georgia and Latvia.

The recommendations cover all three of the aforementioned areas, as several additions, suggestions, and needs were identified by the partners—TSU Faculty of Medicine—during the course of the project.

Upon reviewing the Latvian system of education for healthcare practitioners, allied health professionals, and other medical personnel, the working group proposed the following recommendations:

1. **Engage with industry experts and healthcare institutions** to address the regulation of the education process for allied health professionals in Georgia. This would facilitate proposals to the Ministry of Health on the need to establish and implement training programs for other healthcare personnel.

For example, develop standardized educational programs for masseurs, cosmetologists, pathologists, laboratory technicians, and other specialists who are currently trained in various unregulated and uncontrolled private courses.

2. **Establish a Simulation Center at TSU** to support the development of simulation-based medical programs, ensuring training for students, residents, healthcare practitioners, and allied professionals in a simulated environment, including:
 - Use of mannequins that simulate physiological responses, such as breathing, heartbeat, blood pressure, and medication reactions;
 - Integration of VR technology to allow professionals to practice complex procedures in a safe, digital environment;
 - Training students and residents through realistic scenarios, such as emergency response, childbirth, or cardiopulmonary resuscitation;
 - Use of simulated patients (actors or virtual patients) for teaching communication and empathy in various clinical situations;



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- Development of training programs and preparation of instructors.
3. **Continue collaboration on various projects aimed at improving the administrative implementation and content development of residency programs.**
 4. Engage with experts and healthcare institutions to **address issues regarding the accessibility of the healthcare system as a whole** and the risks this poses for the training of healthcare professionals.

Highlight the risks associated with developing residency specialties and ensuring access to high-risk specialties (e.g., emergency medicine physicians).
 5. **Support TSU students in developing non-governmental organizations (NGOs)** to facilitate the implementation of various issues at the political level.
 6. **Highlight the role of the nursing profession** in the healthcare system with industry experts and healthcare institutions, aiming to elevate its prestige.
 7. **Promote the certification and unified regulation of the nursing profession** with experts and healthcare institutions, as well as **advance the transition of nursing education from vocational to higher education.**
 8. Engage with experts and healthcare institutions to **transfer the certification of continuing education activities to professional associations.**
 9. **Develop collaborative projects to create and implement continuing education programs aligned with European Union standards.**
 10. **Incorporate simulation-based learning content into continuing education activities.**
 11. **Promote the development of regional training centers** with experts and healthcare institutions to ensure the availability of education in regional areas.