



OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF MEDICAL SPECIALISTS IN BULGARIA

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Abstract

Training of medical professionals through continuous education is essential for ensuring the required quality of medical services, improving their efficiency and opportunity for professional development, while satisfying the needs and wishes of patients.

The article examines and analyzes the opinion of medical specialists – physicians and health care professionals about their available opportunities for training and professional development in the workplace. A survey involving 135 physicians and 140 health care professionals working in hospitals was carried out during the period 20.07.2014-20.10.2014. It was analyzed their opinion on the time allowed for education and adaptation to the workplace, the need for additional training and qualification, and the career and growth prospects in the unit they work in. Studied was also the opinion of respondents regarding the need of periodic verification of the knowledge and skills of medical specialists, and the need of evaluation of the level of implementation of their work.

Keywords: Education, professional career, medical specialists.

INTRODUCTION

Improvement of qualification of medical specialists thanks to continuous education and training is the main prerequisite for ensuring the necessary quality of the medical activities, improvement of their effectiveness and opportunity for career growth.

The assurance of suitable terms and conditions for post-graduation qualification makes it possible to harness the achievements of modern medicine as well as work in optimal psycho-climate. This is the guarantee for considering professionalism of behalf of the management team of the researched hospitals.

The objective of this article is to research and analyse the opinion of medical specialists – doctors and healthcare professionals concerning the opportunities they were provided with for training and professional development at workplace. In order to achieve the outlined objective, we performed the following tasks:

1. Research of the opinion of medical specialists on the time spent for tuition and adaptation to workplace.
2. Research of doctors and healthcare professionals’ needs of additional training and qualification.
3. Establishment of their perspective for professional career and development within their division.
4. Research of the opinion of respondents on the need of regular checks of their knowledge and skills and assessment of the level of work performance.

METHODOLOGY

In order to accumulate information we used anonymous inquiry card. We inquired 135 doctors and 140 healthcare professionals that work in healthcare institutions for hospital cares in the city of Sofia in the period of 20.07.2014-20.10.2014. In view of this elaboration we used broad range of descriptive and analytical statistical methods. The quantitative analyses were performed with the statistical package of applied programmes - SPSS 17.0. In view of tabular and graphic processing and presentation we used the products of MICROSOFT OFFICE.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The performed research covered 135 doctors whose average age was $45,46 \pm 9,85$ within the range of 25-78-year-olds, who work in four Sofia hospitals - MBAL V city hospital, MBAL Tokuda, Hospital of the Ministry of Interior and UMBAL Aleksandrovska Hospital, in wards for two types of treatment – intensive and conservative, of whom 81(60%) were men and 54 (40%) were women. The research participants were 140 healthcare professionals and all of them were women whose average age was $44,46 \pm 10,28$ in the diapason of 23-64-year-old, who work in the same healthcare institutions.

Every medical specialist needs different period of time to adapt to the new workplace. There are many factors to this and some of them could be the following: previous experience (is there any and the way in which it will impact the employee at his or her workplace), how fast he/she grasps things, colleagues’ attitude, who trains them and how he/she trains them, stress level etc. Our research established that the majority of the inquired doctors (93,3%) and 87% of the healthcare professionals are of the opinion they were provided with enough time for training and adaptation to the new workplace, while 6,7% of the doctors and 13% of the healthcare professionals are of the opinion it is not enough.

The comparative analysis of the four hospitals shows that the highest relative share of the positive answer to the question “Do you think you were provided with enough time for training and adaptation to the new workplace?” were attributed to the inquired healthcare professionals of MBAL V city hospital (96,6%), and the lowest to MBAL Tokuda (70%). (Table 1.)

Table 1: Comparative analysis of the answers to the question “Do you think you were provided with sufficient time for training and adaptation to the new workplace?” among the different hospitals

Answers	Frequency	MBAL V city hospital	MBAL Tokuda	Hospital of the Ministry of Interior	UMBAL Aleksandrovska
Yes, sufficient	Number	28	21	32	39
	Relative share in %	96,6	70,0	94,1	86,7
Insufficient	Number	1	9	2	6
	Relative share in %	3,4	30,0	5,9	13,3
Total	Number	29	30	34	45
	Relative share in %	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

* two of the inquired didn’t give any answers

Asked on the need of additional training and qualification more than half of the inquiry participants (53% of the doctors and 56% of the healthcare professionals) are of the opinion they need additional training and qualification and 26% of the doctors and 22% of the healthcare professionals are of the opinion they do not need it.

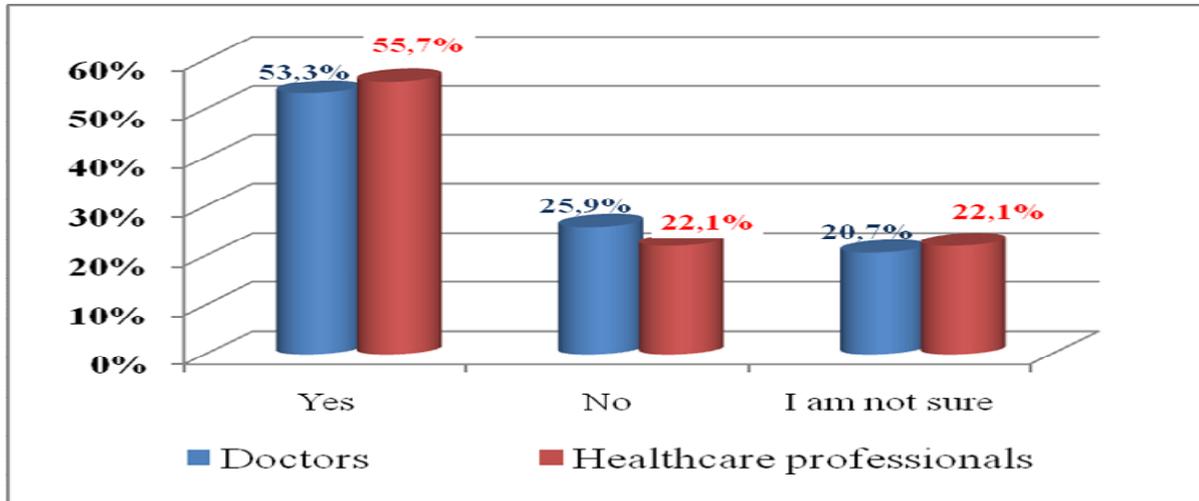


Figure 1: Distribution of respondents in view of their opinion on the need of additional training and qualification

The comparative analysis of the four hospitals shows that the greatest need of additional training and qualification is attributable to the inquired healthcare professionals in MBAL Tokuda (76,7%), and the most prepared ones – from MBAL V city hospital. (Table 2.)

Table 2: Comparative analysis of the healthcare specialists' answers to the question "Do you think you need additional training and qualification?" between the different hospitals

Answers	Frequency	MBAL V city hospital	MBAL Tokuda	Hospital of the Ministry of Interior	UMBAL Aleksandrovska
Yes	Number	12	23	21	22
	Relative share in %	40,0	76,7	61,8	47,8
I am not sure	Number	9	5	4	13
	Relative share in %	30,0	16,7	11,8	28,3
No	Number	9	2	9	11
	Relative share in %	30,0	6,7	26,5	23,9

In view of the next question of the inquiry around two-thirds (64,6%) of the doctors and somewhat above half (53,6%) of the healthcare professionals are of the opinion that there is perspective for professional career and growth in the division where they work, around 35,6% of the doctors and 46,4% of the healthcare professionals shared the opposite opinion concerning this issue. (Figure 2.)

The comparative research of the our hospitals concerning the issue "Is there perspective for professional career and growth in the division where you work?" shows that the significantly higher per cent is of those that answered with "Yes" are the doctor-participants in the research from the Hospital of the Ministry of Interior (78,1%) and UMBAL Aleksandrovska (77,1%) compared to MBAL V city hospital (42,4%). Significantly highest relative share (80%) is attributable to those that believe there is no perspective for professional career and growth in the division where they work are the inquired healthcare professionals of MBAL V city hospital, and the highest per cent of positive opinion about this issue is attributable to nurses of the Hospital of the Ministry of Interior – 58,8%.

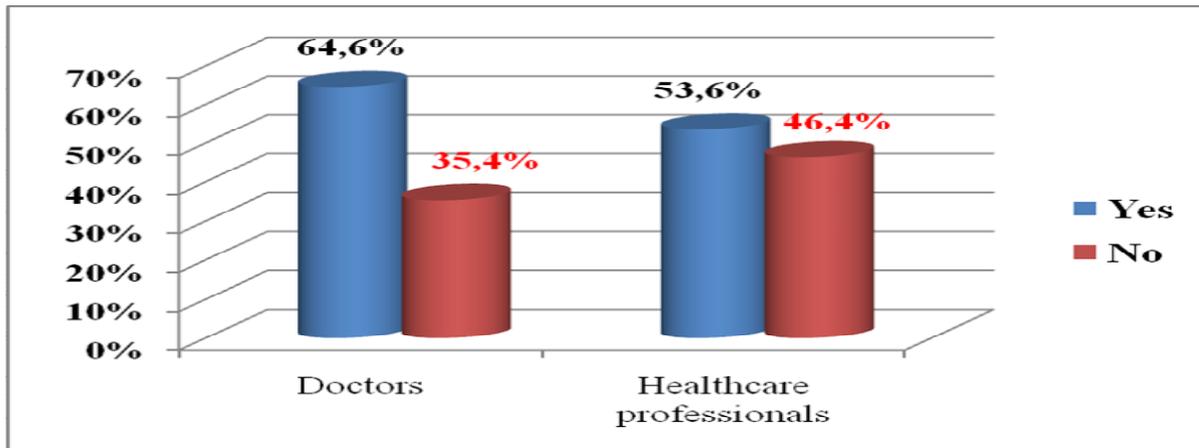


Figure 2: Distribution of the respondents in view of the answers to the question “Is there perspective for professional career and growth in the division where you work?”

This result is evidence for the fact that in the healthcare institutions there is ambitious, innovative and democratic management style in place. The managers provide the personnel with the opportunity to enrich their knowledge on regular basis, which inevitably results in improving the quality of the offered healthcare services and provides the personnel with incentives for artistic and initiative approach.

The assurance of suitable terms and conditions for post-graduation qualification makes it possible to harness the achievements of modern medicine as well as work in optimal psycho-climate. This is the guarantee for considering professionalism of behalf of the management team of the researched hospitals.

While being after the common objective – patient’s well-being and organization’s prosperity, they satisfy personnel’s wish for identifying oneself with the organization and showing imitativeness and autonomy thanks to the acquired new competencies.

In order to establish the opinion of the inquired concerning the need of regular check of knowledge and skills of the medical specialists and assessment of the work performance level we asked them the next inquiry question. According to the results, the opinion of 93,3% of the doctors and 78,6% of the healthcare professionals is that they need such check, and 6,7% and 21,4% correspondingly are of the opposite opinion. The comparative presentation of the inquiry results in the case of doctors concerning the issue “According to you, do you need regular check of knowledge and skills of medical specialists and assessment of the work performance level?” shows that with significantly higher per cent of the answer “Yes” we reported the Hospital of Ministry of Interior compared to MBAL V city hospital, and in view of “No” it was MBAL V city hospital compared to the Hospital of the Ministry of Interior (Table 3.)

Table 3: Comparative analysis of the doctors’ answers to the question “According to you, do you need regular check of knowledge and skills of medical specialists and assessment of the work performance level?” of the different hospitals

Answers	Frequency	MBAL V city hospital	MBAL Tokuda	Hospital of the Ministry of Interior	UMBAL Aleksandrovskaa
Yes	Number	28	31	32	35
	Relative share in %	82,4	93,9	100,0	97,2
No	Number	6	2	0	1
	Relative share in %	17,6	6,1	0	2,8
Total	Number	34	33	32	36
	Relative share in %	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

The comparative presentation of the results from the inquiry of healthcare professionals in view of this issue shows that with the significant highest per cent of the answer “Yes” is the Hospital of the Ministry of Interior (88,2%), and with “No” - MBAL V city hospital (36,7%). (Table 4.)

Table 4: Comparative analysis of answers to the question “According to you, do you need regular check of knowledge and skills of medical specialists and assessment of the work performance level?” for the different hospitals

Answers	Frequency	MBAL V city hospital	MBAL Tokuda	Hospital of the Ministry of Interior	UMBAL Aleksandrovska
Yes	Number	19	26	30	35
	Relative share in %	63,3	86,7	88,2	76,1
No	Number	11	4	4	11
	Relative share in %	36,7	13,3	11,8	23,9

Asked on the way they assess their performance, the majority of the respondents (73% of the doctors and 74,8% of the healthcare professionals) are of the opinion that their performance satisfies the requirements and almost one-fourth (24,6% of the doctors and 24,5% of the healthcare professionals) answered with “Exceptionally good”. (Figure 3.)

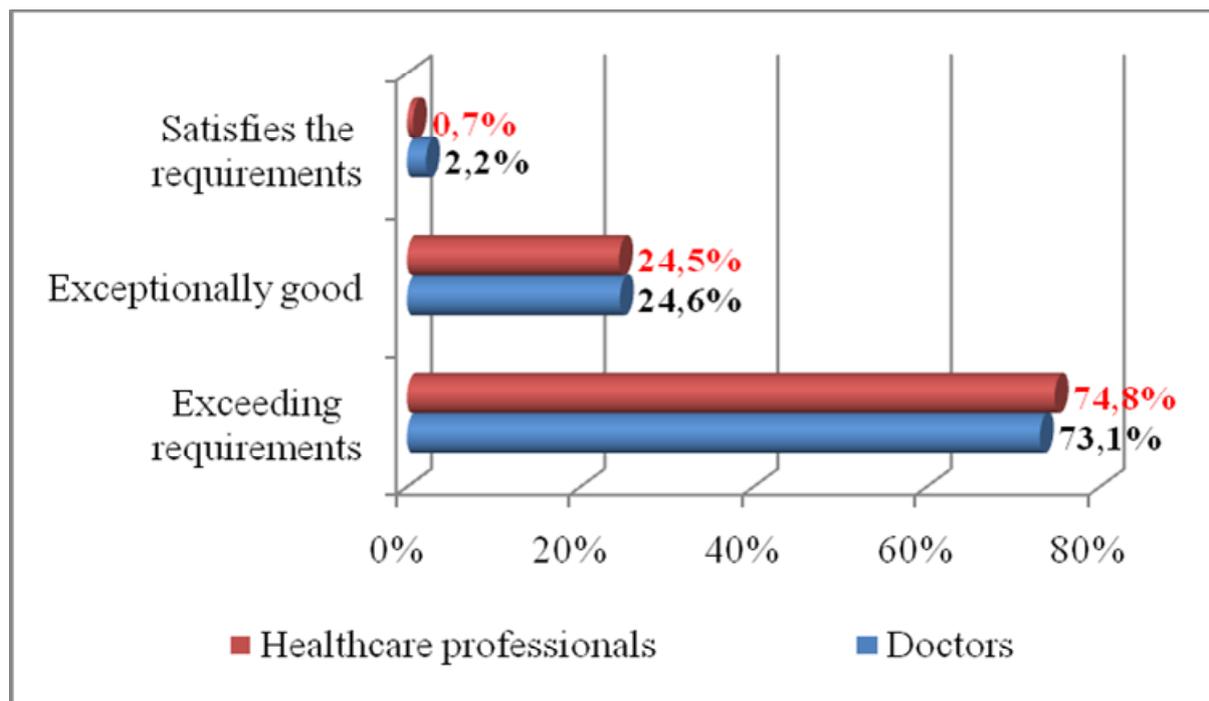


Figure 3: Frequency distribution of the answers to the question “How do you assess your performance?”

The comparative analysis of the inquired doctors concerning the answers to the question "How do you assess your performance?" shows that with statistically significant higher per cent of the answer “Exceptionally good” are the research participants from UMBAL Aleksandrovska /36,1%/ compared to MBAL V city hospital /15,2%/. The inquired experts from the researched hospitals do not differ in statistically significant manner in view of the other answers to this question. (Table 5.)

Table 5: Comparative analysis of doctors' answers to the question "How do you assess your performance?" among the different hospitals

Answers	Frequency	MBAL V city hospital	MBAL Tokuda	Hospital of the Ministry of Interior	UMBAL Aleksandrovska
Exceeding requirements	Number	1	1	1	0
	Relative share in %	3,0	3,0	3,1	0
Exceptionally good	Number	5	8	7	13
	Relative share in %	15,2	24,2	21,9	36,1
Satisfies the requirements	Number	27	24	24	23
	Relative share in %	81,8	72,7	75,0	63,9
Total	Number	33	33	32	36
	Relative share in %	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

The comparative analysis of the inquired healthcare professionals in view of the answers to the question "How do you assess your performance?" shows that the highest per cent (93,3%) with the ones that satisfy the requirements according to the provided answer is attributable to MBAL V city hospital, and the majority "Exceptionally good" are believed to be the ones from MBAL Tokuda (36,7%). (Table 6.)

Table 6: Comparative analysis of the answers of healthcare professionals to the question "How do you assess your performance" of the different hospitals

Answers	Frequency	MBAL V city hospital	MBAL Tokuda	Hospital of the Ministry of Interior	UMBAL Aleksandrovska
Exceeding requirements	Number	0	0	0	1
	Relative share in %	0	0	0	2,2
Exceptionally good	Number	2	11	10	11
	Relative share in %	6,7	36,7	29,4	24,4
Satisfies the requirements	Number	28	19	24	33
	Relative share in %	93,3	63,3	70,6	73,3
Total	Number	30	30	34	45
	Relative share in %	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

* no answer was provided by one inquired

The analysis of the results from the answers to the question "Do you have opportunity for innovativeness and autonomy?" show that 60,4% of the doctors and 59,1% of the healthcare professionals have such an opportunity, and negative answers were given by the other 39,6% of the doctors and 40,9% of the healthcare professionals. The comparative review of the results from the researched hospitals on this issue shows that the significantly highest per cent (68,8%) of the "Yes" answer is attributable to the inquired medical specialists of the Hospital of the Ministry of Interior and of "No" – MBAL Tokuda and UMBAL Aleksandrovska 46,7%.

CONCLUSION

Based on the presented results we could make the following conclusions:

1. The majority of the respondents (93,3% of the doctors and 87% of the healthcare professionals) are of the opinion they were provided with enough time for training and adaptation to the new workplace.
2. Around two-thirds (64,6%) of the doctors that participated in the research are of the opinion there is perspective for professional career and growth in the division where they work, and somewhat above half (53,6%) of the healthcare professionals are of the opinion that there is no perspective for professional career and growth.



3. The need of regular check of knowledge and skills of the medical specialists and the assessment of their work performance level is necessary according to 93,3% of the doctors and 78,6% of the healthcare specialists.
4. The provision of opportunity for individuality and autonomy, being an element of medical specialists' motivation is available in the case of 60,4% of doctors and 59,1% of the healthcare specialists.

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