PUBLIC HEALTH LAW EDUCATION IN HEALTH EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Prof. Dr. Mariela Deliverska
Medical University – Sofia, Faculty of Public Health- Bulgaria
mdeliverska@yahoo.com

Abstract
In situation when public health is under threat, it is essential to address health issues in comply with public health law regulations both on international and on national level. Public health law education as well as policy development has been introduced at different level among countries worldwide. That is the reason why high level of public health law education is of great importance for the proper response to health emergency situations.

Capabilities of detection and assessment of policy measures and provisions for effective health care preventive measures are directly related to the extend and the nature of the emergency events.

The formation of public health law education competences in case of health emergency situations require training providing knowledge on public health law principles, legal issues arising from public health emergency situations, as well as challenges formed by collision between individual rights and public health protection.

Key words: Legal education, public health, emergency

INTRODUCTION

The influence of law on the practice of medicine improves patient safety and quality of healthcare.

Legal education and particularly Public Health Law Education can help understand the ways in which patients and care providers can be involved as partners in healthcare services, both in preventing harm and learning and healing from an adverse event.

Public health law contemplates the responsibilities of individuals and organizations and the duties of the government to act in favour of the health of society. Laws define the jurisdiction of public health officials and specify the manner in which they exercise their authority. Laws can establish norms for healthy behaviour and create the social conditions in which people can be healthy.

Various reasons could be identified for delivering public health law education and training on medical doctors and healthcare professionals. Undergoing such training facilitates the establishment of competences on conducting activities at the highest professional level, as trainees are being able to provide competent, compassionate health care services to patients, and they establish the ability to avoid legal conflicts. Legal and ethical issues related to medical professionals are multifactorial as medical treatment and decisions surrounding health care are extremely complex. It is therefore very important for healthcare providers to be knowledgeable and aware of the issues that govern patient care and ways to properly manage such issues.

DISCUSSION

Law education and public health emergencies
Health emergencies could raise significantly number of legal issues, as public health emergencies involve increased incidence of illness, injury and/or death. Public health emergencies require special measures to address increased morbidity, mortality and interruption of essential health services. For such emergencies, a multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional response is often required.
Public health law education in cases of health emergency, need to respond adequately to the specifics of the circumstances. Legal issues of prevention and control of the spread of severe human diseases, as well as issues related to public health protection need to be included into the education and training curriculum.

**Law education and cross-border threats to health**

Legal framework and regulatory issues on serious cross-border threats to health need to be properly addressed due to the fact that the protection of human health is a matter which has cross-cutting dimensions and is relevant to numerous national, regional and international policies and activities.

Public Health law education includes basic knowledge requirements as of basic communication techniques, informed consent procedures and the basics of open disclosure. In cases of emergency situations, especially those consisting cross-border threats to health, usually creates conditions for reorganization and development of public health regulatory framework. Such development, without any doubt, has impact on public health law curriculum and education.

Rapid change and development of economic, social, legal and health environment in society, requires implementation of modern, innovative and adaptive educational tools and models.

Where public health laws authorize interferences with freedom of movement, the right to control one’s health and body, privacy, and property rights, they should balance these private rights with the public health interest in an ethical and transparent way. Proper response and reaction of healthcare professionals could be obtained by public health law education.

Due to the complexity of factors in role at emergency situations, public health law education and training is necessary to be also provided to actors outside the healthcare system. Such training is especially required in regards to personnel who are directly or indirectly involved in operational or decision-making activities, undertaken in response to emergency situations.

**Ethical issues in educational curriculum**

Educational curriculum, when developed for training personnel who deals with consequences by emergency situations, have to stress not only on legal but also on ethical issues. Building and developing capacity of recognizing ethical principles could provide grounds for elimination of disbalance and disproportion exercising when exercising individual rights against public interest. Some of the main ethical principles, which are be included into the education curriculum of public health professionals and personnel involved in dealing with emergency situation circumstances include: principle of Proportionality, principle of Reasonable and effective means, principle of Distributive justice, principle of Trust and transparency. This set of ethical principles are valuable and important in cases involving interference with exercising freedoms and rights, such as the freedom of movement, the right to control one’s health and body, privacy and property rights, etc.

In cross-cultural settings, it is necessary for both healthcare providers and patients, as well as for lawyers to accommodate to the circumstances of medical practice case in the context of more than one system. Apart from ethical implications, the existence of cultural differences and social stereotypes could result to negative impact and affects the way we experience the world and the people in it. The field of medicine has recognized the significant role that culture-with its many facets-plays in the effective delivery of healthcare.

**CONCLUSION**

Public Health law education and training related to establishing competences for providing professional health care services in situations of emergency and serious cross-border threats to health, requires multidisciplinary approach. Such education builds capacity for dealing with complex situations and problems. When properly provided, public health law education and training adds value...
to the protection and improvement of human health, as at the same provides the ability for healthcare professionals to exercise their duties with understanding and knowledge mechanisms for protection of human rights and public interests.

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REFERENCES


