

Analysis and a Review of Systematic Concept for Prevention and Health Promotion in Healthcare Sector of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Abstract

Introduction and the goal: In time when healthcare budgets are reduced because of the rise of medical technology prices, demographic trends, and dominance of chronic diseases in morbidity and mortality of the population, prevention of diseases and promotion of health have become vital interests of the reform commitments and the imperative of the intersectoral development policy in the community. The goal of this work is the assessment of participation and the definition of the role of prevention and promotion of health in important strategic and legal documents in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Methods: In this research we used descriptive method, in which secondary source of data is used. Documents listed in the references are used as a base.

Results: In the last decade many relevant documents have been written, which affirm the importance of preventive interventions in relation to population groups and priority public healthcare challenges such as: Federal programme for prevention of alcoholism and drug addiction, Strategy for control of tobacco, Policy for food and diet, Strategy for improving sexual and reproductive health and rights, Policy of healthcare of youth, and Strategy for prevention of malignant neoplasm.

Conclusions: Analysis of the available documents indicates respectable systematic positioning of prevention and promotion of health in reform of healthcare services, education of healthcare workers, achieving quality and accreditation standards of good practice, together with the need for improving the education of public and patients about importance of partnership and active participation in improving health, and strengthening the concept of personal and social responsibility for health.

Keywords: strategy, prevention, promotion of health, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Introduction

Healthcare system is one of the complex subsystems of the society. In case of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina the Healthcare system is one of the most complex systems in Europe and in the world. The healthcare system in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is very dispersed and decentralised, so the responsibility for healthcare of population of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is divided between 11 ministries, with no cohesion at state level, which is necessary for any serious and effective healthcare system.

In spirit of holistic approach of WHO, referring to concept of health, which is much more than a mere absence of disease or disability, prevention is accepted as the spectrum of activities with purpose of eradication, removal, or reduction of the influence of disease or disability (1).

Reforms of Healthcare systems around the world affirmed the improvement of quality and safety of services, healthcare oriented towards actual needs and demands, promotion of the patient rights, and the traditional division on primary, secondary, and tertiary level is replaced by the concept of promotion of health in community, which is based on the healthcare policy, organisation of the healthcare system and education and competence of healthcare workers.

In time when healthcare budgets are reduced because of the rise of medical technology prices, demographic trends, and dominance of chronic diseases in morbidity and mortality of the population, prevention of diseases and promotion of health have become vital interests of the reform commitments and the imperative of the intersectoral development policy in the community (2).

Similarly to other countries of the region, in the Healthcare sector of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina there are important reform interventions and socio-economic and healthcare transitional changes, which have influence on health of the population. Despite advanced medical technology, education and scientific research, the health conditions of the population are dominated by diseases and disorders which emphasise the importance of preventive actions.

The goal of this work is the assessment of participation and the definition of the role of prevention and promotion of health in important strategic and legal documents in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and assessment of harmonization of the same with recommendations of relevant international documents.

Methods

In this research we used descriptive method, in which secondary source of data is used. Documents listed in the references are used as a base.

This work represents a review of current political, strategic, and legal documents in Healthcare sector of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in terms of the analysis of involvement and importance of perception, prevention, and promotion of health at all levels of Healthcare.

Results

Importance of prevention for Healthcare sector in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

According to the results of the statistical research and some periodic population researches, population health of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina has adverse trends of dominance of disease development and mortality of the population from highly preventable risk factors. In life style and habits of adult population it is noted that there are 41% with recorded hypertension, 30% of smokers, 20% with problems of obesity, and 80% of physically inactive, which is connected to trends of increase of chronic non-infective diseases dominated by heart diseases, blood vessel diseases, and malignant neoplasm, as the leading causes of death (3).

In order to improve health of the population through Healthcare sector of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, many interventions of prevention and health promotions have been affirmed as part of systematic changes, and they have been directed towards education and training of Healthcare workers and organisation of Healthcare which enables supervision over determinants of health and prevention of risk factors, improving individual and social responsibility for health, orientation towards local community, development of intersectoral cooperation and partnership for health. Therefore, especially the competencies of public health professionals have been emphasized recently. A competent public health workforce is an essential component of an effective public health system (4, 18).

Systematic approach to the concept of prevention in Healthcare sector

Politics and strategic documents

In the last decade many relevant documents have been written, which affirm the importance of preventive interventions in relation to population groups and priority public healthcare challenges such as: Federal programme for prevention of alcoholism and drug addiction, Strategy for control of tobacco, Policy for food and diet, Strategy for improving sexual and reproductive health and rights, Policy of healthcare of youth, and Strategy for prevention of malignant neoplasm (5-10).

Reform of Primary Healthcare (PHC) through the team of family medicine represents the backbone of the Healthcare system reform in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has lasted for over 10 years with important results and in developing PHC network, and also in strategically led education and development of human resources.

Strategy of development of PHC affirmed reform of PHC oriented towards needs of users of Healthcare, family, community, treatment of patients in family and in community, development of adequate system of specialist-consultative and hospital care, and of prevention and promotion of health. Principles of Development strategies of PHC based on universal coverage by basic preventive and therapy services which promote health and prevent or control disease, and also include community in promotion of health (11).

Key competence in PHC/family medicine in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina are providing the first contact with patients and families, possibility of early detection and control of risk factors, making decision about consultative-specialist examination, hospital care, home care and education of patient/family about prevention of risk factors, self-help and self-control, and promotion of health.

Quality and accreditation standards

In order to promote quality and safety of services at all levels of Healthcare, in 2005 the Law on system of improved quality, safety, and accreditation in the Healthcare system of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which introduced possibility to licence healthcare workers, accreditation of healthcare institutions, such as accreditation standards for hospitals, pharmacies, emergency rooms, centres, and PHC teams of family medicine (12).

In all accreditation standards predicted for healthcare institutions and also for licensing healthcare workers, affirmation of prevention and promotion of health represents important segment of competencies and diagnostic-therapeutic guides of good practice.

It is important to mention segment of prevention and promotion of health as a part of accreditation standards for teams of family medicine, which represents 140 out of 807 total accreditation points, or 40% of the evaluated activities of the family medicine team. Accreditation standards for prevention and promotion of health include data and pieces of information about the way of life, notifications for preventive activities, cooperation in promotion of health and organisation of group consultation for patients with recorded risk factors such as addiction, irregular diet, obesity, inadequate physical activity, risk factors for malignant neoplasm, prevention of infections, organisation of control and systematic examinations of patients (13).

Reform of education

Development of Healthcare and turning point from therapeutic towards preventive concept, was followed by the reform of education of healthcare workers of PHC and family medicine in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Segment of the prevention and promotion of health has been declared as important segment of the curriculum of all faculties of medicine in theoretical and in practical education. Knowledge and skills of healthcare workers for prevention, identification, and monitoring of the certain risk factors, preventively oriented therapeutic protocols based on active involvement of the patient, self-help, self-control, and also use of network services in communities for intervention of promotion of health, represent key competences defined in Rulebooks of PAT or additional education on specialisation of the teams of family medicine in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (14,15).

Legal framework

Important step in Healthcare sector is actualisation of legal documents through passing the Law on Healthcare in 2010, which promotes concept of social care for health of population and which is accomplished at the levels of Federation, Canton, Municipality, employer, and the individual, and it includes: preservation and improvement of health, detection and suppression of risk factors of disease development, acquiring knowledge and habits of healthy way of life, promotion of healthy life styles, prevention, suppression, and early detection of diseases, timely diagnosis and timely treatment, rehabilitation of patients, and pieces of information necessary for responsible actions and realizing the right to health (16)

In spirit of European Charter on Rights of Patients, it is important to mention passing the Law on rights and responsibilities of the patient in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina from 2010, which represents major step towards social affirmation of concept of prevention and promotion of health. Beside other rights, this Law introduces the right of the patient to have preventive actions and pieces of information necessary for preservation of health and acquiring healthy habits, and also information on risky behaviour and risk factors of living and working environment, which could have negative consequences for his health at all levels

of healthcare. However, special importance of this Law is promotion of the responsibility of the patient himself for his health, in which the patient is obliged to refer to his health responsibly, and actively participate in protection, preservation and improvement of his health, but also follow the instructions and taken measures of therapy proscribed by competent healthcare worker (17).

Discussion

Prevention and promotion of health are integrative segments of most of the relevant strategic documents in Healthcare sector of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, through the intersectoral preventive interventions directed at population groups and leading public health problems and sectors important for the health of the population.

Legal framework emphasises inclusion of prevention as important segment of services at all levels of Healthcare, and also social responsibility for health, and introduction of patient's obligation for responsible behaviour and life style.

Affirmation of quality in Healthcare system is based on introducing the system of accreditation standards for healthcare workers and healthcare institutions in which prevention and promotion of health takes an important place in diagnostic-therapeutic guides of good practice.

Reform of the medical education is in progress but it is certain that current educational programmes affirm development of knowledge and skills referring to early identification of risk factors, prevention, promotion of health and intersectoral cooperation, all of which is in accordance to recommendations of international documents on reform of medical education.

Conclusions

Analysis of strategic documents of the Healthcare sector in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina confirms the argument that strategic commitment to strongly affirm the importance of prevention and promotion of health in system interventions at all levels of Healthcare.

Analysis of available documents indicates respectable systematic positioning of the concept of prevention and promotion of health in reform of healthcare services, education of healthcare workers, achieving the quality and accreditation standards of good practice, with need to improve education of public and patients about importance of partnership, and active involvement in improvement of health and development of the concept of personal and social responsibility for health.

Conflict of Interest: None declared

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