

Youth Health Status and Preventive Medicine

Tinatin Manjavidze¹, Nata Kazakashvili², Nato Pitskhelauri³, Lasha Loria⁴, George Lobzhanidze⁵, Nino Chikhladze⁶

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Faculty of medicine, Department of Public Health

¹MPH, PhD student; ²Supervisor, MD, PhD, Associate Professor; ³MD, PhD; ⁴Supervisor, MD, PhD, Associate Professor; ⁵PhD student, MD; ⁶Supervisor, MD, PhD, Associate Professor.

Summary:

Aim: The aim of our study was to assess the level of students' awareness of health and health rights and attitude toward prevention and healthy lifestyle.

Methodology: A questionnaire has been developed and randomly selected 700 students of Tbilisi State University have been interviewed in summer 2016. 654 fully answered questionnaires were analyzed.

Results: The study showed that the majority of students (71%) have a positive assessment of their health and do not visit medical institutions for preventive examinations (68%). One third of students (33%) do not see a need for preventive measures at all. Most of the students do not participate in any sports (74%), 68% has unhealthy diet and every third student uses tobacco (32%). Most students do not have information about the health insurance and therefore do not use student health insurance (69%). Most students feel that they do not have complete information about their health (77%) and lack of information about their rights to health (81%), although they are interested in medical and health-related legal issues.

Conclusion: Many students face financial problems while taking medical care, reason is young people are not adequately informed about their health insurance. Most youth polled did not have complete information about their health, however, are interested in health-related issues.

Keywords: Youth health, health promotion, health insurance.

Introduction:

Young people's health is the fundamental of the well-being of the country. This is socially active and reproductive group, which mainly determines the future of the country and its socio-economic development. In youth period ends human mental and physical development, resulting in forming the basic skills and abilities, which are the cornerstone of the success in their future work and life. The health status and needs of the youth is of country's healthcare policy (1). On March 28, 2014, the Georgian Government has approved the revised document of the state youth policy, according to which the concept of "young" as defined in the European Union was formed and includes 15-29 years aged individuals (2).

The need for more activities in youth healthcare has been voiced by numerous international organizations and health-oriented societies. Young people's right to health is proved by international legal documents. Adolescents and youth reproductive health and awareness on these issues are specially emphasizes around the world. Given the fact that people in their 20-24 has the highest rate of sexually transmitted diseases and the lowest rate of contraceptive use (3).

According to WHO latest data, main causes of deaths of young people are: traffic injuries, HIV infection, Suicide, Lower respiratory tract infections, violence. All these issues require particular attention in terms of reducing the mortality rate of the young people (4).

Due to the importance of the problem development and implementation of national strategies and programs on children and young people's health has been recognized on the special session UN General Assembly. Attention should be paid primarily by adult's health and protection of their rights, social adaptation; priorities for the government of different countries were identified to achieve better health for young people (5).

In close cooperation with the government sector, health and social conditions of the youth were led by United Nations Population Fund and UNICEF, to form a common vision about youth, their roles and needs; this should develop the necessary mechanisms for the young people's future progress.

National Statistical Service with the technical support of the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs, National Center for Disease Control (NCDC), The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) National Youth Survey was conducted in 2014 and respective report was prepared covering the situation and needs of young people in Georgia. Healthcare was the one of the five essential thematic parts of the research. It once again shows the importance of young people's healthcare issues (6).

In addition to the above mentioned problems, there is a significant difference in the mortality rate among young people. The overall population mortality rate among men is 1.2 times higher than the same figure for women; for the 15-24 age group the death rate among men is four times higher than in women.

The importance of the issue derives from the fact that in youth most of the causes of death are preventable and diseases developed in this age continues throughout life. These problems can be divided into the following groups: early and unplanned pregnancy; sexually transmitted infections; HIV infection; Mental problems; Road traffic accidents; Violence / suicide; Drug addiction; Tobacco and alcohol use; unhealthy diet (7).

Many chronic diseases, that affect quality of life, take start in this age and therefore, in order to improve health of general population, special care should be taken on adolescence and students. Therefore, with consideration of all this small-scale research was planned and carried out on "student's opinions and needs of health care issues."

The proportion of 15-29 old population in Georgia is 22.5% of the total population. The total number of students is 138,900, accounting for 3.72% of the population. 10.1% of 15-29 year young people study at higher education institutions.

The aim of the study:

has been to assess the level of students' awareness of health and health rights and attitude toward prevention and healthy lifestyle.

Methods:

A questionnaire has been developed and randomly selected 700 students of Tbilisi State University have been interviewed in summer 2016.

654 fully answered questionnaires were analyzed.

Results:

The study involved 18-29 year old students. The study showed that the majority of students (71%) have a positive assessment of their health and do not visit medical institutions for preventive examinations (68%). One third of students (33%) do not see a need for preventive measures at all.

On the question of how often you visit a medical institution, 52% of respondents answered that very rarely, 41% 1-2 times a year, and 7% monthly visits to the medical institution. When asked what kind of problem they faced during medical care the majority of respondents (41%) cited financial issues, 19% - unacceptable attitude of the medical staff, 15% - insufficient time for the visit, 6% has not any problems visiting medical facility, 1.3% - 1.3% - unorganized lines and the language barrier, lack of professionalism of the doctors was surveyed in 2.5%. Question of whether or not you are taking medication prescribed by a doctor, 53% of students answered positively, 43.5% practices self-treatment; both answers are positive for 3.5% respondents.

Most of the students do not participate in any sports (74%), 68% has unhealthy diet and every third student uses tobacco (32%). Most necessary health care services for students are in the field of therapy, gynecology, urology and dentistry. Most students do not have information about the health insurance and therefore do not use student health insurance (69%).

Source of medical information is Internet and TV for 65%, and about one-third receives medical information from health care providers.

Most students feel that they do not have complete information about their health (77%) and lack of information about their rights to health (81%), although they are interested in medical and health-related legal issues.

Most students (85%) said that the university environment does not provide sufficient information about the health in general, reproductive health and unhealthy habits, although they wanted it was possible (through campaigns, events, news of the university website).

Most students (73%) expressed their willingness to participate in the planned activities of the university to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Conclusion:

The majority of students do not have information about health insurance, thus not uses the student health insurance (68%). Many students face financial problems while taking medical care, reason is young people are not adequately informed about their health insurance. Preventive examination has less importance for young people and they never visit medical facilities, more than a third do not see the necessity of preventive measures at all. At the same time, the students are not aware of their rights in the health sector; they even do not know that healthcare may be governed by laws. Most youth polled did not have complete information about their health, however, are interested in health-related issues.

References:

1. Young people, health and youth policy", John Coleman and Ann Hagell, 2015.p.19.
2. Georgian Government resolution for revised document of the state youth policy, March 28, 2014.
3. "Young People's Health Care:A National Imperative", NIHCM-National Institute For Health Care Management, 2006.
4. Young People's Health- a challenge for society. World Health Organization.
5. Being young in Europe today, Young People migration and socioeconomic situation- Eurostat, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/>
6. "Natioanl research about youth in Georgia"UNICEF, 2014. P. 8.
7. "Young people health condition in Georgia", National Centre for disease control and public health –NCDC, 2015, p.10.