

REPORT FROM TURKEY

EQuIP Meeting, Istanbul, 27-29 April 2006

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- **News from the Health Transition Project**

Supported by the World Bank, the Health Transition project is continuing. Since most of the new regulations are related with primary care, family physicians follow the course very closely and try to make positive influences.

Pilot Implementation: The new primary care health system mentioned in our previous reports (www.aile.net) is being applied in Düzce, the first pilot city. Repeated inspectory visits of Turkish Association of Family Physicians demonstrated a sustained increase in physician as well as public satisfaction. However, despite the many advantages of the new system, especially to mention the increased income of family doctors, there are still some areas to be improved. Among these are the regulation of health services to frequently migrating populations and the IT system used for electronic medical records.

New pilot cities: On March 2006, the ministry of health declared 10 more pilot cities to implement the health transition project. Right after this announcement vocational trainings of the untrained practitioners started in these cities too. Previous educations in the first pilot city Düzce have demonstrated a substantial contribution of these educations to the physicians.

Second phase trainings: The transitional education of the practitioners consists of two phases. A short (10-day) phase one course will be followed by a one-year on-site training. Several

workshops have been done previously to collect the views of trainers in general practice. A team consisting of national and international members has been established to prepare a curriculum for the second phase of the trainings.

- **National Family Practice Core Curriculum Ready**

Although, not officially announced, the Turkish Board of Family Medicine (TAHYK) has finished the preparation of the new national family practice residency curriculum. After sharing the draft document with the academic departments, it will be released and sent to the ministry to be applied in the residency education. Further info can be obtained from the president of the TAHYK Prof. İlhami Unluoglu (iunluog@ogu.edu.tr) or the secretary of the board Pınar Topsever (pinar_topsever@yahoo.com).

- **Social Security System Changed**

Radical changes are happening in the social security system of Turkey. Three big social security organizations were abolished and a new organization was established to cover all citizens leading to standardized services for everybody related to retirement and health financing. This change was followed by a separation of retirement funds and the health care security system. Health care security premiums of all citizens below 18 are now covered by the government.

- **ICPC-2R Book Available in Turkish**

With the supervision and support of Dr. Inge Okkes and Dr. Marc Jamouille from the Wonca International Classification Committee (WICC) a



Turkish team translated and adopted the ICPC2-R Book into Turkish.

Copyrights to publish and distribute five thousand copies of the book were recently obtained from Wonca. Printing procedure is planned to be finished

before the seventh national congress of family medicine in Izmir on 22-26 May 2006.

- **TAHUD Continues to Support National CME Activities**

Continuous Medical Education activities are an important means to increase the quality of health services provided. TAHUD is determinedly striving to support such activities. Despite its limited budget TAHUD managed to organize more than 8 regional meetings spread throughout the country within the last 6 months. Among these are the national family medicine days in Van, Kartal, Adana, Mersin, Antakya, Kahramanmaraş, and Şanlıurfa. A skills-course on chest x-ray interpretation was applied to all primary care physicians in Edirne.

- **Drug Financing Rules Changed in Favor of Family Physicians**

Family physicians are currently the most advantaged physicians in turkey regarding prescription privileges. With the active cooperation of TAHUD executive, the Ministry of Health revised the regulations on prescription privileges of doctors. Formerly family physicians were not allowed to prescribe SSRI's and proton pump inhibitors beyond some other medications.this change led to an improvement of the image of

family physicians. On long term, such positive changes are expected to effect the preference of medical students to enter family medicine residency.

- **Academic News**

The number of academic departments of family medicine has increased to 38. There are currently 5 full professors and 11 associate professors and 35 assistant professors.

The department of family medicine at Trakya University launched its center for family medicine and healthy living.



- **Two Turkish FM Departments Joined the Socrates Primary Health Care Europe Network**

Last year Departments of Family Medicine at Kocaeli and Antalya Universities were invited to introduce themselves at the Socrates Primary Health Care Europe Network Meeting in Vienna. There is mutual ongoing student exchange between Kocaeli and Nijmegen Universities. At the last meeting of the network in Ljubljana Kocaeli was officially accepted to the network.

Zekeriya Aktürk, MD (zekeriya@trakya.edu.tr)
Nezih Dağdeviren, MD (drdagdeviren@trakya.edu.tr)

Trakya University Medical Faculty
Department of Family Medicine
22030 Edirne, Turkey

Phone: +90 284 2360909/1460, Fax: +90 284 2357652

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