



Redemptoris Missio
Fundacja Pomocy Humanitarnej

POLAND



NOW

Shortage of health workers;
consultations overloaded

IN THE FUTURE

More investment in the
education of health workers

www.medicus.ump.edu.pl



**HealthWorkers
4all**

Main achievements

- Increase in number of post-graduate education possibilities financed from the public funds (6500 places in 2015; in 2014 and earlier there were approximately 3000 places).
- Introduction of a system of monitoring of human resources for health (Projekt P4).
- The salaries of nurses have improved.
- Introduction of internal medicine specialists and pediatricians into primary health care.

Introduction

Considering its national profile of health worker migration, Poland appears to be an unusual country on the EU map due to a complex health care system, its strict conditions, and low salaries. Poland, if compared with other Member States, is a source country rather than a destination one.⁵

Activities

At the beginning of the project, the Humanitarian Aid Foundation Redemptoris Missio focused on the increase of awareness of individuals and institutions, who shape the Polish health care system, about unethical nature of international recruitment, i.e. draining medical personnel from developing countries. However, the Polish context of the medical personnel shortages is completely different than we first thought.

In October 2014, we organised a national workshop for individuals and institutions affected by shortages of medical personnel in the headquarters of the Chamber of Physicians in Wielkopolska Region. Furthermore, we organised a series of meetings with representatives of medical personnel, politicians and students. In cooperation with the office of the Member of the European Parliament Filip Kaczmarek, we organised the Forum Health for All in 2013. In 2014, there was a meeting at the Office of the Commissioner for Patients' Rights in Warsaw, during which we reported a problem which we deal within the project.

Results

The actions that were taken within the HW4All project, were aimed primarily on the increase of awareness of stakeholders responsible for the structure and potential reorganisation of the health care system in Poland and for the existing shortages of medical personnel. The problem, which was not only picked up by the Foundation, was being more widely perceived - particularly in the context of the increasing medical needs of an aging Polish society. Actions were taken at a political level (the Polish Ministry of Health, which included a reduction in the limits for admission to the medical faculties) to reduce the shortage of doctors and nurses in

⁵ Chapter 2: Civil society's contribution and advocacy for implementing the WHO Global Code in the European Region: Six country case studies. Linda Mans, Remco Van de Pas, and Giulia de Ponte. In: Migration of health workers: the WHO code of practice and the global economic crisis. Eds: Amani Siyam, Mario Roberto Dal Poz, 2014.

the Polish system, and thus ensure a good availability of medical services for the society in the future.

The Redemptoris Missio Foundation is a member of the international organisation Medicus Mundi International (MMI). We may continue the project activities in the human resources for health working group, in cooperation with other members of the MMI, and in the discussion about medical personnel topics at a European level and in the World Health Organisation. In Poland we will try to take advantage of established contacts and gained experience.

Lessons learned

To evaluate the results of the project, a completely different context should be taken into account: the problem of migration of medical personnel in Poland. Many Polish doctors and nurses and representatives of other health professions go abroad mainly to search for better living and working conditions.

Working on the implementation of the project, we have met the complexity of the Polish health care system. Based on our observations, we wrote some recommendations, which were included in the analysis of stakeholders and may contribute to reduce the deficit. During the project we have established a good cooperation with the local medical professional association, who understands the essence of the problem very well. In addition, through numerous public meetings we increased awareness of the shortage of medical personnel.

In the Polish health care system some steps have been taken during the project to reduce shortages of medical staff, e.g. reduced limits of admission to medical school, increased salaries for nurses, permission for doctors of internal medicine and paediatricians for conduction of primary health care practices, which until now could only be done by family medicine specialists.

By participating in the project Redemptoris Missio primarily gained experience in advocacy, a new field for us. Until now our activities consisted of bringing direct medical aid to the medical missions in developing countries. We acquired the difficult ability to carry out projects co-financed by the European Commission. We may now participate in the following consortia and apply for other grants.