

## **Reaccreditation of Study Programs of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina**

### **The accreditation process**

An Expert Team (ET) visited University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina” (referred thereafter as UP) on May 10, 2016 to perform evaluations for reaccreditation of the following study programs:

- Nursing (Bachelor)
- Midwifery (Bachelor)
- Physiotherapy (Bachelor)
- Experimental Biomedicine (PhD)
- Public Health (PhD)

### **The Expert Team included (in alphabetical order):**

- Prof. Dr. Helvi Kyngäs, University of Oulu, Finland
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Patsch, Paracelsus Medical University, Salzburg, Austria
- Mr. Adrian Stan, European Student Union (ESU)

### **The Team was supported by members of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency:**

- Ms. Furtuna Mehmeti, Acting Director, KAA
- Mr. Fisnik Gashi, Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring, KAA (present at working dinner)
- Mr. Shkelzen Gerxhaliu, Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring, KAA (present at site visit)

### **Site visit**

The site visit took place on May 10, 2016, at UP, Faculty of Medicine and was organized as follows:

- Meeting with management
- Meeting with responsible persons for the study program (curriculum, teaching and research)
- Visit of facilities and infrastructure
- Meeting with teachers

- Meeting with students
- Consultation of expert team with KAA officer
- Closing meeting with UP management

**The report is based on:**

- Self-evaluation report 2015
- Meetings and discussions which took place during the site visit
- The Code of Good Practice, Guidelines for Site-Visit and Guidelines for Experts (academic programs) provided by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency
- Site-visit of the facilities
- Documents requested by ET
  - Nursing programs and self-study hours in each course
  - Exact hours of clinical training in direct contact with the patients in the Nursing program
  - Physiotherapy: names of the teachers and their academic grade, teachers employed and teachers not primarily appointed in physiotherapy
  - Publication list of the physiotherapy staff
  - Publication list of the Department of Public Health
  - Midwifery
- The response of UP, Faculty of Medicine, to the draft evaluation report

**and is the result of:**

Collegial work of experts appointed by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency.

The Expert Team visited UP on May 10 and had meetings with:

- Authorities of the Medical Faculty: Prof. Dr. Suzana Manxhuka-Kerliu (Dean of the Faculty), Prof. Ass. Dr. Kreshnik Hoti (Vice Dean for Academic Affairs), Prof. Assoc. Dr. Gloria Staka (Vice Dean for Finance), Prof. Ass. Dr. Ibrahim Rudhani (Vice Dean for Health Affairs), Ass. Dr. Fisnik Kurshumliu, Dr. Sci. (Coordinator for Academic Development, Prof. Ass. Dr. Shaip Krasniqi (Previous Coordinator for Academic Development)
- Faculty members responsible for the organization of the accredited programme: Prof. Assoc. Dr. Sylejman Rexhep (Nursing and Midwifery), Prof. Dr. Hajrije Hundozi Hysenaj (Physiotherapy), Prof. Ass. Dr. Burim Neziri (Experimental Medicine – PhD Program), Prof. Assoc. Dr. Tahire Moloku Gjergji and Prof. Assoc. Dr. Merita Berisha (Public Health – PhD Program)
- Representatives of academic teachers and supervisors involved in the programme
- Representatives of PhD students

The Expert Team (ET) wishes to acknowledge the hospitality of the Faculty Management, presentations of the Faculty Management and Programme Organizers and the pleasant and productive working environment.

### **Introductory Meeting with Faculty of Medicine Management**

Dean Prof. Dr. Manxhuka-Kerliu indicated to the ET that the members of the management committee have been appointed in March 2016. The central vision of the new team is to create a medical school of excellence. Internalization has high priority. An international honorary advisory board with members from prestigious medical schools from Europe, U.S.A. and Australia has been appointed. Alumni working in the U.S.A. and Europe will be appointed as visiting professors to facilitate modern methods of teaching and telemedicine. Exchange programs for teachers and students are being developed. Working groups have been formed to realize these endeavours. The vice-dean discussed a number of specific topics that are currently addressed. These include, but are not limited to brainstorming sessions to identify research topics and foreign partners for potential grant applications, modern communication tools, the instalment of a drug information centre, the creation of e- and simulation labs as well as training facilities for clinical skills. The vice-dean for financial affairs briefly discussed the current budget. Part of the resources will be used for the new building and laboratory equipment. Finally, potential sources for budget increase in the future were discussed. Overall, the ET feels that vision and plans for improvement of the medical faculty are ambitious and likely to benefit UP.

# **Bachelor program in Nursing**

Prof. Dr. Helvi Kyngäs, University of Oulu, Finland

## **1. Academic Program and Student Management**

University of Prishtina is established in 1969. It has bachelor (BA), master (MA) and doctoral (PhD) level programs. Bachelor Program of Nursing has accredited in 2013 for three years. It is very clear that the program is needed. There is insufficiency number of nurses with bachelor level education in Kosovo. The program correspond with mission and principles of faculty of medicine.

### **Structure of the Program**

The program for Bachelor in Nursing as a technical numbers comply with the European Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications (20005/36/EU, with amendment 2013/55/EU). The program is divided into six semesters (each with 60 ECTS) and the duration of study is three academic years (180 ECTS). All courses carry ECTS points and one ECTS is equivalent with 30 hours (whole program 5400 hours). All courses are at least 3 ECTS which is recommendation. The curriculum includes 10% from 180 ECTS elective courses. The ECTS and the number of hours of theoretical studies are allocated correctly as well as self-study hours.

According to requirements of European Directive and Bologna process it should be at least half of studies clinical training, 1/3 theoretical part and students self-study. In the present nursing program it means that half of 5400 hours is 2700 hours which should be clinical training in direct contact with a healthy or sick individual and/or community. However, in present program clinical and laboratory training hours together are 2700 hours. However, this is promised to revise to be according to EU requirements.

The person in charge of clinical training is not nurse. However, the training in clinical settings are mentored by nurses (nine) and teachers (three) who are nurses. According to documents mentioned above the clinical training need to be taken place under the responsibility of nursing teachers, in cooperation with other qualified nurses. The current situation is just acceptable but it is very vulnerable, because the number of mentors is not high as well as the number of teachers who are nurses is low (three). Faculty of Medicine in Prishtina runs a Tempus program of Master's Degree in Nursing and Midwifery and by the end of 2016 it is expected to have 25 graduates in Nursing and Midwifery Science. That will enable excellent opportunity to improve academic staff qualifications in nursing program.

In current program the titles of courses are proper and cover areas which are defined in EU directive. There is also defined the main expected learning outcomes for program but they are quite general level. There should be more accurately defined program's core competences and nursing skills. After they are defined for all program it should be make sure that they are logical with each course's learning outcomes and content. In that way the program will become more nursing orientated than it is now.

One point more to improve the quality of program is to update the literature in terms of the years of them and to have more modern nursing books. As well, in many courses the literature is not nursing literature.

Admission criteria and admission procedures are transparent and according to international standards.

### **Recommendations:**

1. It should be defined more accurately the program's expected core competences in terms of nursing skills and knowledge. After that define all courses content and learning outcomes to be logical with programs expected core competencies to aim them to be more nursing oriented than the present program is.
2. The clinical training hours should be half of program hours which means here 2700 hours. That must be changed to be according to requirements (20005/36/EU, with amendment 2013/55/EU).
3. Responsibility of clinical training must have a nursing teachers and under nurses mentoring. That is just fulfilled with minimum level and it should employ the academic staff who have nurse's degree because the current situation is very vulnerable.
4. The literature must be updated to be the latest books and the latest knowledge and literature of nursing.
5. To carry out nursing program it is recommended to take not more than 50 students per year.

### **Teaching and learning**

It is mentioned to use variety of teaching methods (lecture based learning, problem based learning, simulation based learning, practice based learning, reflective learning, research based learning and e-learning). The academic teaching staff (who were present in meeting and who teach also in nursing program) argued to use these methods except e-learning is not used. These all are modern and commonly used methods and they very useful to teach nurses students. It was pointed out in meeting with management group that e-learning is one issue which will be developed during the coming years.

It is presented assessment methods and how many per cent each of them are from whole assessment. (e.g. practical test 10%, finals test 70%, seminars 5% etc). The evaluation of the most of courses are based on many different assessment practices which is very good.

### **Recommendation:**

1. It is recommended to develop e-learning.

### **2. Staff**

There is working three nurses (MA in Nursing). There is also contract with 9 nurses (5 of them have MA in Nursing) who work in hospital and who mentor the students' clinical training. Addition to this, there is international contacts to get support to develop nursing program. As mentioned above there is also program of Master's Degree in Nursing and Midwifery and it is supposed that there will be graduated 25 people by the end of 2016. It was also told that there is 5 people in PhD program in nursing. It seems that in the near future there will be a good number of potential academic staff who are nurses presuming that university will employ them to work for nursing program. It is absolutely necessary to assure the academic staff

qualifications (who has nurses background) as soon as possible to be better than just fulfill requirements with minimum level.

**Recommendations:**

1. The requirements of the European Directive is just fulfilled with minimum level which explicitly defines that education of nurses should take place chiefly under supervision of nurses. It should be employed more staff who have nurse's degree as soon as possible.

**3. Research and international co-operation**

There is no nursing research. The academic staff who are teaching in nursing program are active in research but they are not doing nursing research. Students diploma works are focused more in medical issues than in nursing issues probably because the lack of academic nursing staff. Nursing research is needed to develop nursing and evidence based practice. These can not be developed without research.

There is international collaboration in nursing program and plans to develop nursing research. That is really needed to get support to develop nursing program.

**Recommendation:**

1. It should be prepared research plan for Nursing Research. It is wise to develop the research around the issues which are important areas in Nursing in Kosovo and then look for international partners who are interested in same topic.

**4. Space and equipments**

In general level the university provides sufficient and proper spaces for teaching and learning. Infrastructure for theoretical part for example such as lecture rooms and computer labs. Also the academic staff and students (I did not meet any nursing students but other students in meeting) were satisfied with library services and possibilities to access the databases.

There were several Laboratory rooms for Practical Training. The most of beds and manikins are old fashion but they cover the nursing areas which need to practice in laboratory settings. There is not beds and manikins to practice fundamental nursing skills but it was told that the students will practice them in clinical settings. Because they are fundamental skills I do not see there a big risk for patients' safety even they are practiced in clinical setting beside of laboratory settings. However, it is highly recommended to buy some new manikins and bed for practice fundamental skills of nursing. It was pointed out from management group that there is plan to build clinical skills center. That would be very useful for all students in medical faculty and would be useful to practice together with students from different programs to learn multiprofessional work.

**Recommendations:**

1. The Laboratory need new beds (or at least one), manikins, models and equipments to train nursing skills.
2. While plan the clinical skills center the nurses' laboratory training would be useful to plan to take place there. This has been confirmed by the new Management in their comments to draft report.

## **5. Quality Management**

The Faculty has organized and defined Quality management. It is collected the data by questionnaire each year for all academic staff, other staff and students to evaluate the quality. Also, there is transparent system to develop and evaluate the programs.

## **6. Conclusion:**

**Accreditation Decision:** Bachelor in Nursing is **recommend accreditation for three years.**

# **Bachelor Program of Midwifery**

Prof. Dr. Helvi Kyngäs, University of Oulu, Finland

The program correspond with mission and principles of faculty of medicine. In Kosovo there is insufficient number of midwiferies. This is program **is** absolutely needed from the both perspectives society and development of health care system in country.

## **1. Academic Program and Student Management**

### Structure of the Program

The program for Bachelor in Midwifery comply with the European Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications (20005/36/EC, with amendment 2013/55/EU). The program is divided into six semesters (each with 60 ECTS) and the duration of study is three academic years (180 ECTS). All courses carry ECTS points (1 ECTS = 30 hours). Because of that whole program has 5400 hours. All courses carry at least 3 ECTS and program includes 10% from 180 ECTS elective courses which are according to recommendation. The ECTS and the number of hours of theoretical studies and clinical training are allocated correctly. As well as self-study hours. According to EU directive (three years program) consist of theoretical and practical training, with at least one third of the minimum duration representing clinical training. This criteria is fulfilled.

According to documents mentioned above practical and clinical training is to be dispensed under appropriate supervision. Serious problem is that in program there is any teachers who are midwives. As well, there is any midwives in clinical setting to mentor the students. This is against the EU directive. It is listed very detailed instructions in those documents for practical training, for example, advising of pregnant women, involving at least 100 pre-natal examinations, supervision and care of at least 40 pregnant women, conduct by the student of at least 40 deliveries: where this number cannot be reached owing to the lack of available women in labour, it may be reduced to a minimum of 30, provided that the student assists with 20 further deliveries etc. It is accurately defined what should be practice in clinical settings. In current midwifery program it is not mentioned any this kind of practices.

There is defined the main expected learning outcomes for program but they are general level. There should be more accurately defined the program's core competences and skills. Also, the learning outcomes for clinical training are very general level compared to that what is said in (20005/36/EC, with amendment 2013/55/EU). In program (in part of clinical training or students practical training book) it should be mentioned those practical training issues which are mentioned above and published in directive 2013/55/EU and 2005/36/EC. Internationally, in most cases there is students practice book where those skills are listed and sign by mentor after it has been done.

There is some old books and some literature which focus is not in midwifery.

Admission criteria and admission procedures are transparent and according to international standards.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Clinical training must be carried out under midwives mentoring. In the current program it is not organized as it is recommended by EU directive. This is serious problem.
2. It must be more accurately indicate the main competencies of midwifery program in terms of knowledge and skills.
3. The skills required according to 20005/36/EU, with amendment 2013/55/EU should be mentioned in program or/and in clinical training book. Those skills must be trained and controlled by teachers or mentors in clinical setting.
4. The literature must be updated and focused more in midwifery literature.
5. It is not recommended to take any students before academic teachers and clinical mentors qualifications are according to requirements.

### **Teaching and learning**

It is mentioned to use variety of teaching methods (lecture based learning, problem based learning, simulation based learning, practice based learning, reflective learning, research based learning and e-learning). The academic teaching staff (who were present in meeting and who teach also in midwifery program) argued to use these methods except e-learning. These all are modern and commonly used methods and they very useful. It was pointed out in meeting with management group that e-learning is one issue which will be developed during the coming years.

It is presented assessment methods and how many per cent each of them are from whole assessment. (e.g. practical test 10%, finals test 70%, seminars 5% etc). The evaluation of the most of courses are based on many different assessment practices which is very good.

Recommendation:

1. It is recommended to develop e-learning.

### **2. Staff**

There is obvious lack of staff who are midwives. In program there is any midwifery teachers. As well, there is any midwives in clinical setting to mentor the students clinical training. It is told that there is some international connections to get support but that is not in terms of teaching and mentoring the clinical training. Faculty of Medicine in Prishtina runs a Tempus program of Master's Degree in Nursing and Midwifery and by the end of 2016 it is expected to have 25 graduates. That will enable excellent opportunity to improve academic staff qualifications in midwifery program and to improve program itself to fulfill requirements (20005/36/EC, with amendment 2013/55/EU). However, at the moment staff qualifications do not fulfill EU directives and it is strongly under it.

Recommendations:

1. It **MUST** employ immediately the people who are midwives and make sure that clinical training is done under midwives mentoring.

### **3. Research and international co-operation**

There is no research focusing on midwifery because there is no midwives working at university. The academic staff who are teaching in program are active in research but they are not doing research of midwifery. Students' diploma works are focused more in medical issues than in issues which are in the focus of midwifery. That kind of research is needed to develop midwifery and evidence based practice.

There is some international collaboration but that is focused more to develop program and of course that is what program absolutely need.

Recommendation:

1. It should be prepared research plan for midwifery research as soon as possible. It is wise to develop the research around the issues which are important areas in Kosovo and then look for international partners who are interested in same topics.
2. It should be make international contracts to assure the development of midwifery program, to get more midwives to teach and to develop research.

#### **4. Space and equipments**

In general level the university provides sufficient spaces for teaching and learning. All infrastructure for theoretical part such like lecture rooms and computer labs library are good. There is available databases for journals and books.

The rooms for itself Laboratory rooms for Practical Training are proper. But the most of beds and manikins are old fashion and they do not cover the areas which are needed to practice midwifery skills in laboratory settings. It is argued by management group the plan for developing clinical skills centre. In that connection it would be useful from both financial and practical perspectives to build that so that all students in medical faculty could use that and even practice together to learn multiprofessional work.

Recommendations:

1. The Laboratory Training need new beds (or at least one), manikins, models and equipments to train skills of midwifery.
2. While plan the clinical training center the midwives laboratory training would be useful to plan to take place there.

#### **5. Quality Management**

The Faculty has organized and defined Quality management. It is collected the data by questionnaire each year for all academic staff, other staff and students to evaluate the quality. Also, there is transparent system to develop and evaluate the programs.

#### **6. Conclusion:**

Accreditation Decision: The program for Bachelor in Midwifery **is not recommend accreditation**. The qualifications of academic staff does not fulfill EU requirements. There is any midwifery in clinical settings to mentor students and that is also strongly against EU requirements. Also, the content of program especially the clinical training and skills of midwifery does not fulfill EU requirements (20005/36/EC, with amendment 2013/55/EU). There is not proper equipments for laboratory training to train midwifery skills.

## **Bachelor Program in Physiotherapy**

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Patsch, Paracelsus Medical University, Salzburg, Austria

### **General information**

The basic Program in Physiotherapy was established by Queens University in Canada in the years from 2001 to 2004, was then transferred to University of Limoges, France and was moved to UP in 2008. After adaption of the curriculum to fulfill EU guidelines, it was accredited in 2013. The program is consistent with UP's mission and principles of operation. The program is similar to the respective programs in Zagreb, Bucharest and Skopje. Collaborations are entertained with these three universities, but interactions with similar programs in Middle- or Western Europa are not evident.

### **1. Academic Program and Student Management**

The study program comprises 6 semesters over 3 years of full-time studies (180 ECTS). One (1) ECTS is equivalent to thirty (30) hours of studies. All courses are graded by ECTS values. The allocation of ECTS is appropriate and justified and the assessment/examination methods are adequate.

The program enlists up to 50 students per year. Admission tests, qualifications and admission procedures are adequate. The academic degree of "Bachelor in Physiotherapy" is awarded after successful completion of the program. As part of the site visit, a discussion with bachelor students in the physiotherapy program was conducted. Students stated that they had to take 16 exams in the first, 20 in the second and 18 in the third year of study. They felt that the program, although overall very positive, is overloaded with mandatory courses and practical activities and that there was not enough time to prepare for examinations. They even suggested to prolong the entire study program to 4 years (which is outside of EU guidelines) in order to study all the subjects with reasonable success. A more detailed examination of the curriculum revealed that many courses are valued with only 2 ECTS, while EU directions favor courses with 3 or more ECTS. Furthermore, free learning time is underrepresented. Indeed, there are several courses that overlap. Such courses could be combined into one course with only one examination. For instance, one example would be to combine surgery, traumatology, orthopedics and aspects of sports medicine. However, consolidation of courses may not be enough and the content of the courses also requires some pruning.

Some of the references date back quite far. More recent literature would help and literature sources need to be cited correctly (for journals: authors, title, year of publication, volume and pages; for books: name of the book, edition number, chapter, authors, title of the chapter, pages, year of publication).

### **Recommendations**

- Consolidate the curriculum to fewer courses with broader scope, reduce

examinations and overall content of courses by 30 % and increase free learning time.

- Continuously update the courses as well as the references.

## **2. Staff**

The staff engaged in the Program of physiotherapy is listed in the courses of the curriculum. The teachers from the physiotherapy department and other departments have been detailed in a list, requested during the site visit. Overall, the teaching staff clearly is competent and the number of teachers is sufficient, but continued education of teaching members will be essential to adapt more modern teaching that enhances the learning effects.

### **Recommendation**

- Continued education of teachers should have a high priority. The instalment of e-learning and telemedicine should be very helpful in this regard. After an initial trial period, continued education of teachers should become mandatory.

## **3. Research and international Co-operations**

While the teaching staff has enough scientific output, the self-evaluation report provides little, if any specifics regarding ongoing or planned research by students. Examples about research topics could have been provided. Research by students is essential for their development and use of evidence based practical methods. There is also little information about student exchange with other universities.

Collaborations with similar programs in Zagreb, Bucharest and Skopje have been mentioned, but it is not clear, whether research is part of the collaborations.

### **Recommendation**

- Prepare a catalogue of potential topics for the diploma work of students, establish collaborations with universities from Middle- or Western Europe and develop student exchange programs with other universities.

## **4. Finance and Infrastructure**

The Faculty of Medicine provides adequate space for lecture rooms and treatment facilities. Library services including use of computers with access to databases seems to be sufficient. The availability of a large number of patients suffering from a wide variety of diseases is clearly a strength of the program. A visit of the physiotherapy facilities was not included into the site visit.

## **5. Quality Management**

UP Faculty of Medicine has a quality assurance program. Questionnaires for students and teachers are used for quality evaluations. However, the rate of answering the questions is often not high. The on-line quality control should improve this situation. Similarly, results of evaluations should be available for all teachers in the near future. Examinations in physiotherapy that are conducted in comparable universities could be used to judge the educational success.

### **Summary and Overall Recommendations**

The expert team concludes that the Program in Physiotherapy complies with the respective EU directives in most parts and recommends accreditation for the next 3 years for 50 students/year. However, the following changes/adaptions in the program should be made:

- Consolidate the curriculum to fewer courses with broader scope, reduce examinations and overall content of courses by 30 % and increase free learning time.
- Continuously update the courses as well as the references.
- Continued education of teachers should have a high priority. The instalment of e-learning and telemedicine should be very helpful in this regard. After an initial trial period, continued education of teachers should become mandatory.
- Prepare a catalogue of potential topics for the diploma work of students, establish collaborations with universities from Middle- or Western Europe and develop student exchange programs with other universities.

In their response to the draft of this evaluation report, UP Faculty of Medicine indicated that the recommendations listed above will be implemented in the near future.

## **Study Program Experimental Biomedicine – Doctoral Study**

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Patsch, Paracelsus Medical University Salzburg, Austria

### **General information**

The PhD programme in Experimental Biomedicine had been conceived as a continuation of the Tempus project (159034-TEMPUS-2009-XK-JPHES for “Education, Research and Training in Medical and Natural Sciences”). Co-operations with partners from the University of Ghent, the University of Edinburgh, the University of Vienna and the University of Graz were an essential part of Tempus. The first accreditation for the study program was granted in 2012. A comprehensive evaluation for reaccreditation was performed in July/August 2015, where several points of criticism and suggestions for improvement have been raised. A time frame of 6 months has been granted to adequately address the issues raised in the report of the ET. Hence, the current evaluation specifically focussed on the actions/explanations to resolve these issues.

### **Points of criticism, recommendations made in July/August 2015 and responses of UP**

1. The authorities of the Faculty should consider either extension of the programme, or recruitment of candidates free of other obligations.

Study coordinators adequately responded by including into the admission criteria “fully-time studies” without other obligations. An extension of the time for studies may be granted for part-time students.

2. The existing courses should be divided into the mandatory, core courses including: Methodology of Research, Medical Informatics, Statistics (Biostatistics), Ethics of Research, Intellectual Property rights and Project Management, plus Journal Club and elective (remaining) courses providing knowledge on selected fields. The workload of core courses should be reduced to the equivalent of 30 ECTS.

Mandatory core courses have been identified with an equivalent of 30 ECTS as requested. Elective courses are properly defined.

3. The Journal Club should be continued throughout the whole period of studies.

The Journal Club is now included in all 6 semesters.

4. Consultations with respective supervisors during 3rd, 4th and 5th semesters should be formally indicated in the curriculum.

Consultations with supervisors and/or professors are now formally indicated

throughout the studies.

5. The list of courses should be enriched by courses related to basic sciences like Cell Biology, Biochemistry, Genetics and Molecular Biology.

The list of elective courses has been enriched and contains the requested courses.

6. The curriculum should include mandatory doctoral seminars which will give students an opportunity to present their research data and discuss further project work.

A thesis seminar has been included in the curriculum during semesters 3 to 6.

7. Laboratory rotations should be included during the first year and explicitly indicated in addition to the courses concerned.

The current curriculum contains laboratory rotations during the first and second year of study.

**Recommendation:**

All laboratory rotations should be offered during the first year, as this may be helpful for choosing the laboratory for thesis work.

8. The content of the course on Ethics should be altered focusing on ethics of research and not on doctor-patient relationship

The content of the course in Ethics has been changed and focusses now on research Ethics.

9. More attention should be paid to training and assessment of transferable skills.

Training and assessment of transferable skills is now adequate.

10. The description of courses should be modified by underlining the time for laboratory work and the research component.

Time for laboratory and thesis work is now clearly provided.

11. The amount of assessment procedures per course should be reduced and assessment of practical skills should be introduced.

The laboratory supervisor will assess the practical skills of students and will sign off

for each major method learned by a student

12. Immediate action should be taken to reduce bureaucracy related to thesis admission, evaluation and acceptance.

The new faculty management conducts now more frequent meetings (2 per month) to fulfill the needs of students.

13. Staff training including not only supervisors, but also other teachers involved in the program should address the specificity of the III-rd cycle which may require resignation from the traditional methods of teaching and assessment and adoption of the new ones.

The new faculty management supports a number of training opportunities for the newer methods of teaching such as student centered teaching and problem oriented learning. According to the Dean, each professor should stay one month abroad to acquire newer methods in teaching and research. Several teachers have already used such an opportunity. Furthermore, e-learning will be further developed for teachers. Teachers will also have the opportunity to hear lectures (transmitted by telemedicine) of collaborators from the U.S.A. and Western Europe.

14. The stays of students in laboratories abroad should be carefully planned by local supervisors from the perspective of students' thesis and intensive efforts to create joined degrees should be undertaken.

At the site visit, several examples were presented that attest to the credibility of planning stays abroad. The methods to be learned abroad are identified. Experiments that need to be done in the foreign institution are planned. The realization of joint degrees is planned by faculty management.

15. Representatives of PhD students should be co-opted to Doctoral Study Councils (but not to evaluation committees).

Students have so far been represented in the University Senate and are now also in the council for medical studies.

16. There is an urgent need to guarantee more funds for the laboratory work. These funds should be secured for each student prior to his/her acceptance into the program.

Ministry doubled this year twice the support laboratory reagents and publication costs. Acquisition of grants and other financial support is a high priority for the faculty management.

17. The results of students' evaluation questionnaires should be communicated to the teachers who have been evaluated.

Previously, only teachers with poor performance were informed by management. Evaluations will be done online in the future. This will facilitate that each teacher has access to his evaluation

18. The questionnaires for PhD program evaluation by students should be modified reflecting the main aspects of the doctoral studies.

Changes in the questionnaires are planned for the online evaluation

Additional points to be considered, but not essential for the current re-accreditation:

1. University regulations regarding usage of ECTS in relation to bench research in life sciences should be re-considered.
2. Budgetary sovereignty for the Faculty of Medicine, either within the University of Prishtina or in form of a separate Medical University that may also include the Medical Centre may be strongly considered, to facilitate financial planning and purchasing of necessary equipment.
3. UP should also look for increased funding for laboratory work from the ministry and possibilities of co-funding the research by local pharmaceutical industry.

Ad 1.

According to the program officer, teachers of UP urged for changes of the PhD curriculum in response to the 2015 evaluation. University management accepted the changes, but the parliament has to vote on these changes.

Ad 2 and 3:

These issues are not yet resolved.

### **Summary and Overall Recommendations**

After a careful review of the actions and responses of UP to the evaluation report 2015, the ET recommends accreditation of the program for 3 years and a total of 10 students per 3 years.

- A minor issue that should be corrected relates to laboratory rotations. These should take place in the first year of study. The students may benefit from being early exposed to several laboratory disciplines.

### **Additional remarks**

- In the discussion with the dean, the question was asked whether UP, Faculty of Medicine, can combine all PhD programs into one program with several subspecialties. ET supports such a change that would include a common trunk, i.e., the mandatory courses, for all PhDs. Elective courses may then be offered for the various subspecialties. Such an approach would save resources and facilitate the communication among students in different fields.
- In the discussion with students, 2 students enrolled in the Tempus were present. Both students will defend their thesis at the end of this year or next year. Both students indicated that the program was very successful and of great benefit. They also stated that the program was instrumental for future collaborations and exchange of students, not least because of the good impression they made abroad.
- In the student discussion, an important issue related to GPA came up. As the GPA is used as a main criterion for priority choices or residents in Kosovo, students suggested that the examination grade in each course should be multiplied by the ECTS points prior to adding up all grades. Such a change in calculations should be considered as it would include the weight of individual courses and their importance in the study program.
- The tuition fee of 1000,0 Euro/semester is of some concern

In their response to the draft of this evaluation report, UP Faculty of Medicine indicated that the government reduced the tuition fees for 2016 by 50%.

## **Public Health – Doctoral Program (PhD)**

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Patsch, Paracelsus Medical University, Salzburg, Austria  
Prof. Dr. Helvi Kyngäs, University of Oulu, Finland

### **Introduction**

The Institute of National Public Health was established 1925. It serves a scientific and health profession institute for Kosovo, conducts research and professional training in the public health sciences. It houses several departments including Epidemiology, Human Ecology, Social medicine, Microbiology, Health Information s and the School of Public Health. The doctoral Public Health Program (PhD) was accredited in 2013 and is now up for re-accreditation.

### **1. Academic Program and Student Management**

The Public Health (PhD) Program is fully in line with the institutions mission and principles of operation. The program is comparable to respective programs in other universities. The study programs is conceived for 6 semesters over 3 years of full-time studies (180 ECTS, 1 ECTS = 25 hours.) There are mandatory courses during the first semester carrying a total of 30 ECTS. In the following semester, elective lectures are available as well as a journal club and a thesis seminar throughout the study. Furthermore, a rotation through various laboratories is part of the curriculum. Students can choose their field of research among disciplines such as epidemiology, human ecology, microbiology, social medicine, public policy and administration. The “collection” of ECTS is somewhat obsolete for PhD programs in natural sciences with laboratory work as their main component. The vast majority of time should be spent on thesis work and thesis-related studies. This was pointed out previously in the 2015 review for the PhD program in Experimental Biomedicine. Furthermore, it is very unlikely (and actually not necessary in most natural science PhD programs of other universities) that a student has a publication in the fourth semester in a journal with an impact factor. The ET has been informed that changes in these studies are now under consideration by government and parliament.

The curriculum is somewhat overloaded with courses in the dental field of medicine. As already suggested in the evaluation from 2013, the courses could be a bit more balanced by including a formal course in social medicine.

Of some concern was the fact that as of now only 2 students from the program (installed in 2013) have obtained thesis approval. The overall study time should be 3 years and include the thesis defence. Thus, a study time > 4 years is certainly not desirable as students should move on with their professional carrier.

An exchange program for students is also advised.

## **2. Staff**

There are four professors, 7 associate professors, 6 assistant professors and 10 assistants. The number of academic staff members is clearly sufficient for the proposed number of students. Qualifications and competencies of staff members are good, but, like in most scientific fields, continued education of teachers will be essential.

### **Recommendations**

- Mandatory continued education for teachers should be considered
- Establish a student exchange program with other universities

## **3. Research and International Co-operation**

The research output of the academic staff is certainly acceptable. Moreover, the departments of the institutes have numerous collaborations with the other public health institutions in Kosovo and associations with several institutes in Europe and the U.S.A.

## **4. Finance and Infrastructure**

The departments of the National Institute of Health appear to be well funded. The building was recently remodeled through a project funded by EC. The laboratories are generally well equipped. Specifically, most equipment and instruments in microbiology are state-of-the-art.

Of some concern is the students tuition fee of 1000 Euro/semester and the tuition for the PhD thesis defense.

## **5. Quality management**

UP Faculty of Medicine has a quality assurance program. Questionnaires for students and teachers are used for quality evaluations. However, the rate of answering the questions is often not high. The on-line quality control should improve this situation. Similarly, results of evaluations should be available for all teachers in the near future. Study time and professional placement of graduates should also be monitored as this is an important quality indicator.

### **Summary and Overall Recommendations**

The ET came to the conclusion that most aspects of the Public Health PhD-Program are consistent with EU directives and therefore recommends reaccreditation for 3 years and for

10 students/3 years.

**Suggestions:**

- Continued education of teachers should have a high priority. The instalment of e-learning and telemedicine should be very helpful in this regard. After an initial trial period, continued education of teachers should become mandatory.
- Monitor study time and professional placement of graduates
- Establish exchange program for students (and if possible, also for teachers)

In their response to the draft of this evaluation report, UP Faculty of Medicine indicated that the suggestions listed above will be considered and implemented in due course. Furthermore, the government of Kosovo reduced the tuition fees for 2016 reduced by 50%.

**University of Prishtina – Faculty of Medicine – Reaccreditation procedure –  
10<sup>th</sup> of May 2016**

*Mr. Adrian Stan, European Student Union (ESU)*

**Students in the programmes examined (strong points, things that need improvement and recommendations):**

- Teaching – The students are satisfied with the methods for assessment of learning outcomes. The level of teaching is good but there is little information about teaching methods. The overall impression from SER and discussions with students is that mostly traditional approaches are followed. Teaching should be flexible with an approach on shifting the paradigm from teacher centered methods to the student centered methods – the concept of student centered learning (SCL). Student centered learning can encourage deeper learning, knowing that retention rates differ depending on the way in which material is learned. Beside teachers reading from power-points presentations there should be put a bigger accent on demonstrations, discussions and practical doing, which the students always complain that they want more. The practical part is more important, more weight should be placed in it and a more independent study time approach on theory. A question that the institution always can address itself in every programme of studies is ‘are the students fit to practice right after graduation?’
- The institution has the clear ambition to establish modern didactic methods (e-learning, problem-based learning etc.), but their use is still heterogeneous depending on the programmes and should be further enforced in all of them.
- Despite several Erasmus agreements international mobility is low and more agreements with more places should be taken in consideration. Also the exchange programs can be advertised more because too little information is provided to the students about opportunities.
- The infrastructure can be more modernized in some parts, especially the laboratories (beside the Histology and Pathology, many of them are ill equipped) and lecture halls can get cold during the winter times. The organization in practicals can be better in terms of lowering the number of students in them. 15-20 students/group can be overcrowding in laboratories. The new building of Dean

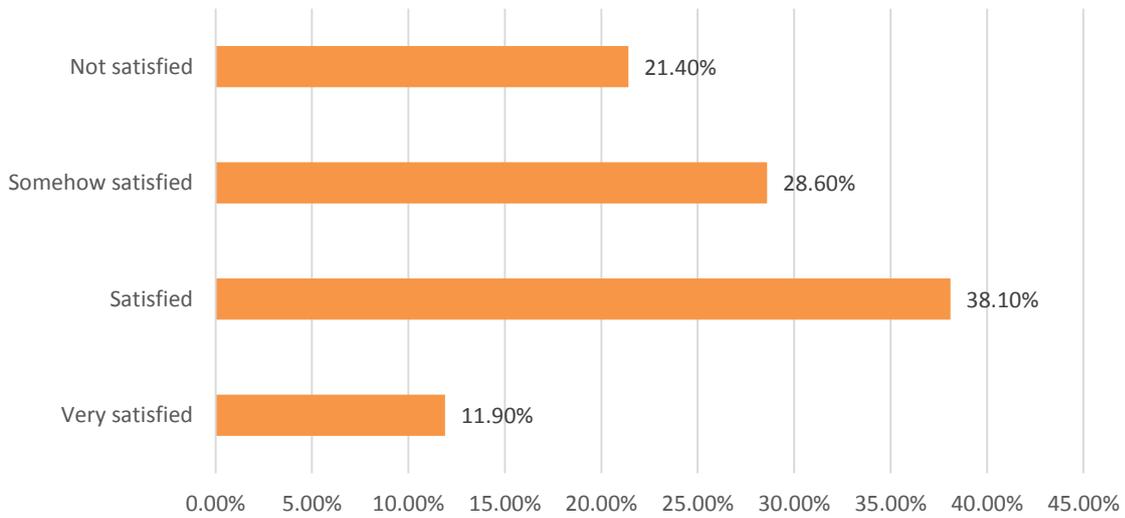
is under construction since 2015 and when it will be finished it will free up more spaces in the actual dean's office. Also a general thing mentioned by the students is the need for a new, modern library with enough places so it can accommodate them especially during the exams.

- From the discussion with the panel, the students appear very active and are actively asked for feedback at the end of every semester (sometimes electronically). However, the number of students participating in those surveys is quite low, they are not asked to fill them at every subject and do not know the outcomes of them, if anything is going to be change if needed. The chain of decision is rather long if organizational changes have to be implemented, the faculty of medicine being part of the university without independence in some areas, but the new management team is eager to work on the issues.
- Small size and multiplicity of the courses in the Physiotherapy programme make the curricula complicated and may not offer a full and wider view on the subjects. Identifying larger assemblies of courses should therefore help in this process, while keeping enough flexibility.
- For the final exams students generally are divided in two parts. Those who know enough English to learn from recognized international literature ('Guyton and Hall Textbook of Medical Physiology', 'Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine' etc.) and those who know very little English and must read from very old (80's, 90's) and outdated books. The academic staff should be encouraged to publish more in their language because the exams are also held in the official language.
- Students should be able to choose subjects that are optional. Saying that a subject is optional and being the only one to elect from is a disrespect to the intelligence of the students in general. Also where there are 2 optional most of the students cannot pick one or the other, the faculty being the one which determines where each and every one go. There should be more optional and relevant subjects and students to be let to choose freely whichever they prefer.
- Academic staff can encourage students to do research and maybe continue their masters or PhD studies in the framework of their bachelor thesis. Also, in general, the programmes should more actively search to develop connection with the private sector.
- A setup dedicated to career orientation (students in final years and not only), consultation (learning support for first-years etc.) for the students can be very

helpful. The productivity of this support services may be difficult to assess, as their effect is often revealed indirectly or after a longer period of time, but it of vital importance to the students' development.

- The overall number of students enrolled each year over the past 3 years is lower since the last evaluation and needs to remain the same, admitting a bigger number while the infrastructure is the same not being recommended.
- Family Medicine should be taught in the clinical years because students are not well prepared to understand the whole process in the second year when they still study many preclinical subjects.
- The employment rate of alumni is high because there is a constant need of employees in the medical field.
- No drop-out rates data is available. It is recommended that a system to be implemented so that the faculty will have a wider knowledge about its students in terms of academic life.
- *In the vast majority of the world the biomedical sciences universities are divided and function as stand-alone. The time has come to further discuss the possibility of becoming an independent part of University of Prishtina, as the actual heads of the faculty are looking forward to that. Thus the new university will be composed and lead by people who have specific knowledge in the field of medicine and it will be in favor of medical staff. The sustainability of the separation must be questioned at first, to see the directions this will lead to, if the infrastructure is sufficient and if there are more spaces to expand and the number of teaching staff.*

### Student's perspective - How satisfied are you in choosing the Faculty of Medicine in Prishtina?



### STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE - THE PROGRAMME OF STUDIES AND CURRICULUM ARE UPDATED AND RELEVANT IN THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE?

