



# Poster Book

*Sixth MPH Poster Conference Showcases  
Public Health Internship Experiences*

November 25, 2019 @5:30PM

The Public Health Internship program was added to the MPH curriculum in 2014 to provide students an opportunity to apply theories, ideas, and skills learned in the classroom to public health practice in real work settings, and to network with public health professionals.

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**AUA** TURPANJIAN SCHOOL *of*  
PUBLIC HEALTH



**Intern:** Tatev Arakelyan BS  
**Internship Preceptor:** Gevorg Tamamyanyan MD, MSc, PhD  
**Internship Coordinator:** Tsovinar Harutyunyan MPH, PhD

**Overview of the Organization:** The Pediatric Cancer and Blood Disorders Center located at the Hematology Center was established in February 2019. After the reunion with the “Muratsan” Pediatric Oncology and Hematology Department, the center became the sole institution to provide both inpatient and outpatient oncological and hematological health care services of international standards.

**Program Background:** The Oncology and Hematology departments at the center used either the Discharge Summary forms provided by the Ministry of Health (MoH) of Armenia or the form developed by themselves. Neither of the forms corresponds to current international standards. The project was launched to create a standard form corresponding to international guidelines.

### Internship objectives

- To understand the aims, functions, and gaps of the Pediatric Cancer and Blood Disorders Center
- To develop and implement a Discharge Summary standard form for the Center
- To conduct a formative assessment of the Discharge Summary before and after piloting the developed form
- Develop the manuscript: “Development and Implementation of a Pediatric Discharge Summary Standard.” for publishing in a peer-reviewed international scientific journal.

### Lessons learned

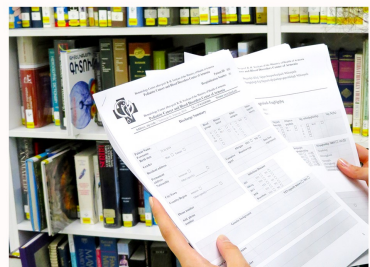
- Importance of having a standard form of medical documentation
- Importance of effective preplanning
- Importance of considering department-specific medical documentation differences
- Field-specific translations (medical terminology)

### Skills gained

- Comprehensive literature review skills
- Communicative and collaborative skills
- Study plan development skills
- Experience in medical documentation development
- Self-management & time-management skills

### Tasks completed

- Extensive literature review on the existing standards and guidelines in the world to develop a Discharge Summary
- Collection of the existing Discharge Summary forms from both Oncology and Hematology departments of the Center
- Study plan and timeline development
- Review of the existing form with the physicians of both departments
- Development of the standard Discharge Summary template; translating into Armenian and Russian
- Piloting the developed form among all the doctors at the Center
- Opinion gathering from the doctors regarding the quality and the content of the Discharge Summary.
- Finalized the Discharge Summary developed in three languages (Armenian, English, Russian)



### Contacts

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### Overview of the organization

- The National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis (NIRT) works under the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). The internship was completed in the Department of Social and Behavioural Sciences at NIRT. The department is involved in several research programs in the area of tuberculosis (TB) care and prevention and in the overall development and health improvement of the tribal communities.

### Background of the projects

- The NIRT is developing a quantitative tool to measure patients' perceptions on the quality of TB care settings in Chennai. It was planned to develop the tool based on qualitative research and validate it.
- The Social and Behavioural Sciences Department is trying to adopt and develop a tribal village Kammarvar Palayam. The department has undertaken several projects to improve the health of adults and children in the village, including nutritional and social support interventions.

### Internship Objectives

- To get familiar with the structure and functions of NIRT, including the current research projects.
- To develop a tool to measure patients' opinions about the quality of TB care settings in Chennai
  - conduct in-depth interviews (IDIs) with the TB patients
  - analyse the collected information
  - develop a quantitative tool based on the findings
- To work with the small tribal community at Kammarvar Palayam to
  - Assess current status of the Irular tribal community in that small village
  - Develop a social map of the community
  - Develop a plan for the improvement of the community's health



During IDI with one of my participants



Educating mothers about hygiene



During the development of the community's social map



During field visit with my preceptors

### Completed tasks

- Literature review about how to develop a tool measuring patients' perceptions of the quality of care
- Adapted a guide from the previous study conducted at the department for use in the current research
- Conducted five audio-recorded IDIs with TB patients in the primary health care centres
- Transcribed and translated the responses from the participants
- Completed the analysis of the findings using ATLAS.ti software program
- Collected information on income, education level, and number of children's in the tribal community
- Participated in the weekly distribution of multigrain flour for the community's children
- Helped to develop a social map of the community
- Educated mothers about oral hygiene for children

### Selected study findings

- Professionalism, attitude and behaviour of health care providers, information provided to patients, and health care centres' infrastructure and cleanliness are the major themes for measuring quality of TB care settings in Chennai based on patients' perceptions
- The tribal community can get support from the Government (including jobs and education grants for students), but many of them are not aware of these opportunities or do not know how to navigate the system to receive support.

### Lessons learned and skills gained

- Developed literature review skills
- Learned the steps in developing a study tool
- Improved the skills of working in challenging settings
- Improved public communication skills
- Gained experience in conducting field visits
- Understood the importance of flexibility during the study and the advantages of group work in challenging situations
- Understood how public health administration functions in India and what are the current limitations

### Contact information

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## Overview of the organization

- Nork Marash Medical Center is one of the **largest cardiac** centers in the Transcaucasian region.
- More than **20 000** patients with heart diseases are surveyed annually in the center and more than 500 surgical operations and 1000 stenting procedures are performed.
- **"Our motto is to the protect patient's health and provide care and comfort."** Miqael Adamyan, NMMC Director

## Internship Objectives

- Assisting in the identification of **Transcatheter aortic valve implantation (TAVI)** eligible patients from the existing NMMC patients records from 2015 to 2018.
- Help with conducting a retrospective cohort study on the topic of **"Myocardial Infarction with non-obstructive coronary arteries."**



Patient related factors				Cardiac related factors			
Age (years)	65	0	Stroke	0	0	0	0
Gender	male	0	ECG class I degree *	0	0	0	0
Recent myocardial infarction	no	0	EF function	1	0	0	0
Chronic kidney disease	normal GFR (>30ml/min)	0	Previous CABG (Y/N)	0	0	0	0
Bilateral aortic atherosclerosis *	no	0	Recent MI *	0	0	0	0
Prior aortic aortic	no	0	Previous myocardial infarction **	0	0	0	0
Previous aortic surgery	no	0	Coronary revascularization **	0	0	0	0
Previous lung disease *	no	0	Operative treated aortic	0	0	0	0
Previous aortic aortic	no	0	stroke -	0	0	0	0
Previous aortic aortic	no	0	Major of the intervention **	0	0	0	0
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease *	no	0	3 procedures -	0	0	0	0
Stroke on treatment	no	0	Replaced via femoral route	no	0	0	0

Euroscore calculator used to identify TAVI patients.

## Lessons Learned

- Operation of the medical center.
- The environment and working conditions influence the process of productive work.
- The double-checking of records is necessary for accurate data collection.
- Extracting the relevant information form literature is a skill that is gained with practice.



## Project Background

- Transcatheter aortic valve implantation (TAVI) procedure implementation.
- A retrospective cohort study on the topic of **"Myocardial Infarction with non-obstructive coronary arteries."**
- The aim is to present the first-ever statistical data from one of the largest cardiac centers of Armenia.



With my preceptor, selecting eligible patients.

## Skills Gained

- Communication skills and teamwork.
- Time management skills.
- Use of IBM SPSS software.

## Completed Tasks

- Literature review to identify the eligibility criteria for TAVI.
- Record review, to identify the TAVI eligible patients.
- Literature review on the topic of **"Myocardial Infarction with non-obstructive coronary arteries."**
- Contributed to the development of the application for IRB approval of the study.
- Reviewed the structure of existing databases at NMMC.
- Gained an expert opinion from cardiologists on TAVI procedure.
- Study design and inclusion and exclusion criteria development.



# MPH Internship at Ministry of Health and National Institute of Health, RA

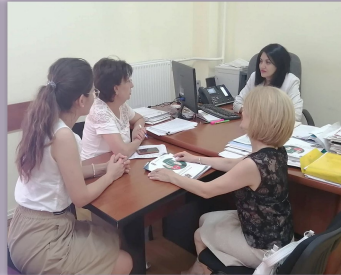
**AUA** American University of Armenia  
TURANJIAN SCHOOL of PUBLIC HEALTH

Intern: M. Avagyan, MD, MPH©

Internship Preceptors: L. Nanushyan MD, MPH and S. Grigoryan, DVM, MPH , Internship Coordinator: T. Harutyunyan, MPH, PhD

## Overview of the Organization

The National Institute of Health (NIH) is an autonomous institution funded and sustained by the Ministry of Health to deliver academic education to postgraduate professionals, promote clinical research and support health care institutions. The NIH collaborates with a range of public health and academic institutions in Armenia and abroad.



## Project Background

- Non-communicable diseases (NCD) are the largest contributors to mortality in Armenia
- Based on the national survey, conducted in 2016-2017, Armenian population aged 18-69 consumes on average 9.8 grams of salt daily, which exceeds the WHO-recommended level (5g/day) .
- In July 2019 the MoH in collaboration with the NIH launched the Salt Reduction Campaign to address this preventable public health issue.

## Internship Objectives

- Understand the structure of the Ministry of Health (MoH) and the National Institute of Health (NIH), including the activities and functions of each department.
- Understand salt-associated noncommunicable disease (NCD) burden among Armenian population.
- Participate in the development of the salt reduction program
- Identify the best strategy to raise awareness of high salt consumption associated risks and promote behavioral change among Armenian population.

## Completed Tasks

- ✓ A comprehensive literature review on the problem, including suggested solutions from WHO and other countries' experience.
- ✓ Review and discussion of the STEPS national survey about NCDs in Armenia.
- ✓ Extracting food values/statistical data about food consumption patterns among Armenians.
- ✓ Literature review on poster creation for behavior change, designing the adapted version for Armenian population with special targets (for school children, general population and healthcare decision makers).
- ✓ Literature review on booklet creation about salt reduction importance and advices.



- ✓ Booklet translation and design.
- ✓ Development of the questionnaire for booklet pretesting.
- ✓ Conducting eight interviews regarding the booklet content among population.

## Lessons Learned

- Theory application.
- Adapt disease prevention program in a resource limited setting.
- Work under time pressure
- Considering the country's political and economic status when launching national campaigns.

## Skills Gained

- Improved strategic thinking
- Improved critical thinking
- Improved literature review skills
- Policy analysis skills
- Improved communication skills



## Contacts

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Intern: Karen Bedirian, BS, MPHc  
Preceptor: Zara Janibekyan, MD, MPH

Internship Coordinator:  
Tsovinar Harutyunyan, MPH, PhD

## ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION



Jinshian Memorial Foundation (JMF) is a Yerevan-based non-governmental organization that works in Armenia and Artsakh. It is sponsored mainly by the Jinshian Memorial Program, which was founded in 1998 and provides relief to Armenians worldwide. The JMF began working in Armenia in 1993, and has since been involved in the development of five areas of priority, Community Development, Education & Civil Society, Economic Development, Health, and Spiritual Uplift.

It prioritizes projects that seek to improve the health of children, adolescents, and women by improving the accessibility and affordability of health care.

It works in the areas of disability prevention; reproductive health and rural communities' health development.

## INTERNSHIP OBJECTIVES

- Understand the strategies and mechanisms of the organization's work and get familiar with the health domains it focuses on.
- Carry out literature review, monitoring & evaluation, reporting, and proposal writing for the "Health Improvement of School-Age Children" project taking place in Gegharkunik, Kotayk and Yerevan.
- Help develop a grant proposal for the establishment of a rehabilitation center in Sevan city of Armenia.
- Participate in projects dealing with children's disability prevention and treatment.

### Projects

- Health improvement in School-Age Children
- Establishment of a Rehabilitation Center in Sevan City
- Disability Prevention among Children and Outreach Clinics in Armenia
- Enhancing the Practical Skills of Medical Personnel of Artsakh Republic through Simulation-Facilitated Training

## HEALTH IMPROVEMENT IN SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN



**20%**  
increase in the level  
of knowledge and  
skills among school  
nurses

The project aims to improve the health status of students in Armenia through training school nurses. Its objective is to achieve a 20% increase in the level of knowledge and skills of the school nurses measured through pre and post tests. A pilot project in Yerevan has achieved a 18% increase, but has identified the gaps that needed to be addressed. As a result, a unified educational module was developed by JMF and accredited by the Ministry of Health of Armenia. The second phase in Kotayk and Gegharkunik marzas has achieved a 20% and 17% increase in the knowledge level of the nurses, respectively. The project was evaluated using pre and post tests that were developed during the pilot. Certificates were provided to the nurses who passed the training. These will add 10 credit points to the number of credit points required for the nurses' continuing education (140 credit points every five years). A third phase was planned to be implemented by JMF in the marzas of Ararat and Aragatsotn and a grant proposal was developed. The two marzas were chosen based on the needs of the population and the convenience of the implementing organization.

- 2017 - 2018: Pilot in Yerevan
- 2019: Second phase in Kotayk & Gegharkunik
- 2019 - 2010: Third phase in Ararat & Aragatsotn

Monitoring & Evaluation  
Grant Proposal Writing

knowledge  
applied

Situational Analysis  
Priority Setting

## COMPLETED TASKS



- Evaluating the second phase of the project by checking the pre and post tests of the school nurses trained in Kotayk and Gegharkunik marzas and comparing the level of knowledge and skills among them before and after the training.
- Monitoring the attendance of the nurses through attendance sheets.
- Doing a literature review to compare the situation in Armenia and other countries regarding the continuing education apparatus for school nurses (the frequency of license renewal, the presence of a unified educational material for all school nurses, etc.).
- Disseminating the findings of the second phase by preparing a power point presentation that demonstrates the accomplishments of the pilot and the results of the second phase to be presented to stakeholders later on.
- Developing a grant proposal for the third phase of the project which will be implemented by JMF in the marzas of Ararat and Aragatsotn. This included developing a statement of need for expanding the project to said marzas, an implementation plan, a timeframe, a primary budget calculation, and a log frame.

## SKILLS GAINED



Time management skills  
Communication skills  
Reporting and presentation skills  
Goal setting  
Setting SMART objectives and operational indicators  
Data collection



## LESSONS LEARNED

- Making sure the timing of the project is convenient for the beneficiaries.
- Making a log frame of the project to eliminate any possibility to forget a task.
- While disseminating findings, giving a detailed introduction of the project and its setting to the audience.



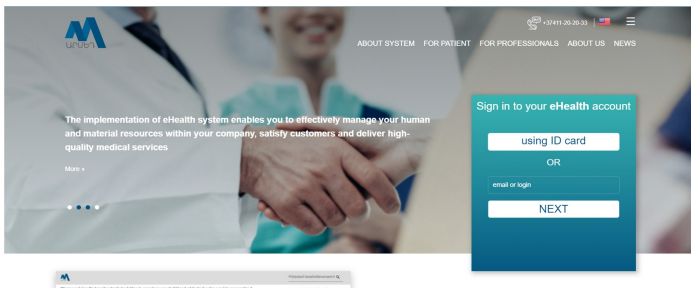
**Internship preceptor: Anna Artsruni MD, MPH**

**Intern: Aram Ghulijanyan MD**

**Internship coordinator: Tsovinar Harutyunyan MPH, PhD**

**Overview of the organization**

"National Electronic Health Operator" CJSC was established in August 2017 in accordance with the provisions of the concession agreement of the government of Republic of Armenia. It is the main provider of eHealth services (electronic health records, telemedicine, register of medical experts and organizations, diagnostic decision support system) in Armenia.



**Program background**

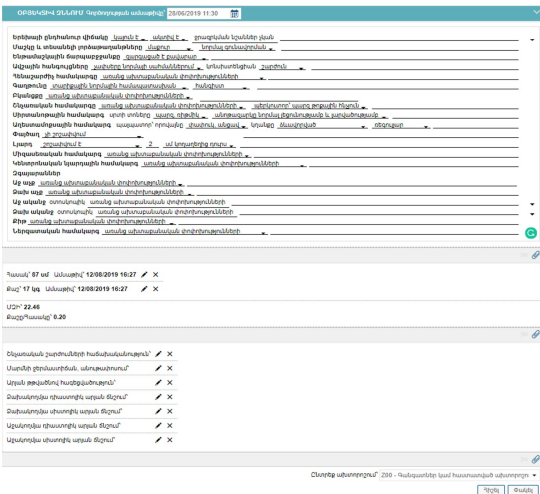
One of the areas, where the system still needs some improvement, is the adaptation of the medical documents that are developed by the government of Armenia and are currently in use in Armenian hospitals. Adapted documents need to meet the legislative requirements, be user friendly and, at the same time, make the entered medical information retrievable and reportable.

**Internship objectives**

- Objective I.** Understand the structure and the functions of the “National Electronic Health Operator” CJSC
- Objective II** Document development for electronic health records (EHR).
- Objective III.** Incorporation of the created documents in the working processes of medical departments, including testing, training of the basic users, and troubleshooting.
- Objective IV.** Participation in the development of new features of Armenian EHR system.

**Completed tasks**

- Development of the admission forms for the "Heratsi" Hospital Complex №1
- Training of the basic users
- Contribution in the development of the sets of documents for the national eHealth system that will replace the paper based outpatient charts in the PHC facilities.



**Skills developed**

- Skills of EHR document creation based on the existing legislation and the experience of the medical professionals (physicians, hospital managers, nurses).
- Skills of management of training process.
- Some programming skills (creating several scripts using Java Script).

**Lessons learned**

- Better time management (being able to use all the working hours in a day)
- Activity planning skills (being able to do several tasks at the same time)

**Contact information**

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# MPH Internship at Fund For Armenian Relief

Intern: Anna Isahakyan, MD  
 Internship preceptor: Hambardzum Simonyan, MD  
 Internship coordinator: Tsovinar Harutyunyan, MPH, PhD

## Overview of the Organization

The **sustainability, continuity and capacity building** are the main strategic goals of all FAR healthcare programs. FAR has been developing and implementing capacity building/sustainable healthcare programs for Armenia and Artsakh:

### Main activities

- **Organizing** specific Continuing Medical Education courses
- **Creating** working networks/partnerships
- **Raising** public awareness on healthy lifestyle
- **Fostering** individual support for kids and families
- **Subsidizing** healthy meals for and providing necessary food supplements to children
- **Improving** infrastructure of medical clinics



## Program Background

FAR healthcare programs mostly invest in **human capacity building**

In **1996-2000** FAR medical fellowship program in USA

In **2002** the establishment of FAR Fellowship Alumni Association

In **2005** FAR started the continuing medical education program (CMEP) for physicians working in Armenian provinces

In **2011** American Armenian Healthcare Professionals Organization (AAHPO) integrated this model for Artsakh physicians

In **2013** FAR started program in Tavush Marz to combat malnutrition among preschool children

In **2018** FAR replicated the Tavush program in Aragatsotn Marz

In **2018** FAR started community nurses training program in Artsakh

In **2019** FAR started the neurology and neurosurgery development program dedicated to Prof. Edgar M. Housepian

## Internship Objectives

- Understand the main activities and the mission of **FAR healthcare programs**
- Support **Continuing Medical Education (CME)** program implementation
- Design the evaluation of the **preschool children nutrition component of Breaking the Cycle of Poverty Program in Berd community of Tavush Marz**



The Aygepar kindergarten' playroom after attack with firing bullets in 2014

## Completed Tasks



Reviewed the latest changes in the legislation for continuing professional development (CPD) accreditation  
**Updated 22 training program modules**



Participated in meetings with doctors and supported the organization of graduation day for participants and implemented other administrative work related to the CME program



Supported the elaboration of the questionnaire and designing the evaluation for the preschool children nutrition component of Breaking the Cycle of Poverty Program evaluation in Berd community of Tavush Marz



Piloted the questionnaire in the kindergarden in the village Aygepar (Armenian-Azerbaijani border)

## Skills Gained

- Improved professional communication skills
- Improved adaptability and time management
- Improved critical thinking
- Practical skills of research and analysis
- Legislation analysis skills
- Improved technical proficiency



## Contact Information

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## MPH Internship at Avedisian Onanian Center for Health Services Research & Development (CHSR), AUA

Intern: Yogeshwaran Jaishankar

Internship Preceptors: Varduhi Petrosyan Ph.D., MS and Varduhi Hayrumyan, MS, MPH

MPH Internship Coordinator: Tsovinar Harutyunyan, MPH, PhD

### Overview of the organization

The CHSR is recognized for its health development activities, health services research and evaluation. It gained a reputation for its excellence and professionalism in the field of research. The CHSR offers field training in research for the AUA MPH students and provides technical support for the Armenian Government and international research organizations in implementing and evaluating health programs in Armenia.

### Assessment of adolescent friendly services (AFS) in primary healthcare (PHC) facilities of Armenia



#### Project Background:

The CHSR is assessing the quality of adolescent friendly health service (AFHS) in primary health care centers of Armenia. The aim of this assessment is to identify the most critical problems and priority actions to improve those services.

#### Internship Goals and Objectives:

- Conduct comprehensive literature review on AFHS provided in PHC
- Review the international standards of friendly services provided to adolescents.
- Explore WHO adolescent-friendly service standards
- Develop an observational checklist (instrument) for facility inventory



#### Skills gained

- Time management
- Data cleaning and analysis
- Coding and categorization of open-ended questions
- Adapting an evidence-based observational checklist

#### Lessons Learned

- Importance of networking
- Importance of managing time and meeting deadlines
- Significance of documenting the process of the work at every stage
- Professional communication
- Accepting constructive criticism



With my internship preceptors Dr. Petrosyan and Ms. Hayrumyan

### Institutionalization of Patient-Centered Tuberculosis Treatment in Armenia

#### Project Background:

The CHSR conducted a one-day training for the Civil Society Organizations (CSO) to promote awareness and build capacity on tuberculosis (TB) advocacy. The aim of the program training was to improve the participants' skills for effective health communication, understanding and knowledge of TB and its risk factors.

#### Internship Goals and Objectives:

- Participate in evaluation of the CSO training
- Prepare the training evaluation report



#### Completed Tasks

- Reviewed the agenda for change developed by WHO for AFHS
- Nine articles were systematically reviewed to understand the different aspects to assess the AFHS provided in PHC
- Prepared summary for the assessment of AFHS conducted worldwide
- Reviewed and adopted the observational checklist (tool) to measure the WHO AFHS standards in primary health care facilities.
- Performed data cleaning and descriptive analysis for one-day training of the CSO to promote awareness and build capacity on TB advocacy using SPSS software.



**Internship Coordinator**

Dr. Tsovinar Harutyunyan, MPH, PhD

**Internship Organization**

Ministry of Health,  
Republic of Armenia

**Internship Preceptors**

Mrs. Lena Nanushyan, MD, MPH  
Mr. Samvel Grigoryan, DVM, MPH

The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia is a republican body of the executive authority, which elaborates and implements the policies of the Republic of Armenia Government in the healthcare sector.

**TWINNING**



“Twinning is a European Union instrument for institutional cooperation between Public Administrations of European Union Member States and of beneficiary or partner countries.”

– *European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations*

Twinning is a shared commitment, a two-way technical assistance tool and a constructive partnership enhanced through peer to peer activities.

**OBJECTIVES**

- To get acquainted with Twinning instrument and review the documents highlighting partnership between European Union and Republic of Armenia
- To support the design of Twinning project proposal aimed at the implementation of mandatory comprehensive health insurance in Republic of Armenia

**COMPLETED TASKS**



- Reviewed key documents such as Twinning Manual, CEPA, Health Systems in Transition reports
- Reviewed Twinning in European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations countries
- Identified priorities of partnership between European Union and Armenia
- Developed a concept note summarizing the Twinning Manual and CEPA
- Conducted desk research of strategic documents aimed to implement mandatory health insurance
- Drafted the key components of the Twinning project proposal such as ongoing reforms, linked activities, mandatory outputs, key indicators, implementation arrangements, crosscutting issues
- Developed the list of applicable domestic legislation in the field of health insurance in Armenia
- Developed a logical framework matrix for the Twinning project proposal

**LESSONS LEARNED**

- Learned about the major public health issues in Armenia in many fields such as population health status, financial risk protection, policy regulations and health care delivery
- Learned about the domestic legislation, organizational system and finance mechanisms of Republic of Armenia in the field of healthcare
- Learned about the institutional and context analysis methods such as calculating economic burden in terms of direct and indirect costs, assessing health impact and calculating return on investment, which are widely used in economic analysis for investments
- Learned the fundamentals of proposal writing such as addressing the requirements of the funding agency, developing content as per standard format and satisfying the overall program criteria

**SKILLS DEVELOPED**

- Conceptual skills
- Analytical skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Document review skills
- Proposal writing skills
- Task management skills
- Decision-making skills
- Leadership skills
- Initiative-taking skills

**OVERVIEW OF THE ORGANIZATION**

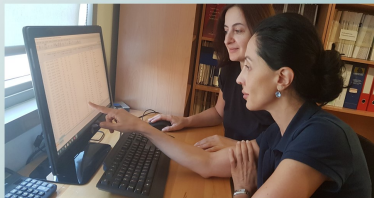
The Meghriyan Institute was established in 1991 within the Center for Health Services Research and Development (CHSR) of American University of Armenia (AUA). The mission of Meghriyan Institute is to prevent avoidable blindness. Meghriyan Institute implemented eye screening programs among socio-economically disadvantaged population and vulnerable children in Armenia and Artsakh and organized educational programs among eye care providers to prevent blindness.

**ACCOMPLISHED TASKS**

- Literature review on the research topic
- Training in SPSS program
- Creation of SPSS data screen
- Data entry of 500 respondents
- Data cleaning by spot checks
- Calculation of means, creation of dummy variables, variable recoding
- Descriptive analysis and logistic regression
- Interpretation of the study findings
- Designing the tables (including population characteristics and adjusted, unadjusted OR, p-values and confidence intervals)
- Report preparation (introduction, methods, analysis, study variables and results)

**PROJECT BACKGROUND**

Meghriyan Institute launched a project on "Visual impairment and associated risk factors in patients with diabetes mellitus in Tavush and Armavir provinces of Armenia" in 2016. The aim of the project was to assess the prevalence of visual impairment and associated risk factors in patients with diabetes mellitus in Tavush and Armavir provinces of Armenia. Overall, 449 participants from Tavush and 838 from Armavir participated in the project. Patients with diabetes were invited to the nearest hospital for eye examination and interview. A structured questionnaire assessed patients' socio-demographic characteristics, mean years of having diabetes, type of diabetes, and family history of diabetes. Visual impairment was defined based on WHO classification.



**INTERNSHIP OBJECTIVES**

- Get familiar with the work of Meghriyan Institute and the project on "Visual impairment and associated risk factors in patients with diabetes mellitus in Tavush and Armavir provinces of Armenia".
- Enter data collected during 2017-2018 into SPSS 21 software
- Conduct descriptive and bivariate data analysis
- Write a report based on findings

Table 1. Characteristics of patients with diabetes in Tavush and Armavir

	Tavush % (n)	Armavir % (n)	Total % (n)
<b>All participants</b>	47.8 (449)	52.6 (500)*	100 (949)
Age, years	62.33 (10.42)	61.30 (9.09)	61.81(9.76)
Mean (SD)			
<b>Sex</b>			
Male	30.8 (37)	29.4 (146)	30.1(283)
Female	69.2 (308)	70.6 (349)	69.9 (658)
<b>Education</b>			
Incomplete secondary	17.1 (77)	10.6 (53)	13.70 (130)
Secondary	41.9 (188)	40.6 (203)	41.20 (391)
Professional technical	28.7 (129)	33.4 (167)	31.2 (296)
Institute/University	12.2 (55)	15.2 (76)	13.8 (131)
Postgraduate	0 (0)	0.2 (1)	0.1 (1)
<b>Diabetes years</b>	6.8 (5.33)	8.3 (7.27)	7.6(6.47)
Mean (SD)			
<b>Diabetes type</b>			
Type I	2.7 (12)	4.0 (20)	3.4 (32)
Type II	27.5 (125)	46.0 (230)	37.3 (353)
Don't know	69.8 (312)	50.0 (250)	59.3 (562)
<b>Family history of diabetes</b>			
Yes	51(229)	60.1 (299)	55.7 (528)
No	49.0 (220)	39.9 (199)	44.2 (419)
<b>Socioeconomic status</b>			
Significantly below average	32.8 (147)	25.4(126)	28.9 (273)
Below average	23.4 (105)	22.1 (110)	22.8 (215)
Average	42.4 (190)	49.5 (246)	46.1 (436)
Above average	1.1(5)	1.8 (9)	1.5(14)
Significantly above average	0.2 (1)	0.6 (3)	0.4 (4)
Don't know	0 (0)	0.6 (3)	0.3 (3)
<b>Visual impairment</b>			
no visual impairment (≥ 0.5)	86.6 (388)	86.3 (423)	86.5 (817)
early (< 0.5 - 0.3)	4.5 (20)	6.0 (30)	5.3 (50)
moderate (< 0.3 > 0.1)	5.6 (25)	5.6 (28)	5.6 (53)
severe (< 0.1 > 0.05)	2.0 (9)	0.8 (4)	1.4 (13)
blind (≤ 0.05)	1.3 (6)	1.2 (6)	1.3 (12)

\*data analysis was done among 949 patients

Table 2. Risk factors associated with visual impairment: bivariate and multivariate analysis

	Unadjusted p-value	Unadjusted OR (95% CI)	Adjusted p-value	Adjusted OR (95% CI)
<b>Age, years</b>	0.00	1.09 (1.07-1.12)	0.00	1.09(1.06-1.11)
<b>Marz</b>	0.96	0.99 (0.68-1.44)	0.64	0.90 (0.58-1.39)
<b>Sex</b>				
Male		1.00 (reference)		
Female	0.72	1.08 (0.71-1.63)	0.43	1.21 (0.75-1.94)
<b>Education</b>				
University		1.00		
College	0.39	1.57 (1.02-2.41)	0.09	1.51 (0.93-2.44)
Up to 10 years	0.00	2.93 (1.75-4.9)	0.03	1.99 (1.07-3.72)
<b>Diabetes years</b>	0.00	1.07 (1.04-1.10)	0.00	1.08 (1.04-1.12)
<b>Diabetes type</b>				
Type I		1.00		
Type II	0.89	0.97 (0.66-1.4)	0.72	1.09 (0.68-1.73)
<b>Family history of Diabetes</b>				
No		1.00		
Yes	0.15	0.76 (0.53-1.10)	0.38	0.85 (0.59-1.22)
<b>Socioeconomic status</b>				
High		1.00		
Average	0.58	1.16 (0.69-3.28)	0.85	1.05 (0.60-1.83)
Low	0.00	2.14 (1.40-3.28)	0.05	1.63 (1.00-2.63)

**LESSONS LEARNED**

- The importance of carrying out detailed literature review before doing the study
- Working independently
- Managing time effectively
- Responsibility and punctuality
- Mastering research methodology
- Openness to new knowledge, skills, and work approaches

**SKILLS GAINED**

- Data entry and analysis skills in SPSS
- Application of statistical concepts and mastery of analytical skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Statistical analysis interpretation
- Report writing
- Practical and strategic approach to work
- Accuracy and attention to details
- Planning tasks and working to deadlines

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# MPH Internship at Coimbatore Cancer Foundation, India.

Intern: Rishba Getzie Peter

Internship Coordinator: T. Harutyunyan MPH, PHD

Internship Preceptors: Dr. Balaji, Dr. Latha Balasubramani, Dr. Harsha, Ms Sharda Jayaraman

## Overview of the organization

**Coimbatore Cancer Foundation (CCF)** was established in 1991 by Late Shri. K. Sreenivasan, a cancer survivor.

**Vision:** To improve the quality of life of people diagnosed with cancer and their families and add value to life.

**Mission:** To educate, support and enhance the wellbeing of people with cancer and their caregivers and to improve cancer awareness among the public.

## Program Background

- The major running project under CCF is *Aravanaippu*- a rural mobile home-based palliative service among the rural communities under Coimbatore district, initiated in December 2018.
- Palliative care provided in the scope of the project includes comprehensive physical, psychosocial and spiritual care aiming to improve the quality of life of patients suffering from chronic health conditions and add value to their life.
- Participants under this project were selected based on *needs-assessment survey*.
- CCF is planning to extend the project, hence it launched the *Impact analysis* of running project *Aravanaippu* among the registered chronic suffering patients to assess the project's impact.
- To improve cancer awareness in the Coimbatore district, CCF started *Anti-tobacco awareness program* among school students in the rural community, to fulfil its mission of educating families through children.



With my project Aravanaippu team and my preceptors Dr. Balaji (left corner) and Dr Harsha (behind me)



With my preceptor Ms Sharda Jayaraman (3<sup>rd</sup> from right) and the counsellors of CCF



CA breast patient (sitting) under palliative care, caregivers and the palliative team



CA ovary patient under palliative care



Hygiene awareness speech- near the patient household



Data collection during anti-tobacco awareness program



## Objectives of the Internship Program

- ❖ Assess the level of awareness among the school students concerning tobacco use, before and after the tobacco awareness program.
- ❖ Assess the impact of the awareness program, held on "Ellargi school, Lakshminaiknampalayam, Coimbatore."

## Skills Gained

- Practical exposure to community-based program (to plan, organize and conduct).
- Application of theories learned in classroom.
- Improved public speaking skills.
- Improvement in time management skills and multitasking.

## Completed Tasks

- Daily field visits to the registered patients in the rural community to counsel them regarding hygiene and provide physical, psychosocial and emotional support.
- *Data collection* for the study "Impact analysis of the palliative care project- Aravanaippu" in village Karadivavi.
- Contributed to all aspects of the Anti-tobacco awareness program including *planning, organization, and implementation*.
- *Developed questionnaire* for evaluating the program based on the available pre-existing questionnaire in the organization for adults and adapted the questionnaire for the use among students.
- *Data collection* among the selected students who attended the anti-tobacco awareness program and *data entry (Excel)*.
- Development of the *draft proposal* for the *needs assessment* study "Assessing the Need for Palliative Care Services in the rural community- Karadivavi."
- *Digitization* of the pre-existing program documentation.

## Lessons Learned

- Public health professionals have an important role to play in the society.
- *Prioritizing* tasks is essential for producing better outcomes.
- Apart from treating and diagnosing a disease, *supporting care* is also needed.
- *Dignified death* is a part of people quality of life and an important public health issue to focus on.
- People's lack of awareness and knowledge regarding cancer is an important barrier to improving health outcomes.
- Local governments' negligence in rendering the services to the needy leads to the persistence of important health issues in the population.
- Keeping electronic documentation at the organization is essential for effective work processes.

**MPH INTERNSHIP**

Internship organization: Ministry of Health

Internship preceptor: Gohar Panajyan MD, MPH

Internship coordinator: Tsovinar Harutyunyan, MPH, PhD

Intern: Meri Sahakyan



**Overview of the organization**

The Ministry of Health (MOH) is a state body of executive power, that is responsible for the policy development and implementation in the field of health care.

Mission of the MOH

- Development and implementation of health care policies.
- Organization of health care services for the Armenian population
- Coordination and implementation of educational programs to promote the health of the Armenian population.
- Implementation of targeted projects and programs to reduce mortality and morbidity rates.
- The MOH is responsible for the international collaboration, development and implementation of projects in the sphere of health care in conjunction with relevant governmental entities.

**Objectives of the internship**

- Learn about the structure and key functions of the MOH.
- Learn the tools related to the health care quality measurement used in Armenia.
- Develop at least three output papers for the top priority areas of the work of the MOH.
  - ✓ Summary of the international experience on regulations of labelling in the menus.
  - ✓ Recommendations on improving general public perception towards HPV vaccination and addressing negative opinions in the population.
  - ✓ Public awareness leaflets about the HPV vaccination.
- Attend at least two process meetings or technical discussions related to vaccination or Mother and Child Health at the Ministry of Health to get familiarized with the decision-making processes of a governmental organization.

**Program background**

Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) causes six different types of cancer, including cervical cancer (CC), which is the second cause of death among women of reproductive health. More than one hundred women with CC diagnosis die each year in Armenia. In 2017, Armenian Government together with the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization introduced a nationwide program for HPV vaccination. The program is an important step to decrease the cancer rates that are associated with the HPV. However, the first response of the Armenian population to the program was not as good as it was expected.

**Skills gained**

•Literature review

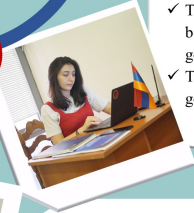
•Communication skills

Data collection and analysis

•Poster development

**Lessons learned**

- ✓ The importance of careful planning of the project from the starting point to the implementation.
- ✓ The importance of the collaboration between different ministries and governmental entities.
- ✓ The flipside of the success of governmental projects.



**Completed activities**

- Drafted recommendations for the stakeholders of the HPV vaccination program to improve general attitude towards the HPV vaccination.
- Acquainted with the vaccination chain starting from the import of the vaccines till the delivery of the vaccination by attending Vaccine Warehouse of the National Center of Disease Control and Prevention.
- Attendance of the Reference Laboratory and understanding how the national response is organized during critical situations.
- Attended the Armenian International Medical Congress where international and local experts presented topics about HPV vaccination, smoking and health care quality.
- Prepared a summary of the international experience for calorie labelling in menus.



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Տեսակի թվաքանակը

- 14 տեսակի հոմո
- 12-ը կարող են հանգեցնել քաղցր և սպիտակ ճեղքվածքների
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Հայաստանում յուրաքանչյուր 72 ժամում 1 կին մահանում է արգանքի վզիկի բացվելից

## Internship at the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia

*Intern:* Rohith Sharan Sankaran MD©, MPH©

*Internship Coordinator:* Dr. Tsovinar Harutyunyan MPH, PhD

*Internship Preceptor:* Dr. Gohar Panajyan MD, MPH (Advisor to the Health Minister)



### MINISTRY OF HEALTH

*The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia (RA) is a governmental body of executive power, processing and implementing the policies of the RA Government in healthcare.*

Its core functions include:

- Developing and implementing healthcare policies and stating targeted programs, providing sanitary and epidemiological security;
- Organizing primary and specialized medical care of population;
- Implementing policy of mother and child health protection;
- Organizing events improving health of population;
- Processing and implementing programs for reducing mortality and disability.

### INTERNSHIP OBJECTIVES

1. Get acquainted with the structure and the core functions of the Ministry of Health (MoH) and its departments.
2. Engage in the operations of one of the specialized subdivisions/structures of the MoH and get familiarized with its structure and functioning.
3. Get acquainted with the key functions and operations of the E-health working group at the MoH of Armenia.
4. Understand the progress of the HPV vaccination program in Armenia.
5. Attend at least three technical discussions at the MoH and its entities.

### COMPLETED TASKS

- ✓ Learned about the working processes of MoH and its entities
- ✓ Prepared a literature review on calorie labelling in restaurant menus
- ✓ Prepared a summary on ways to tackle unjustified C-section rates in Armenia
- ✓ Created a 'No Smoking' poster for the staff of MoH
- ✓ Got acquainted with ARLIS and Mulberry platform of the MoH

### PROGRAM BACKGROUND

- Public health
- Maternal and child care
- Health care provision
- Drug policy and medical technologies
- Emergency Situation and Response Preparedness
- Public relations departments
- External affairs

The internship was conducted in the scope of several MOH projects, including planning the implementation of calorie labelling at the restaurants in Yerevan, the development of possible approaches to reduce unjustified C-section rates, the improvement of HPV vaccination coverage in the country, and several educational events open for public and health care professionals.



Above: Internship preceptor and I  
Above right: No smoking poster  
Below Right: Co-intern and I with the staff of the Department of Drug policy and medical technologies.

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### SKILLS GAINED

- ✓ Increased adaptability at a new workplace
- ✓ Professional communication skills
- ✓ Skills of receiving and acknowledging constructive criticism
- ✓ Increased self-reliance and team working skills
- ✓ Skills of working on official documents
- ✓ Online information navigation skills

### IMPORTANT LESSONS

- The importance of incorporating Public Health theories and models in real life
- Building trust and professionalism at workplace
- Significance of alliances and international collaborations

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# Public Health Internship at the The Ministry of Health, RA

Intern: Kristina Sargsyan MD, MPH candidate

Internship Coordinator: Dr. Tsovinar Harutyunyan MPH, PhD

Internship Preceptors: Lena Nanushyan MD, MPH, Samvel Grigoryan DVM, MPH

Participating organization: "National Institute of Health named after academician S. Avdalbekyan"



## Overview of the Organization

The National Institute of Health named after academician S. Avdalbekyan (NIH), is a closed joint-stock company subordinated to the Ministry of Health. The Ministry of Health's Electronic Health (eHealth) Implementation Department serves as a core link between the Government and the National Electronic Health Operator (Armed). It is obliged to promote and advance e-health implementation at the national level.

## Program Background

- ✓ The mission of the department is to improve patients' equity and quality of life by implementing eHealth. eHealth is a step forward for health care information systems globally. It is the interrelation of health data and the internet making the communication between patients and health care providers more efficient, transparent and inexpensive
- ✓ The vision of the department is to have educated doctors-users and precisely operating network. Required steps are as following: expose existing issues in the field, organize four-day lasting training for primary health care physicians and narrow specialists, continue to improve Armed operating system, making it more user-friendly
- ✓ Adopt and adapt universal clinical terminologies (LOINC, SNOMED, ICD-10, RxNorm) and insert.

## Internship Objectives

- ✓ Understand the structure of the Ministry of Health, get acquainted with the principles of the e-health system and contribute to its implementation
- ✓ Gain practical skills for working with the National eHealth Operator (Armed system, at [www.preprod.armed.am](http://www.preprod.armed.am))
- ✓ Participate in training course prepared for primary health care physicians (general practitioners, physicians, and pediatricians) in the scope of the eHealth implementation project.
- ✓ Assist doctors in practicing gained knowledge at medical centers, reveal any existing issues and transfer to the department.
- ✓ Participate in the cleanup and adaptation process of clinical terminologies designed for working with medical records, documents, procedures, named LOINC (Logical Observation Identifiers Names and Codes)



Meeting MOH with the Armenian Eyecare Project

## Important Lessons

- ✓ Understood the importance of the public health profession for improving and protecting community health and well-being  
Learned how to participate in business discussions, represent ideas, be persuasive and come to an agreement
- ✓ Learned how to organize my schedule effectively and complete challenging and responsible assignments
- ✓ Apply the stages of the planning cycle (Situational analysis, Allocative planning Priority setting and Option appraisal, Programming and implementation, Monitoring and evaluation) in practice



With the eHealth implementation department



Helping doctors to apply acquired skills after training

## Completed Tasks

- ✓ Reviewed the documents related to the eHealth and its regulation in Armenia
- ✓ Prepared a literature review about universal medical languages-Clinical Terminologies (CT): LOINC (Logical Observation Identifiers Names and Codes) and SNOMED (Systematized Nomenclature of Medicine—Clinical Terms)
- ✓ Got acquainted with the existing operating platform of eHealth (Armed system). Received qualification as a trainer, contributed to the development and review of the syllabus and assisted lecturers during the training of primary health care physicians on eHealth implementation
- ✓ Participated four-day classes from "Saint Gregory the Illuminator", "Muratsan", "Ararat", "Masis" Medical Centers
- ✓ Developed the handout for the ArmTab users for the training
- ✓ Constructed the questionnaire assessing the quality of training
- ✓ Produced concise experience and feedback reports
- ✓ Represented the Ministry of Health at the meeting with the Armenian Eyecare Project, devoted to the discussion of clinical terminologies (LOINC, SNOMED, RxNorm)
- ✓ Reviewed and edited formerly translated LOINC codes (4000 codes).
- ✓ With the group of volunteers visited the first trained medical center ("Saint Gregory the Illuminator" MC) and explored underlying problems with operating eHealth system
- ✓ Participated in the development of the protocol to translate clinical terminologies for Armenia

## Skills Gained

- ✓ Learned the organizational approaches of the Ministry of Health
- ✓ Got acquainted with new operating systems (Linux, Ubuntu, Armed)
- ✓ Learned how to improve and implement gained multidisciplinary knowledge in the process
- ✓ Developed skills on teaching, lecturing, assisting tutor and individuals requiring guidance



# MPH Internship at Ministry of Health, RA

Intern: A. Shatvoryan, BS, MPH©

Internship Preceptors: L. Nanushyan MD, MPH and S. Grigoryan, DVM, MPH

Internship Coordinator: T. Harutyunyan, MPH, PhD

## Project Background

- Storing the data in electronic form is necessary nowadays to have a modern, well-functioning, user-friendly healthcare system. Implementation of the eHealth system is a main priority for the MOH. It includes training GPs to work with an online platform, organized for the first time.
- Implementation and improvement of pharmaceutical care, organized by the MOH, directly contributes to the accessibility and reduction of health inequalities. Pharmaceutical care is a necessary element aiming to improve patient participation, inter-professional collaboration and monitoring of outcome-related indicators.

## Overview of the Organization

The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia is a state body which is responsible for developing and implementing policy to improve the health quality, mortality and morbidity of the Armenian population.

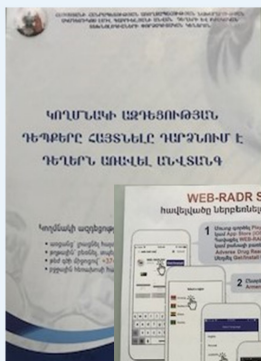


## Internship Goals and Objectives

- Participate in the implementation of the eHealth system.
  - Provide assistance in the conduction of the trainings of GPs.
  - Register the specialists who attended the trainings in the eHealth system and give them access to the system.
  - Play active role in the development of electronic drug prescriptions.
- Get familiar with/analyze the drug policy in the RA
  - Analyze key laws and legislative acts regulating pharmaceutical market.
  - Participation in the meetings with key stakeholders
  - Explore Drug Safety Monitoring System (Pharmacovigilance) and Smart Safety Surveillance (3S) project established by the WHO to strengthen drug safety monitoring system
  - Participate in the organization of Pharmacovigilance training for pharmacists

## Completed Tasks

- Research on pharmacy practice regulations in RA, CIS countries, EU and the USA
- Literature review on the differences between educational programs of pharmacists and pharmaceutical technicians and their role in healthcare system in RA
- Participation in Pharmacovigilance training for pharmacists, flier design and PowerPoint Presentation
- Developing electronic prescriptions section in the National eHealth system of Armenia
- Provide assistance in the delivery of 12-hours trainings for General Practitioners on "Basic principles of working with online platforms and national e-Health system "Armed"
- Creating electronic Database of all working healthcare specialists in RA.
- Participation in numerous meetings and discussions on eHealth



## Skills Gained

- Policy analysis skills
- Organization and delivery of trainings
- Improved communication and negotiation skills
- Ability to cooperate with different professional groups (decision makers, international experts, businessmen, healthcare providers, IT specialists etc.)
- Multitasking and time management skills
- Skills to negotiate with different partners and defend the interests of the country.

	A	B
1	ԱՐԱՊԱՅՈՒՆ	53
2	ԱՐԱՐԱՏ	118
3	ԱՐԱՎԿԻՐ	134
4	ԳԵՆԵՐԱՆԵՐՄԻՒԷ	40
5	ԵՐԵՎԱՆ	457
6	ԼՈՒԻ	60
7	ԿՈՏԱՅԷ	79
8	ՇԻՐԱԿ	27
9	ՍՅՈՒՄԷ	14
10	ՎԱՅՈՒՆ ՉՈՐ	16
11	ՏԱՎՈՐԵ	38
12	Grand Total	1036

## Lessons Learned

- The importance of conducting research for the improvement of the healthcare policy
- The importance of using online platforms, websites and mobile apps for the improvement of healthcare functioning in RA
- The challenges and ways to overcome them during the trainings for healthcare providers



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**Internship Coordinator**  
Dr. Tsovinar Harutyunyan, MPH, PhD

**Internship Preceptor**  
Dr. Gevorg Tamamyan, MD, MSc, PhD

**Internship Supervisors**  
Dr. Jemma Arakelyan, MD, PhD (c)  
Dr. Samvel Bardakchyan, MD, PhD (c)

The Hematology Center after Professor R.H. Yeolyan, is a narrow-specialized institution for blood and oncological diseases in the Republic of Armenia.

The center offers latest diagnostic techniques and highly effective medical treatments as per international guidelines. The center has a wide range of curative programs and practices. The center utilizes innovative approaches and new technologies such as target therapy with tyrosine kinase inhibitors, high dose chemotherapy and cell therapy with cells transplantation.

The project focused on identifying the barriers to accessibility of targeted therapy for Breast Cancer (BC) among patients seeking BC treatment in Armenia. The qualitative study assessed out-of-pocket payment burden among patients and their opinions about the quality of treatment. The study provided evidence for the development and implementation of intervention strategies.

## OBJECTIVES



- To get acquainted with the structure, functions and main challenges of the institution
- To conduct a retrospective record review of patients with BC to identify some important characteristics which can help understand the treatment accessibility issue
- To conduct a study on the barriers to accessibility of targeted therapy for BC among women seeking BC treatment at the Hematology Center in Yerevan, Armenia
- To suggest strategies for increasing access to cancer treatment in Armenia



Left to Right : Dr. Liana Safaryan, Dr. Martin Harutyunyan, Dr. Samvel Bardakchyan, Darshan Shingala, Dr. Jemma Arakelyan



## COMPLETED TASKS

- Conducted record review of cancer patients
- Conducted literature review of the barriers to accessibility of targeted therapy for breast cancer in low- and middle-income countries
- Developed an in-depth interview guide with probe questions to assess the patient experience regarding the out-of-pocket payment burden and its effects on the quality of treatment among those who seek cancer treatment
- Adapted the interview guide to Armenian context
- Conducted 26 interviews of cancer patients seeking treatment at the Hematology Center
- Prepared summary report
- Drafted intervention strategies to address the problem

## SKILLS DEVELOPED



- Record review and assessment skills
- Analytical and conceptual skills
- Prioritization of workload and task management
- Time management and effective planning skills
- Professional and organizational skills
- Collaboration, interaction and group work skills
- Stress tolerance and adaptability



## SELECTED FINDINGS

- All the study participants were satisfied with the quality of health care and health care providers
- All the study participants paid OOP for the examination, analysis and therapeutic drugs and were sponsored by family members
- Majority of participants experienced financial difficulties due to high OOP expenditures
- Several study participants did not choose targeted therapy because of financial vulnerability

## LESSONS LEARNED



- Distinguish between the clinical problems versus public health problems
- Importance of public health in clinical settings
- Knowledge about the challenges of Armenian health care system
- Importance of participation, involvement and awareness of patients regarding their treatment



Left to Right : Dr. Gevorg Tamamyan , Darshan Shingala



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement mandatory health insurance to increase access to targeted therapy
- Support the research on the development of biosimilar drugs
- Introduce generic and biosimilar drugs as a relatively inexpensive alternative therapy
- Enhance collaboration with international funding agencies and strengthen diaspora support

# MPH Internship at Ministry of Health, Republic of Armenia

Intern: Saro Tsaturyan, BS, MPH ©

Internship Preceptor: Lena Nanushyan, MD, MPH

Internship Coordinator: Tsovinar Harutyunyan, MPH, PhD

**AUA** American University  
of Armenia  
**TURPANJIAN SCHOOL of  
PUBLIC HEALTH**



## Overview of the Organization

The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia is a state body of executive power, which elaborates and implements the policy of the Government in the health sector.

## Project Background

Ministry of Health (MOH) contracts around 500 health care providers annually to provide publicly funded free of charge services for the population, covered by the Basic Benefits Package (BBP). The process, formally called “state order placement by the MOH”, was formerly regulated by the Order of the Minister of Health N 49-N of 15.09.2015, which had a normative character. According to the requirements of Constitutional amendments of 2015, currently all normative-legal regulations in the country must be approved by either Laws, or Government of Armenia (GOA) and Prime Minister decrees, therefore, MOH needed to change the current legal status of state order placement procedures and align them with the Constitutional norms, as well as with the current MOH health policy.

## Internship Goal and Objectives

**The Goal:** To provide technical assistance to the MOH for drafting a proper legal act for regulation of state order placement procedures under BBP.

### The Objectives:

- ✓ Review and assess current legal norms and regulations, and the functions and responsibilities of MOH and its relevant units (including the State Health Agency) on procurement of publicly funded medical services under BBP.
- ✓ Assist in drafting the new Government decree on regulation of state order placement procedures, including its internal discussions within the MOH.
- ✓ Contribute to the process of collecting and summarizing the feedback from other ministries and agencies, incorporating the suggested changes and amendments into the draft, preparing the final version of the document to be submitted to the GOA for approval.

## Expected Impact of the New Regulation

- ✓ Reduced administrative burden for health facilities in preparing and submitting their annual state order applications.
- ✓ Elimination of certain formal requirements such as having passed an external audit by a private firm for health facilities with an annual turnover of more than 200 million AMD.
- ✓ Setting the fixed start date for the annual application process (September 1), thus improving the predictability and transparency of the process.
- ✓ Overall simplification and streamlining of the state order application process, at the same time providing the MOH with necessary flexibility in exercising its purchasing function to address health care quality and access for the population.



With my internship preceptor, Deputy Minister of Health Dr. Lena Nanushyan

## Current Status of the Draft GOA Decree

Approval pending, until after the suggested amendments in the Law on Medical Assistance and Services for the Population will be approved by the National Assembly.

## Accomplished Tasks

- ✓ Review of the current legislation of the Republic of Armenia on public procurement of goods and services was conducted, including the RA Law on Procurement, GOA Decree N 386-N, approved on April 6, 2017 (on E-Procurement system), GOA Decree N 526-N, approved on May 4, 2017 (on organization of public procurement system), GOA Decree N 1301-N, approved on August 15, 2002 (on approving the SHA charter), Prime Minister Decree N 728-L, approved on June 11, 2018 (on approving the MOH charter), and the Order of the Minister of Health N 49-N of 15.09.2015 (on the current system of state order placement).
- ✓ Drafting of the GOA decree on regulation of state order placement process
- ✓ Summarizing the feedback from different MOH staff units on draft decree
- ✓ Summarizing the feedback from the Ministries of Finance, Territorial Administration and Infrastructure, Labor and Social Affairs, and from the Yerevan Municipality on the draft GOA decree
- ✓ Contributing to the preparation of the revised version of the GOA decree, based on all available feedback from relevant Government agencies and other stakeholders
- ✓ Assisting in preparation of a summary of suggested changes and amendments of the draft GOA.

## Lessons Learned and Skills Gained

- ✓ Further strengthening of purchasing mechanisms of BBP services through implementation of a single-buyer social health insurance model in Armenia must be considered a key element of the health care reforms.
- ✓ Better engagement of relevant Ministries (such as the Ministry of Finance) by the MOH into ongoing discussions on how to improve the service delivery and health sector management can greatly facilitate successful implementation of the reforms.
- ✓ The internship provided a good opportunity to get a better understanding of how the internal Government work culture has been affected by the last year’s “velvet” revolution in Armenia.
- ✓ Improved skills for communicating and coordinating with different stakeholders, meeting deadlines, working under time pressure.

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Second-year Master of Public Health (MPH) students from the American University of Armenia (AUA)'s Turpanjian School of Public Health (SPH) recently delivered poster presentations describing their internship experiences at various public health related organizations. This was the sixth poster conference organized for MPH students. Dr. Tsovinar Harutyunyan has been the internship coordinator.

Internship sites included the Ministry of Health (MoH) of the Republic of Armenia (RA); Fund for Armenian Relief; National Electronic Healthcare Operator (ԱՐՄԵԴ); Garo Meghriqian Institute for Preventive Ophthalmology, Avedisian Onanian Center for Health Services Research and Development (CHSR) of SPH; Jinishian Memorial Foundation; National Institute of Health Named after Academician S. Avdalybekyan (RA MoH); Hematology Center after Prof. R. Yeolyan (RA MoH); Nork-Marash Medical Center; Coimbatore Cancer Foundation (CCF), India; and National Institute of Research in Tuberculosis (NIRT), India.

The poster professional committee members approached each student and asked questions about their internship projects. Voting took place for the best poster, with student Yogeshwaran Jaishankar winning the most votes. SPH faculty and researchers, representatives of internship organizations, MPH students and alumni, and other guests participated in the voting. Committee members also chose Anna Isahakyan's and Manushak Avagyan's posters as winners. Dr. Tsovinar Harutyunyan awarded small gift to three winning students.

The Public Health Internship program was added to the MPH curriculum with the objective of providing students with an opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge, ideas, and skills acquired in the classroom to real-world public health practice, as well as to network with public health professionals.