

Nutritional Education in Health Resort Institutions in the Face of Demographic and Epidemiological Changes in Poland

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Abstract : Spa treatment is an important area of the health care system in Poland due to the increasing needs of the population and the context of historical conditions for this form of therapy. It extends the range of financing possibilities of the outlets and increases the potential of spa services, which is very important in the context of demographic and epidemiological changes. The main advantages of spa treatment services include its relatively wide availability, low risk of side effects, good patient tolerance, long-lasting curative effect and a relatively low cost. In addition, patients should be provided with a proper diet and enable participation in health education and health promotion classes aimed at health problems consistent with the treatment profile. Challenges for global health care systems include a sharp increase in spending on benefits, dynamic development of health technologies and growing social expectations. This requires extending the competences of health resort facilities for health promotion. Within each type of health resort institutions in Poland, nutritional education services are implemented, aimed at creating and consolidating proper eating habits. Choosing the right diet can speed up recovery or become one of the methods to alleviate the symptoms of chronic diseases. During spa treatment patient learns the principles of rational nutrition and adequate dietotherapy to his diseases. The aim of the project is to assess the frequency and quality of nutritional education provided to patients in health resort facilities in a nationwide perspective. The material for the study will be data obtained as part of an in-depth interview conducted among Heads of Nutrition Departments of selected institutions. The use of nutritional education in a health resort may be an important goal of implementing the state health policy as a useful tool to reduce the risk of diet-related diseases. Recognizing nutritional education in health resort institutions as a type of full-value health service can be effective system support for health policy, including seniors, due to demographic changes currently occurring in the Polish population. Furthermore, it is necessary to increase the interest and motivation of patients to follow the recommendations of nutritional education, because it will bring tangible benefits for the long-term effects of therapy and care should be taken for the form and methodology of nutrition education implemented in health resort institutions. Finally it is necessary to construct an educational offer in terms of selected groups of patients with the highest health needs: the elderly and the disabled. In conclusion, it can be said that the system of nutritional education implemented in polish health resort institutions should be subjected to global changes and strong systemic correction.

Keywords : health care system, nutritional education, public health, spa and treatment

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