

National Rehabilitation Plan in Ukraine

Geography and scale:	Ukraine; national
Type of disability:	All types

Involved actors

- Ministry of Public Health of Ukraine
- Professional organizations (e.g. Ukrainian Society for Neurorehabilitation)
- Organizations of people with disabilities (e.g. Coalition for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities)
- Scientific Institutions (e.g. Institute of Emergency Surgery and Rehabilitation)
- Veteran organizations (e.g. Ukrainian Association of Disabled Military Men)
- International Society of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine
- World Health Organization
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- International NGOs (e.g. UCP Wheels for Humanity; Humanity and Inclusion)

Best practice description

In 2015, Ukraine developed a National Disability, Health and Rehabilitation plan to improve rehabilitation services within the health care system, based in a technical consultation process conducted by a rehabilitation advisory team. Main actions and implementation projects included:

1. Establishment of a new rehabilitation department within the Ministry of Health and an inter-ministerial committee.
2. Translation and local adaption of rehabilitation terminology of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) into Ukrainian.
3. Establishment of procedures to conduct a population-based disability survey using internationally recognized methods.
4. Establishment of new curricula and rehabilitation professionals (physical and rehabilitation medicine (PRM) physicians, prosthetist-orthotists, speech and language therapists, physical and occupational therapists).
5. Implementation of model rehabilitation services for acute, post-acute and long-term phases.

Origin / impetus for best practice

- Since 2014 the armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine has resulted in an increased demand for rehabilitation services.
- The Ministry of Health decided to implement principles of the World Health Organization Global Disability Action Plan 2014-2021.
- Ukraine had a rehabilitation system predominantly based on a biomedical model of disability and therapy focused on compensation of functional deficits and different kinds of social support.
- Essential rehabilitation professionals were absent and there was a lack of intersectoral coordination between governing bodies providing rehabilitation services.

Impact / results of implementing best practice

- PRM physicians of the European Society conducted 26 courses (160 hours) to train 26 regular trainers from Ukrainian Medical Universities; in 2020, Ukraine had 283 local PRM physicians.
- The first class of Occupational Therapy Master students enrolled in September 2019.
- Since 2020, three packages of rehabilitation services are included in the national Programs of Medical Guarantees.

Critical success factors for best practice

- Ongoing health care reform of secondary and tertiary levels of care.
- High level of political will and commitment of experts.
- Participation of people with disabilities in the technical consultation process.
- Collaboration with European and international partners.
- Raising awareness and information campaigns about the importance of rehabilitation services.

Impact statement

Lessons learned

- Appropriate health care legislation is required for developing modern rehabilitation services.
- Continuing education for rehabilitation professionals is needed.
- ICF and its biopsychosocial approach, should be implemented at a higher pace and at all stages of the rehabilitation process.

Sources	<p>¹Golyk, V. et al. (2021) Five years after development of the national disability, health and rehabilitation plan for Ukraine: Achievements and challenges. Journal of rehabilitation medicine. [Online] 53 (3), jrm00160-jrm00160.</p> <p>²Gutenbrunner, C. et al. (2018) Responding to the world health organization global disability action plan in Ukraine: Developing a national disability, health and rehabilitation plan. Journal of rehabilitation medicine. [Online] 50 (4), 338-341.</p>
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Further links & information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHO support for health system development in Ukraine, 2016-2019. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2019. • Strengthening Rehabilitation Services in Health Systems - USAID • Gutenbrunner, C. et al. (2018) Strengthening health-related rehabilitation services at the national level. Journal of rehabilitation medicine. [Online] 50 (4), 317-325.
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