Bosnia and Herzegovina

4 AND 5 JUNE 2024

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SUMMARY NOTE ON

MEDICAL LICENSING (TO PRACTICE) AND REGISTRATION SYSTEM OF HEALTH PRACTITIONERS. INSIGHTS ON LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND RELATED EXPERIENCES

4 - 5 JUNE 2024

CHISINAU, REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

The South-eastern Europe Health Network expresses its deep appreciations and gratitude to the Ministry of Health and the National Agency of Public Health of the Republic of Moldova, host of the SEEHN Regional Health Development Center on Human Resources for Health, for its continuous support and efforts dedicated to organize the Regional Meeting

Thematic workshop/round table on
Medical licensing (to practice) and registration system of health practitioners.
Insights on legal framework and related experiences.
4-5 June 2024, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

Photo credit: National Agency of Public Health of the Republic of Moldova

ABBREVIATIONS

ALB	Albania
BIH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
EU	European Union
ISR	State of Israel
MOH	Ministry of Health
MSs	Member States
MDA	Moldova
MKD	North Macedonia
MNE	Montenegro
RHDC	Regional Health Development Center
ROU	Romania
SRB	Serbia
SEE	South Eastern Europe
SEEHN	South Eastern Europe Health Network
WBs	Western Balkans
WHO	World Health Organization

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Summary Background

The Ministry of Health, the National Agency of Public Health of the Republic of Moldova, and the South-Eastern Europe Health Network (SEEHN) welcomed representatives from across the SEE region (ALB, ISR, MDA, MNE, MKD, ROU, SRB) to the highly anticipated meeting focused on **the Medical Licensing and Registration System of Health Practitioners**. The meeting was held on 4 and 5 June 2024, in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova.

This event aimed to provide valuable insights into the legal framework and the related experiences in the healthcare sector, serving as a platform for participants to share best practices, discuss challenges, and foster collaboration in health regulation.

The meeting featured expert speakers, panel discussions, and interactive sessions intended at promoting knowledge exchange and networking opportunities among attendees. Key topics addressed included advancements in medical licensing, registration processes for health practitioners, digital platforms for data collection and analysis and the importance of a robust legal framework in healthcare.

Dr. Mira Jovanovski Dasic, Director of the SEEHN Secretariat, highlighted that "*one of the most significant challenges faced by SEEHN Member States is the brain drain of healthcare professionals, driven by the migration of talent to Western Europe in search of better opportunities. This exacerbates existing issues such as workforce shortages, disparities in healthcare access, and the need for continuous professional development. While other challenges include improving healthcare infrastructure and ensuring equitable access to services, addressing brain drain is critical. It requires strategic efforts to enhance working conditions, provide competitive incentives, and invest in the professional growth of healthcare workers to retain talent within the region.*"

This gathering was also a possibility for an essential step towards addressing these challenges, promoting regional collaboration, and strengthening the healthcare systems across the SEE region.

The meeting objectives aimed to address the critical issues facing the workforce licencing and registration and outline actionable steps for ensuring robust and high-quality healthcare systems in the region.

The participants interventions from the SEEHN member states (ALB, ISR, MNE, MKD, MDA, ROU, SRB) added valuable insights into country-specific experiences and strategies in tackling issues related to licencing and registration system of health practitioners in their respective countries.

The Regional Meeting: ***Medical Licensing (to Practice) and Registration System of Health Practitioners. Insights on Legal Framework and Related Experiences***, detailed programme, is presented in the Annex 1.

Summary of Conclusions and recommendations

The discussions held during the Regional Meeting were remarkably insightful, and gathered the recent developments and achievements on workforce licencing and registration in the SEE region. Moreover, several messages crystalized and will be presented at the 47th SEEHN Plenary Meeting to be held under the Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIH) Presidency on 19-20 June 2024 in Sarajevo, BIH.

Key sessions included discussions on the practical aspects of medical licensing procedures in Israel, digital system (Registry of healthcare professionals) used in Romania, digitization in the healthcare sector challenges and opportunities for medical licensing procedures to be used in Moldova, and related national experiences shared by SEEHN member states. The meeting also featured practical sessions and collaborative discussions, culminating in a set of recommendations for enhancing medical licensing and registration systems in the SEE region.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Regional Meeting successfully identified several critical areas for improvement and collaboration in the medical licensing and registration system. The following conclusions and recommendations were made:

1. **Strengthen Workforce Resilience**
   o Develop strategies to enhance the workforce resilience as a system resilience strategy also in the face of health crises.
   o Implement best practices and innovative approaches to support the mental health and well-being of healthcare professionals.
2. **Address Workforce Shortages and Skill Development**
   o Explore effective solutions to address workforce shortages, including recruitment, retention, and training programs.
   o Develop action plans for skill development and continuous professional education to meet evolving healthcare needs.
   o Improve health workforce migration policies aimed at increasing the quality of the healthcare services and decrease brain drain. Explore circular migration as a mechanism for motivation and returning the best-trained health workforce to the country of origin.
3. **Foster Collaborative Partnerships and Policy Implementation**
   o Promote collaboration between regional stakeholders, including governments, healthcare institutions, and educational organizations.

- o Formulate policy recommendations to ensure high-quality healthcare provision, focusing on equity, accessibility, and sustainability.

4. **Expand Digital Transformation Initiatives**
   - o Continue efforts towards digital transformation in healthcare to improve efficiency and accessibility.
   - o Leverage digital tools and technologies to streamline medical licensing and registration processes.

5. **Enhance International Collaboration**
   - o Strengthen international partnerships to share best practices and improve global standards in healthcare.
   - o Collaborate on intervention programs and policy development to address regional healthcare challenges.
   - o Explore potential regional collaboration within the SEEHN Member states and regional organizations.

6. **Improve Communication Strategies**
   - o Enhance communication channels to keep healthcare practitioners informed about regulatory updates, educational opportunities, and other relevant information.
   - o Foster open and transparent communication with the public to build trust in the healthcare system.

7. **Advocate for Supportive Policies and Increased Funding**
   - o Advocate for policies that support the healthcare workforce and address specific sector needs.
   - o Advocate for increased funding at the governmental level to improve healthcare infrastructure and services.

8. **Set Standards for different professional health personnel**
   - o Establish clear standards/ guidelines for different professional health personnel, including recruitment, training, and professional development.
   - o Update curricula to align with EU directives and ensure the provision of competent healthcare staff.

9. **Establish Efficient Clinical Practice Systems**
   - o Ensure sustainability and continuity in clinical practice by aligning student capacities with healthcare facility capabilities.
   - o Implement effective workforce planning to address labor market needs.

By addressing these key areas, the SEEHN member states can improve the medical licensing and registration systems, enhance healthcare quality, and better support the health workforce across the region.

Annex 1 Final Programme (at request to secretariat email)

Annex 2 List of Participants (at request to secretariat email)