DEVELOPMENT AND TENDENCIES IN THE ORGANIZATION OF HYGIENIC AND EPIDEMIOLOGIC INSPECTION OF VARNA

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An investigation of the organization of the Hygienic and Epidemiologic Inspection of Varna (HEI-Varna), its structural development and changes in the volume of the accomplished activity, staff policy, and necessary equipment was carried out. The initial structure of the establishment of HEI-Varna included two departments. It was then perfectioned and developed into 12 medical divisions. The Ministry of Health abrogated the current Statute-book for the activity and the structure of the HEI and suggested a new project for discussion by the regional inspections. There is a trend towards an increasing number of the objects to be investigated which are situated on the territory supervised by the HEI-Varna. The number of the checks-up and examinations enhances which is related with the greater amount of the objects resulting from the new socio-economic conditions. The staff security of the hygienic and epidemiologic service of the population is performed by 264 employees that is by 10 % less in comparison with that in 1997. One-fifth of the medical personnel members are physicians while 58.54 % of them have already acquired a narrow medical speciality.

Key-words: Hygienic and Epidemiologic Inspection of Varna, health reform, promotion of health, occupational medicine

The new realities in the socio-economic life of the country and the changed priorities and tasks in the health system impose the performance of a reform in the organization of the medico-prophylactic network and of the hygienic and epidemiologic service. From the two basic elements of every organization, i. e., function and structure, which are in dialectical unity, the role of the structure in showing a given model of organization dominates. The rigid structure could be an obstacle for improving the activity of the health care system as a whole or of its subsystems (1).

The initial structure of the Hygienic and Epidemiologic Inspection of Varna (HEI-Varna) was established about 50 years ago. It had two departments: a sanitary and antiepidemical department with two sections and a laboratory department
with three ones. There was a radiologic section with laboratories since 1962 (2). Taking into consideration the quick industrialization of the region and the economic progress, the HEI-Varna established in 1966 modernized and improved its activity. From three laboratories at the beginning they reached the number of twelve at the moment. Thus we can observe some tendencies towards augmentation of the volume of their work.

The structure of HEI-Varna consists of a director, a director’s council, and twelve medical sections. The organizations of the work of HEI-Varna enables the performance of hygienic-antiepidemical activities in case of different disaster situations and their toxic, radioactive, or biological consequences. The structure of the inspection for acting in case of disasters, accidents and catastrophes consists of a governing body (head of department, its deputy, a secretary) and non-armed formations (antiepidemical team, microbiologic, chemical, and radiometric laboratories). When a situation of disaster arises the main activities of HEI-Varna are directed towards the prevention of the appearance and development of epidemics, intoxications, and radioactivity.

According to the changes of the functions and tasks regulated by the Project for the new “Stature-book for the Activity and Structure of HEI” (5), structural changes should be carried out, too. According to the proposal of the Ministry of Health, the main directions are the following:

a) state sanitary (medical) control;  
b) antiepidemical control;  
c) laboratory examinations; and  
d) health promotion.

A strategic purpose of the reform in the HEI is the reorientation to the promotion of health and prevention of diseases thus creating of social policy and attitude to healthy life-styles in the society. One of the main tasks will be to assure sufficient and adequate informational consulting activities for the promotion of health for single individuals and for groups. It is necessary to facilitate the access of people to the modern information and to assure the needs of consultative help.

A new component is the structure-related proposal is the service of occupational medicine. Main functions and tasks of these services are the following (3): elaboration of measures for eliminating and decreasing the risk for health and danger at the working place; monitoring the health condition of the workers and employees and its analysing related with the work which has been done; training of workers and managers for the rules for keeping the health and safety at work, etc. The analyses of the services of occupational medicine are based on the results of the prophylactic examinations and tests they have already made; the indexes of temporary and long-lasting work incapacity and their relation with the labour conditions; the incidence rate and the severity of professional disabilities as well as the parameters of labour traumatism. The preventive activity is most important under the condi-
Development and tendencies in the organization of liberalizing the economic relations and building-up the new and reconstructed objects. The emphasis is made on the preliminary sanitary control for keeping the hygienic requirements when choosing building sites. A total of 882 projects were received at the HEI-Varna in 1997 while their number was much lower (only 72) in 1996. A total of 2337 control examinations were done in 1997 but 1743 ones - in 1996. A total of 1465 projects were given a permission to be realized in 1997 while there were 1162 such projects in 1996. The number of projects that stopped working was 220 in 1996 and 244 in 1997. The distribution of the projects liable to current sanitary control is shown on Fig. 1. The analysis of the data shows a tendency towards augmentation.

The distribution of the medical departments for the last years was the following: hygiene of nutrition - 1/2, social hygiene - 1/4, hygiene of children and adolescents - 1/3, and occupational hygiene - 1/10. The tendency in the activity of the laboratories shows a small decrease since 1994.

In spite of the increasing troubles and the volume of work that has been done the reform in the health system has imposed staff reduction from 293 employees in 1996 down to 264 ones in 1997. The great volume of diagnostic activity of HEI-Varna requires a good professional training and a great number of specialists. Of the personnel members, 25 % are with medical university education, 9 % are with non-medical university education, 34 % are with secondary medical education, 17 % are with secondary non-medical education, and 15 % are with lower education.

The organization and the activity for avoiding and removing the consequences after critical situations (6) is demonstrated in the shape of four medical departments.
Fig. 2. Staff of HEI-Varna involved in non-armed formations

teams including 1/3 of the whole working staff (Fig. 2). The physicians are approximately 1/5 out of all the employees as well as out of the whole common staff involved in non-armed formations to work under the conditions of disasters. The medical staff presenting mainly with sanitary inspectors and laboratory technicians increases from 1/3 to 43,13 % in cases of disasters and accidents.

CONCLUSIONS

The two-department structure of HEI-Varna improved and grew up to twelve-department one. The HEI-Varna also faces the new structure reform requirements. There is a tendency towards increasing the number of control examinations of the objects situated on the territory supervised by HEI-Varna as a result from building-up of numerous new objects. The organization for avoiding and removing the consequences of disasters is presented by non-armed formations, including four medical teams and 1/3 of the working staff. The staff security of the hygienic and epidemiologic service of the population is performed by 264 employees that is by 10 % less in comparison with that in 1997. One-fifth of the medical personnel members are physicians while 58,54 % of them have already acquired a narrow medical speciality.

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Развитие и тенденции в организацията на ХЕИ-Варна

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Резюме: Проведено е проучване на организацията на Хигиено-епидемиологичната инспекция (ХЕИ)-Варна, структурното развитие и промените в обема на извършената дейност, кадровото състояние и материално-техническото обезпечаване. Първоначалната структура при създаването на ХЕИ-Варна включваше два отдела. Тя се усъвършенства и разрасна до 12 медицински отделения. Министерството на здравеопазването отмени досега действащия Правилник за дейността и устройството на ХЕИ и предложи нов проект за обсъждане от районните инспекции. Наблюдава се тенденция за увеличаване на броя на обследваните обекти, намиращи се на територията, контролирана от ХЕИ-Варна. Нараства броят на проверките и изследванията, което е свързано с увеличения брой обекти в резултат на новите социално-икономически условия. Кадровото осигуряване на хигиено-епидемиологичното обслужване на населението се осъществява от 264 служители, което е с 10 % по-малко в сравнение с 1997 г. Една пета от общия състав на служителите са висши медицински кадри, а 58,54 % от тях са с придобита специалност.