

**ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛНИ ПОТРЕБНОСТИ И ПРОФЕСИОНАЛНА
КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТ НА СТУДЕНТИТЕ В МАГИСТЪРСКИТЕ
ПРОГРАМИ ПО ОБЩЕСТВЕНО ЗДРАВЕ**

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**EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF THE
STUDENTS IN THE PUBLIC HEALTH MASTER’S DEGREE PROGRAMS**

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Abstract

Introduction: Core competences of public health professionals are the knowledge and skills in several key areas such as health policy and management, social and behavioral sciences, biostatistics, epidemiology, etc.

Material and Methods: Anonymous survey of 49 students from the MA programs in Public Health and Health Management, and Healthcare Management at the Faculty of Public Health in Plovdiv was conducted in the period September – December 2017.

Self-assessments of the knowledge and skills of the participants were obtained for several disciplines related to courses taught at the Department of Health Management and Health Economics: Health Politics, Social Sciences, Communication, Leadership, etc. We used an adapted tool comprising 39 items measuring competence at the start and at the end of the program using a 4-degree scale from novice (having little or no knowledge and skills) to expert (feeling confident in knowledge and skills and in teaching others).

Results: We assessed the educational needs and the base level of competence resulting from previous training and/or experience as well as the achieved level of competence at the end of the Master’s program.

Conclusion: Competence monitoring informs both lecturers and students and allows targeted approach and planning of self-studies according to specific educational needs.

Keywords: *professional competence; public health education*

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