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## PILOT RESEARCH AMONG GPs CONCERNING PROBLEMS AND DIFFICULTIES IN THE PROCESS OF EDUCATION

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### ABSTRACT

General practitioner is a defining figure in the state and development of primary health care in Bulgaria. He is placed at the base of the pyramid of the health system and he as a “chief expert” at the first level of the provision and management of health care.

The Multidisciplinary approach in general practice requires diverse knowledge and competence on behalf of the general practitioner. Postgraduate training and continuing medical education provides opportunities for professional growth and improvement of acquired knowledge and skills for each family doctor.

**Key words:** family doctor, education, problems

### INTRODUCTION

For quality and effective practice and thriving in the field of family medicine, are needed wide range of competencies, their skillfully and effectively application, and also constant enthusiasm for learning. Opportunities for career realization in terms of general medical practice are connected primarily with the wishes of the family doctor to maintain and develop its scientific and practical potential of high professionalism in the performance of medical and non-medical activities.

### Coals:

The aims of the research were:

to determine the personal position of the family doctor about satisfaction of the training and acquisition of new medical knowledge in the period of specialization in "General Medicine"  
to determine the opinion and attitude of family physicians on participation in various forms of continuing medical education.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

It was conducted an extensive survey of general practitioners in Stara Zagora Region, Bulgaria, during the period from May to June 2011. It was applied direct individual questionnaire in strict compliance with the principles of anonymity and voluntariness.

### DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The number of doctors, who fulfilled out the questionnaire was 52. The most numerous of the age groups is the one ranging from 41 to 50 years – 76,9% (40). The excerpt includes 28 (53, 8%) females and 24 (46,1) males of GPs. Those who have experience from 6-10 years are 39 (75%) of the surveyed family doctors. In 44 of the surveyed, the ambulatory for primary medical care are stationed in cities, as service contingent patients includes all groups by age and gender. The number of registered patients for 17 (32,6 %) of the general practitioners who participated in the survey is around 1000-1500 individuals; for 19 (36, 5%) of them is above 1500 people and for the remaining 16 (29 %) - below 1000. Most of the surveyed family physicians have graduated from the period 1990-1995 years- 28 (53,8 %).

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Family physician functions as chief medical expert at the forefront of the management of medical care and in the provision of health services. He has a central place in the system of practical health care and he plays an important coordinating role.

The training to acquire specialty "General Medicine" was conducted with adopted curriculum by the Minister of Health. It was developed and was offered by higher education schools in accordance with the requirements of current ordinance № 15 of July 2, 2008. The program of education requires a long and extended period for preparation by GPs. Within 3 calendar years, general physicians pass through series of theoretical and practical specialized modules.

The obtaining of additional knowledge and competencies in the field of medical science is connected to the investment of time and absence from work and daily duties. A significant part of respondents share for existence of difficulties in finding a interval of free time during the visit and the application of each medical course – module. (Figure 1)

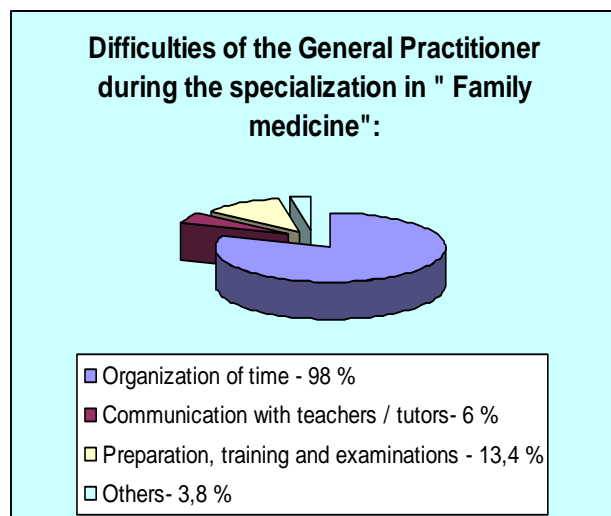


Figure 1.

Main reasons according to family physicians are the lack of alternates and increased commitment and intensity of workflow in ambulatories for primary health care.

Most of respondents feel the need for new and current information in the field of medical research and technology. Medical Universities are places, where doctors who specialize have the opportunity to increase and develop their

theoretical knowledge and practical skills. (Figures 2 and 4)

Organizing and conducting seminars and courses with medical orientation is favorable environment for the development of professional competencies. To such forms of continuing education, the family physicians are showing considerable interest and attention. (Figure 3)

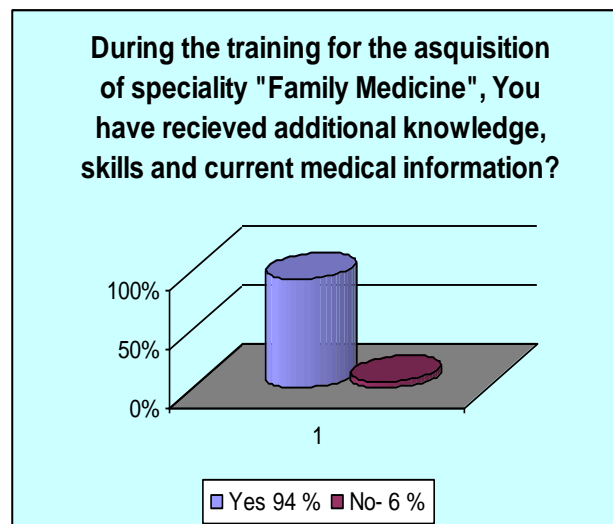


Figure 2.

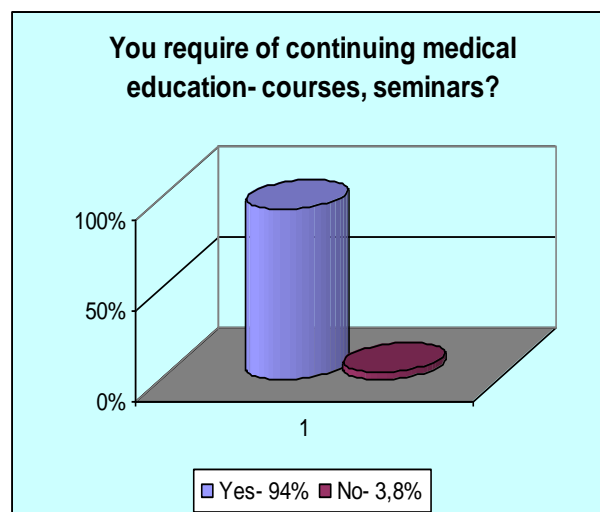


Figure 3.

Training courses with a focus on early diagnosis and detection of diseases are preferred for attending at scientific and practical events of the surveyed physicians. Active search for patients in the early stages of the disease process and algorithms of behavior excite considerable group of GPs. (Figure 5)

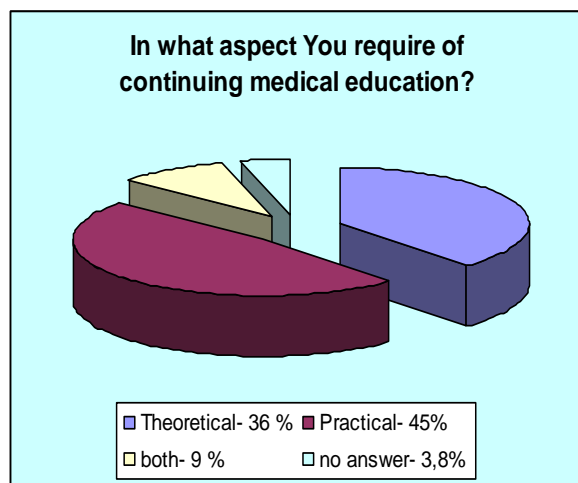


Figure 4.

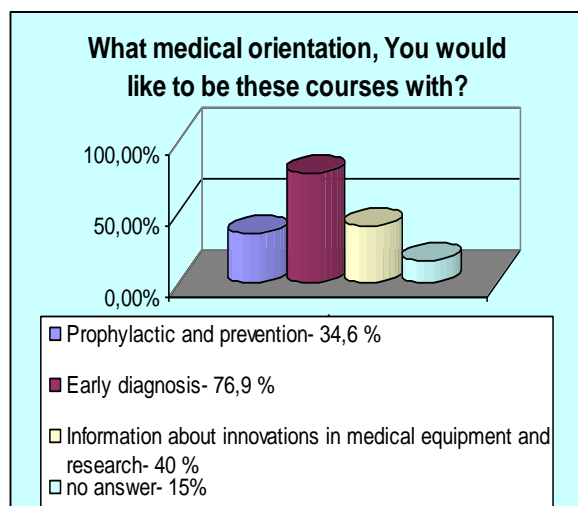


Figure 5.

Constant interest in innovations in medical sciences, and also maintain a relatively good level of competence in the field of family medicine satisfy and support substantially activity of GPs. (Figures 6 and 7)

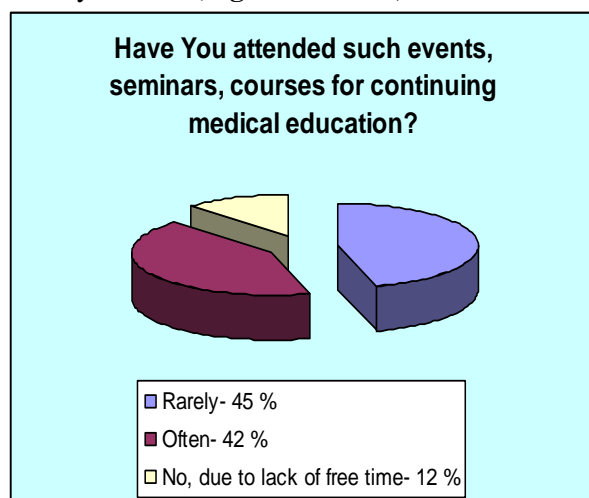


Figure 6.

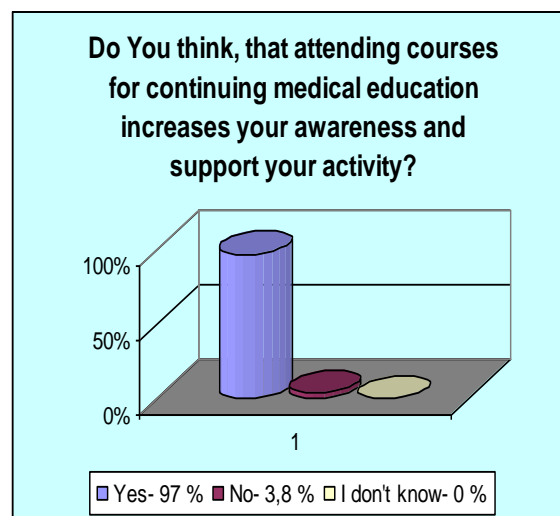


Figure 7.

Through the organization of scientific meetings, conferences, medical courses, and also access to internet-based forms of education, family doctor has the opportunity to raise his awareness for current medical topics and issues. (Figure 8)

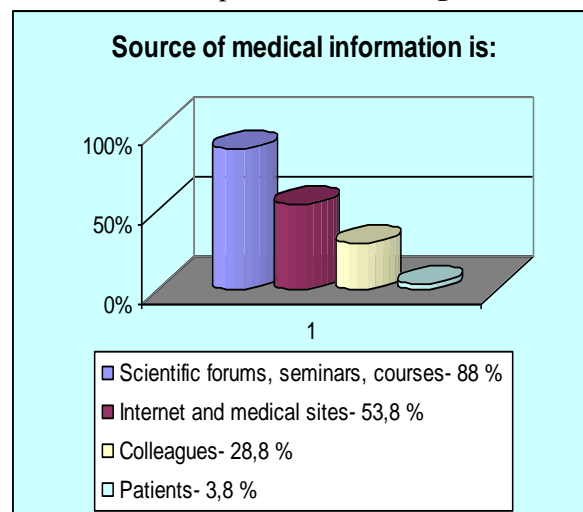


Figure 8

## CONCLUSIONS

From conducted pilot study could be made the following conclusions:

- A large percentage of family physicians think that they acquire additional knowledge and skills during the specialization of family medicine.
- The main difficulties, which they encounter are related with management of time.

Respondents are willing to participate in various forms of continuing medical education for prevention, early diagnosis and innovations in medical research and equipment.

Postgraduate training and access to current medical information through participation in medical courses, scientific meetings and

seminars, increases significantly the quality and effectiveness in the work of each GP.

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