

A Preliminary Finding Regarding Nutrition Information Needs among Family Physicians in Turkey

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Abstract : Healthy eating habits are associated not only with the newborn, child, and maternal health but also with longer life expectancy by acting as a protective factor against non-communicable diseases such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and cancer. The role of nutrition in medical education is to provide information about the relationship between healthy nutrition and malnutrition as well as diet-related non-communicable diseases. Considering the information pollution experienced in the field of nutrition and health in the society, it is seen that more than half of the population receives information from family physicians as the closest counseling unit. However, postgraduate nutrition education programs for physicians and other health professionals who wish to improve their current knowledge of the role of nutrition communication in the prevention and management of chronic diseases are limited worldwide. However, nutrition courses are either not included in the undergraduate medical education curriculum of physicians or they are insufficient. Based on this need, the main aim of the study group was to develop a "Nutrition and Nutrition Communication Training for Physicians" program that would be conducted in cooperation with the Sabri Ülker Foundation and the Federation of Family Physicians Associations (AHEF). This program is the first online nutrition and nutrition communication information platform for physicians in Turkey. This program aims to present the concept of adequate and balanced nutrition to physicians, the importance of nutrition in diseases with scientific data, and to gain communication skills that may be necessary while transferring scientific information to the public. A needs assessment questionnaire was applied to identify pre-program training needs. A study plan was made to allow the participation of all family physicians in the population, and a complete inventory was targeted. In other words, we aimed to reach the whole source without taking a section of the population. Participation in the training is based on volunteerism. The needs assessment study is conducted using 25,102 family physicians for whom email addresses are available. The online questionnaire was sent to all the family physicians with a reminder email one week after the first one, and 1308 responded. Considering the topics determined, a training program was prepared for family physicians under eight online training titles, starting in March 2022, and conducted once every two weeks. The number of audience members present at each session was between 1217 and 1673, and a minimum of 17 and a maximum of 53 questions were received in each session. We strongly believe that to prevent individuals' health problems and to have better control over chronic diseases, the information level of physicians should be increased via these kinds of interventions, and better collaboration between family physicians and dietitians should be established.

Keywords : nutrition communication, nutrition training, communication, nutrition

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