

Making Serbian children hospitals child-friendly

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Introduction:

- Partnerstvo za zdravlje, a Serbian NGO with support from the Ministry of Health is implementing the project “Hospital – a friend to children and families”

- Aim of the project is to introduce *child- and family-centered care* to pediatric wards in Serbia.



- **The initiative aims to reduce unnecessary stress and pain in hospitalized children by educating healthcare workers and non-medical workers about child rights, development, pain management, hospital play, preparation/coping and communication.**
- **The initiative is based on an assessment of current conditions in Serbian pediatric wards.**

Purpose/Methods:

Phase I

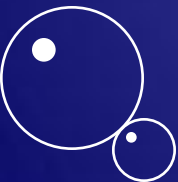
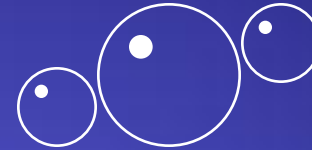
- **A 5-day trainer course based on The Child-Centered Health Care Trainer Manual (Schwethelm , Capello, Brylske, & Munn, 2010) was conducted in May 2010**
- **Multidisciplinary teams from 6 Serbian and two Macedonian children hospitals participated**

- **Knowledge, skills and materials to train others in child-/family-centered care.**



Phase II

- The trainer teams assist in a hospital-by-hospital implementation.
- The complex course has been broken down into 7- 8 four-hour sessions and intersession exercises in order to facilitate learning.



Results:

- **Implementation started 11/2010 in Nis with nurses/teachers from kindergarten**
- **23 trainings were conducted so far**
- **Nurses/teachers from 3 out of 6 hospitals participated**

Reactions to the trainings:

- **Participants were delighted with the training methods (combination of presentations, group work, interactive learning, intersession assignments, video materials).**
- **Practice and skills-building is emphasized, and discussions of the assignments motivate the participants.**

Pre and post test results(1):

- **Nurses/teachers became aware of:**
 - a) the importance to allow children to make choices about their treatment or procedures if the choices do not affect the outcomes negatively**
 - b) the importance to meet child's and parents' developmental, emotional and social needs during hospitalization.**
 - c) non pharmacological methods to relieve pain, stress and anxiety**
 - d) the importance to work to create an environment in which patients and families feel supported enough to speak freely**

Pre and post test results(2):

- It is learned that:
 - a) preparation for hospitalization and medical procedures leads to child's and parent's lower stress and anxiety
 - b) medical staff should encourage parents and children to participate in decision making about care
 - c) to recognize a child that is anxious, frightened and under stress
 - d) expressive play provides children with opportunities that support coping
 - e) medical staff should be prepared to review and/or repeat information multiple times because families and patients may not always be ready to hear or understand the information provided

Conclusions:

- **Lessons-learned show that transforming all the facts and theory of child- and family-centered care into real life application in every-day language and shorter units over a time period, can help participants to better understand child rights, and child- and family-centered care concepts.**
- **This results in better implementation, and a stronger partnership between hospitals and the NGO.**
- **It is hoped that involvement of pediatric workers on the “frontlines” will also increase the interest and involvement of physicians in the medium term.**

Comments

- **Our goal is to increase commitment to hospitalized children's rights by educating the medical and non-medical staff in 6 hospitals that participated in the original trainer course .**
- **We organized working groups to develop materials to prepare children of various ages and their families for hospitalization and common procedures.**
- **We are establishing feedback mechanisms to assure that needs of families for information, communication and involvement in their child's care are met.**
- **Our goal is to make the process sustainable and replicable in other regions and hospitals.**

THANK YOU

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