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Developing Medical Genetics Education Through Curriculum Reforms And Establishment Of Postgraduate Training Programs

LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR GENETIC COUNSELLING MASTER OF SCIENCES PROGRAM AT RUSSIAN-ARMENIAN (SLAVONIC) UNIVERSITY

Four broad learning outcome areas in genetics, in which it is proposed that a graduate genetic counsellor should attain by the end of their education, are shown below:

- 1: Communication skills
- 2: Professional skills
- 3: Counselling skills
- 4: Professional ethical values and skills

1: Communication Skills

After completion of the programme, the graduate can:

- Establish a mutually agreed upon genetic counselling agenda with the client
- Establish empathetic relationship with the client and identify client's concerns and needs
- Obtain and record an appropriate and complete family history
- Support client to make informed choices concerning actions they may take, relevant to the implications of their family history
- Obtain relevant medical information including, but not limited to, pregnancy, developmental, medical and psychosocial histories

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- Explain the technical and medical aspects of diagnostic and screening methods, as well as treatment/management of genetic conditions and/or birth defects to clients with different educational, socioeconomic and ethno cultural backgrounds
- Manage a genetic counselling case in a culturally responsive manner
- Document and present case information clearly and concisely, in both oral and written formats.

2: Professional skills

After completion of the programme, the graduate:

- Has a deep understanding and knowledge of genetics and genomics concepts and principles
- Has an understanding of counselling theory in relation to genetic healthcare
- Can identify and integrate modern genetic testing options used in genetic counselling
- Can understand and explain the patterns of inheritance and the underlying mechanisms by which a genetic condition occurs
- Can understand and provide clinical information as well as treatment options to the clients and their families
- Have knowledge of reproductive organs and systems and general human anatomy
- Makes appropriate and accurate genetic risk assessment

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- Can construct relevant and comprehensive personal and family histories and pedigrees
- Can assess client's understanding, guide counselling sessions as needed and flexibly response to the provided information
- Can critically assess genetic, medical literature and records.

3: Counselling skills

After completion of the programme, the graduate can:

- Use a variety of consultation skills
- Use counselling techniques in relation to genetic health state in an appropriate manner
- Provide client-centred counselling and mental assistance
- Support client's decision-making in a non-directive, non-coercive manner
- Evaluate and act by referral to another healthcare practitioner if indicated
- Be engaged constructively in peer supervision
- Establish and maintain interdisciplinary professional relationships and function as part of a healthcare team.

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4: Professional ethical skills and values

After completion of the programme, the graduate:

- Can act in accordance with the ethical, legal, and philosophical principles and values of the genetic counsellor profession.
- Has an understanding of ethical principles relevant to genetic healthcare (WMA Helsinki Declaration).
- Can integrate ethical principles into counselling practice.
- Can maintain confidentiality and safety of client and obtained sensitive information.
- Should demonstrate initiative for continued professional development.

References:

- Core competences for genetic counsellors, European Board of medical genetics, June 2010
- European Core Curriculum for the Master programme in Genetic Counselling
- Code of professional practice for genetic counsellors in Europe, European Board of medical genetics, June 2013
- The American Board of Genetic Counseling , Genetic Counselors' Scope of Practice, June 2007

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This project has been funded with support from the European Commission:

Grant Agreement 544331-TEMPUS-1-2013-1-AM-TEMPUS-JPCR

This publication reflects only the author's view and the Agency and the Commission are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.