

## Foreword

International interdisciplinary scientific conference “*Society. Health. Welfare*”, held by Rīga Stradiņš University in Latvia every second year, has proved itself over the years as a valuable platform for exchanging views and experience at international level, bringing together social, humanitarian and medical professionals, researchers and academic staff of institutions of higher education.

These collected articles are proceedings of the Part 1 of the 6<sup>th</sup> International conference. It includes **36** articles. The authors of the articles represent different countries: Latvia, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Russia and Kazakhstan. In general, a wide thematic diversity clearly reflects the issues which are of concern to the society as a whole and are at the focus of researchers’ attention.

Following the interdisciplinary idea of the conference, the proceedings are arranged in three chapters.

The **first chapter *Society*** covers two main thematic lines: *legal and social issues and the rule of law and legality*.

Two articles on legal framework in health care regarding the patients’ rights to high-quality health care and the responsibility of medical staff introduce the proceedings. The authors of the article *Procedural Aspects of Healthcare Quality Control in Latvia and its Effect on Legal Protection of Patients* give a comprehensive analysis of healthcare quality control mechanisms in line with the implementation of the Directive 2011/24/EU in Latvia. The authors draw attention and highlight the problems associated with the role of the Health Inspectorate and the competence of the court in assessing offence in health care. Whereas the article *Primary Law in Medicine, its Legal Nature* analyses the right to health care through the prism of economic opportunities, emphasizing the special legal status of the child.

The article *The Effectiveness of Social Work Services for Families Whose Children are in Temporary Custody* reflects the work of social workers with high-risk families. Such families are usually of multi-problem character. The authors conclude that it is not always possible to find a safe and healthy environment for children from families of social risk due to limitations of the social services system and insufficient cooperation between the various levels of decision-making bodies.

The proceedings contain several articles that analyse socially negative phenomena such as bribery, fictitious employment and corruption. The authors of the articles suggest that the development of a legal and democratic country is not at all simple.

Several articles of the **second chapter *Health*** focus on healthcare policy and modernization issues. Analysis of reform processes in the healthcare sector in the last ten years in Latvia is given in the articles *Interest Group Impact on E-health Implementation in Latvia*; *Evaluation of Healthcare Policy in Latvia* and *Latvian Health Care Competitiveness in Relation to its Infrastructure and Available Resources*. The situation in the field of health care is displayed from the comparative perspective between the Baltic and Scandinavian countries.

In today’s society, the maintenance of health and personal wellbeing depends fundamentally on people’s own responsibility and knowledge. Two sectors, health and education sectors are incorporated in health education. Health education and awareness of

the social dimension of health are analysed in the articles *Health Literacy as a Challenge of Health Education* and *Young Adult Health Literacy on Health Promotion as Social Determinant of Health: Challenge for Health Education Practice in Lithuania*.

Complexity of the modern world and dynamic changes are today's reality. The global dimension is present in all areas of life: politics, economy, social and cultural space. Changes in the norms and values of the society affect the behaviour of the personality and often confront the aims of the personality. Therefore, adaptation to social transformations becomes a challenge. The authors of the article *The Relationship between Anomia and Maladaptive Personality Traits* analyse the reflection of general social change as "subjectively perceived anomie" on an individual level.

Several articles describe the personality health behaviour in relationship with lifestyles, as well as the environmental impact on health, such as air quality and health risk.

The role of rehabilitation is becoming increasingly important in the recovery process. The article *Physiotherapy Following Cardiac Surgery: Program Comparison* is devoted to examination and comparing the usability of two physiotherapy programmes, analysing respiratory function in patients before and after cardiac surgery.

The article *Perception of Ethical Issues by Students of Health Professions* concludes the chapter *Health*. The article focuses on education of healthcare professionals within the context of the development of cultural competence in today's multicultural society, which requires specialists to be prepared to work with patients from various social and cultural environments.

The articles included in the **third chapter Welfare** focus on a variety of aspects of welfare: social work in health care; the spiritual care of the dying people; adaptive behaviour as a factor in psychological health; anticipating driving behaviour in relation to socio-demographic characteristics and the system of individual values; psychological safety for a mother having children with special needs; feeling of happiness in the family; the role of physical activity in functioning; environmental accessibility and the impact of non-medical factors on patient health and quality of life.

The articles *Parenting in Low-Income Families from the Perspective of Social Work* and *Why the Share of Small Amount Pensions is so substantial in Latvia?* Conclude the proceedings. Despite the fact that the authors come from different countries and different target groups are being analysed, the two articles share a common guiding principle – 'financial vulnerability' and the 'risk of poverty' as important issues in the future.

The proceedings comprehensively cover the current topical issues through diversity revealing both the common and different trends in Eastern European and non-European countries. The vision and insights of the authors are able to stimulate discussion on approaches and solutions for accepting the challenges of the change in the modern society.

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